Ebenezer Obadare *Editor*

The Handbook of Civil Society in Africa

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An International Multidisciplinary Series

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Editor

The Handbook of Civil Society in Africa

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Turning the Table on Gellner: Alternative Discourses of Civil Society in Africa

Ebenezer Obadare

The idea for this Handbook came to me as I worked through the final edits of my contribution to *The Oxford Handbook of Civil Society* (Oxford University Press 2011), edited by Michael Edwards. The pressure to condense the multilayered historical, theoretical, and practical dimensions of civil society in an extraordinarily diverse continent into a synoptic essay confronted me both with the inherent limitations of my endeavor and the need for a multidisciplinary volume that takes Africa and its multiple discourses seriously. The current volume—aiming to reflect the diversity of African discourses on civil society, map the contours of thematic and regional analyses, and display the fruits of the most up to date research—is the outcome of that recognition.

The need for such a volume—to my knowledge the first of its kind—cannot be overemphasized. Since its emergence in academic, bureaucratic, and policy circles in the late 1980s, the popularity of the idea of civil society in Africa has soared. One testimony to this increasing popularity is the mutual expansion of both the academic literature and the civil society sector in Africa. Yet, this steady expansion notwithstanding, both the discourse and the advocacy of civil society have often been at cross purposes.

While the disjuncture is by no means unique to Africa, it nonetheless underscores the need for a volume that provides a comprehensive account of the twists and turns of the idea of civil society on the African continent. To that end, the current volume pays special attention to the evolution of civil society in Africa, its promise, its changing meanings and applications across a variety of contexts and historical moments, and the ways in which it continues to animate politics, political participation, and social activism. While most of the chapters are written by academics, the tone and framing of the contributions is such that they—individual chapters—are bound to appeal as well to civil society practitioners, especially those who are eager (something I have seen firsthand) to anchor their praxes within relevant intellectual currents.

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Admittedly, there is no shortage of accounts of civil society in Africa. For example, themes like the politicoeconomic context for the recent emergence of civil society in the late 1980s, civil society and democratization, the rise of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) as a professional "third sector," civil society regulation, and civil society and development have received copious treatment. However, most of these accounts betray serious limitations. For example, for the most part, the angle of analysis tends to be national, as opposed to continental. In effect, save a few notable cases (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, Osaghae 1994, Monga 1996, Fatton 1992, Kasfir 1998, Ndegwa 1996), cross-national studies and comparisons remain few and far between. Conscious of this, the chapters in this volume (with the arguable exception of the seven chapters in "Section Two: Regional Perspectives") take the entire continent as their primary unit of analysis. In doing so, they mobilize current thinking on the subject to unpack a variety of theoretical and practical dilemmas.

Furthermore, and as is now widely acknowledged, the field has been largely dominated by studies of NGOs, CSOs, and sundry formal organizations. In this volume, there is a deliberate attempt to shift the grounds of debate and expand the range of issues and problems typically analyzed using the language of civil society. Two things are achieved through this. First is the reappropriation of the idea by its deployment in "strange" territories. Second, the application of the language of civil society to "nontraditional" subjects (like orature and viral messaging) opens up new ways of seeing those same subjects, while also revealing new modes, spaces, and possibilities of formulating subjectivity and organizing resistance in Africa.

Most books of this nature tend to distinguish themselves by their aspiration to analytic or philosophical holism. By contrast, there is no attempt at any sort of integration or coherence here. Indeed, if there is a dedication to any core principle, it is that of difference or variety. The reason for this is not far-fetched. The first generation of writings, animated to a large degree by an identified need to *prove* the existence of civil society in Africa, unwittingly created an impression of discursive singularity. The backdrop to this was the ideas of the highly influential anthropologist, Ernest Gellner, who, famously juxtaposing Islamic and Western societies, suggested that "preaching 'civil society' in conditions which do not permit it is pointless" (1994, p. 211). For Gellner, Islamic societies exemplify those insalubrious conditions, to the extent that they are characterized by "a social order which seems to lack much capacity to provide political countervailing institutions, which is atomized without much individualism, and operates effectively without intellectual pluralism" (1994, p. 29). In the case of African systems, the prevalence of "ritual-pervaded cousinly republics" and "traditional man" appears to contrast rather sharply with the situation in the "Atlantic Society" where the existence of "economic decentralization" and the "modular man" has provided a guarantee for the existence of civil society.

With the literature more or less caught in the glare of Gellnerian cultural determinism, early theorizing on civil society in Africa took on a determinedly defensive hue, and in hindsight, scholars seem to have been more eager to *philosophize* on the possibility of civil society existing and flourishing in Africa, than *describe* the forms and features of actually existing civil society.

Since those reactive early days, the eventual trajectories of scholarship on civil society in Africa—and indeed the non-Atlantic world—have made Gellner's ideas seem antique. Outside the West, the search for the non-Western equivalent of the "modular man" has more or less ceased, giving way to lively and often intriguing deployments of the idea. For instance, rather than search for African analogues of Western countervailing political institutions, African scholars have been content to argue, first, that such institutions may actually have a nonformal quality; and second, that in some societies, the path to longevity for basic ideas of checks and balances may actually lie in their strategic disguise. In this way, a simple rebuttal of cultural essentialism becomes, surprisingly, an inquiry in cultural sociology, in particular, the symbolic dimension of social life which ultimately underwrites and structures formal politics and political institutions.

Turning the table on Gellner—and his philosophical project—in this way has given civil society research in Africa a new lease on life, furnishing a continually productive ideational framework for imagining state–society relations, the modes of enactment and composition of the public sphere, and the varieties and variabilities of resistance. In their respective ways, the chapters in this volume epitomize this positive new approach. By casting a panoramic look at the African continent, they provide a much needed cartography, taking into account persistent, if often undercommunicated, variations in regional discourses.

Because of this, the volume's five sections, while no doubt useful as analytic canopies for the constituent chapters, are ultimately suggestive: such is the abundance of thematic cross references and confluences among the chapters that, as the alert reader will discover, most of them could quite easily trade places without any ghastly violence to the integrity of the Handbook.

The chapters here reveal the powerful reality of a concept that is now effectively indigenized and adapted to African politics and sociology. Critical imagination—nourished by a subject that never seems to lend itself to any sort of reductionism—appears to have trumped Gellner's cultural defeatism.

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Part I
Core Themes

Chapter 2
Escape from Tyranny: Civil Society and Democratic Struggles in Africa

Darren Kew and Modupe Oshikoya

Nigerians awoke on New Year's Day 2012 to a holiday surprise from their government: President Goodluck Jonathan had doubled the price of fuel in the middle of the night by apparently removing a long-standing subsidy. Nigeria makes billions of dollars in oil earnings every year, yet much of these funds disappear into the pockets of powerholders and the well-connected, such that the fuel subsidy is widely seen as the only tangible benefit the public ever sees from these vast earnings. Consequently, public frustrations boiled over immediately, particularly in urban centers, where major demonstrations were organized after the key trade union federation, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), joined and called for strikes. Dubbed "Occupy Nigeria" by the media, the protests brought Nigeria to a standstill for a week and activists headily declared that the winds of the Arab Spring had finally crossed the Sahara.

A week later, labor leaders suddenly called off the demonstrations after reaching a compromise with the government that reinstated half of the subsidy. Nonlabor activists howled with anger that labor leaders had again been "settled" (i.e., bribed) into a deal that squandered a golden opportunity for fundamental democracy-building concessions, but without the NLC's massive organizing potential—and its 5 million members—the protests soon died out, and Occupy Nigeria became primarily an online phenomenon.

These events illustrate both the potential and the limitations that civil society groups bring to the struggle for democracy in Africa. Scholars and practitioners alike have long pinned their hopes for democratization across the continent on these groups, and without a doubt, they have played pivotal roles in the region's successes

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and provided irreplaceable democratic safe havens, especially where states have collapsed or remained stubbornly autocratic. Yet these groups face tremendous barriers and limitations from state and nonstate actors alike, as well as their own internal contradictions that hamper their abilities to build democracy.

We examine the limitations and contradictions of civil society organisations in the following chapter, by focusing in particular on how civil society is immersed in neopatrimonial politics across the continent (Obadare and Adebanwi 2013), but how it has also been essential in the move away from neopatrimonialism to more democratic politics. How can civil society actors, who are so clearly a part of society at large, transform the dominant oligarchic pattern of politics across the continent from within? We pay special attention to lessons from three cases representing a spectrum of democratic progress: Ghana, a continental success story; Uganda, where the state remains openly hostile to reform; and Nigeria, stuck somewhere in between reform and oligarchy. We find several important elements of success—but no single recipe—as well as notes of caution in supporting the roles of these fundamental democratic actors.

Civil Society Across the Continent: Beset, but Vibrant

Civil society is generally understood in Hegelian terms, as the distinct sphere of public space separate from the state, which manages the social relations and communications between the state and its citizens (Young 1994). Civil society organizations are said to be "a dense network of voluntary associations and citizens organizations that help to sustain community relations in a way that generates trust and cooperation between citizens and a high level of civic engagement and participation. Therefore, they create the conditions for social integration, public awareness and action, and democratic stability" (Newton 2001, p. 201).

The state's emergence is often seen as a prerequisite for the development of civil society, such that some experts believe that the persistent weakness of states in Africa contributes to the lack of space for civil society to thrive. Chabal and Daloz (1999) argue that conventional civil society in Africa is an elusive concept as a direct result of African society being formed of different cultural, religious, and sectarian associational life. Thus, "[t]he notion of civil society would only apply if it could be shown that there were meaningful institutional separation between a well-organized civil society and a relatively autonomous bureaucratic state" (Chabal and Daloz 1999, p. 17). Because there is a lack of a clear distinction between the state and associational life in Africa, however, as a result of civil society's inability to transcend "primordial family, kin, or even communal ties" (Chabaz and Daloz 1999, p. 19), the assumption of this distinction is false and does not reflect the reality of present conditions. Rather, Chabaz and Daloz argue that civil society organizations replicate the informal dynamics of the neopatrimonial behavior of African states, in terms of hierarchies between a patron and client.

Chabal and Daloz's provocative analysis underscores how deeply embedded civil society organizations are in African neopatrimonial politics, but the fact that these

organizations are shot through with cultural identities and political loyalties does not necessarily keep them from playing the balancing, mediating, or even transformative roles toward the state expected of civil society under typical understandings of the concept. Naomi Chazan has written about the prominent role of these organizations in the political liberalization in the early 1990s that was seen as the resurgence of civil society in Africa. She states that "[t]he urban protests of the late 1980s and early 1990s that triggered the process of reform were initiated either by civil servants, students, professional organizations, trade unions, or churches, and carried out by a combination of these and other groups in over 20 countries" (Chazan 1992, p. 280). Thus, civil society in Africa flourished in and helped lead the struggle to overthrow repressive regimes and dictators in the march toward democratic governance. The increased prominence and growth of voluntary associations, trade unions, churches, and indigenous nongovernmental institutions played an important role in pressuring governments to undertake political reform. Civil society groups have also been central players in building much-needed political opposition, which provides the essential balance of power upon which democracy depends (Kew 2005).

Since the late 1990s, however, the efficacy of civil society in consolidating political liberalization and economic growth in Africa has been much debated. One of the most common concerns is that the state in Africa subverts the growth of civil society and is the main cause of its weakness. Jackson and Rosberg (1982) emphasize that the weak nature of state institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa has led to political instability, where successive politicians have tried to control their population's political participation on account of their societies being so ethnically diverse (Jackson and Rosberg 1982). This urge to control has fed repressive regimes that limit associational life targeting the governance structures of the state. Larry Diamond notes that many of the political liberalization movements of the 1990s have been stifled by a more recent creeping authoritarianism that has led to corrupt, ineffective state institutions and bureaucracies, a phenomenon he labels "the democratic rollback" (Diamond 2008, p. 1). Diamond argues that the state in Africa has failed to institutionalize democratic governance principles, to the extent that citizens have now retreated from the state. Thus, civil society organizations have become important by playing the role of service provider where the state is incapable, filling an important space between citizens and the state (Diamond 2008).

This renewed concern about stalling democratic development in Africa has led some commentators to look at how civil society could be strengthened in its capacity and organization in relation to its role in election monitoring, as well as in building political opposition and thus regime change (Bratton 1994). Recent protests in Kenya, Nigeria, Togo, Uganda, Ghana, and Zimbabwe show renewed agitation for political reform and democratic governance among the populace, thus suggesting that civil society in contemporary Africa remains vigorous despite the backsliding of its governments.

The most common assumption about civil society in Africa is that it is facing varied difficulties that undermine its autonomy. What experts disagree on is the effectiveness of civil society in bringing about reforms to government structures and institutions and the reasons that define their lack of autonomy. Associational life

in Africa is dominated by traditional and kin-based groups that include tribes and ethnoregional formations, which some argue have been co-opted by the state, that submerge the groups in the neopatrimonial web, or by international foreign donors, whose agendas can be at odds with that of civil society groups (Mw Makumbe 1998). Many organizations also lack knowledge of the policymaking process and are thus unable to hold their respective governments to account or secure proper local funds. This too has contributed to financial dependence on international donors, which may compromise their autonomy and has led to charges of a lack of ambition and purpose (Baylies and Power 2001).

Thus, civil society is reliant on favors from the state or on financial resources from donors, leading to a lack of autonomy (Mw Makumbe 1998). The fact that many civil society organizations are reliant on international donor assistance, in terms of finance and help with operations, is believed to undermine the authority of domestic civil society in the eyes of the indigenous population and the government, as they could be construed as acting in the interests of the donors. Such foreign assistance may, however, be essential to their survival and without it they may be unable to function autonomously of the state (UNDP 2011).

Many civil society organizations in Africa, however, will not or cannot turn to foreign donors, and must turn to the state if they fail to raise internal revenue. Julie Hearn observes that some civil society organizations in Africa align themselves with state policy objectives in order to gain the support of regimes and authorize the implementation of policies, rather than challenge detrimental policies and practices (Hearn 2001). Thus, partnerships between civil society groups and regimes undermine the autonomy of civil society as they attempt to gain patrimonial favors from the state, creating an environment that is unable to challenge hegemonic power and hold governments to account for political and economic failings in policy. This in turn explains the mixed record of civil society organizations in democratic consolidation in Africa, and the even greater difficulties they have faced in getting governments to honor their economic and social commitments (Gyimah-Boadi 1996).

Some of civil society's impact, however, is more difficult to gauge, even though it may well be the sector's most important contribution to democracy building. Alexis de Tocqueville long ago extolled civil society groups as classrooms for democracy, and African organizations play a central role in inculcating democratic political culture in their members (Kew 2005, forthcoming 2013). Democratically structured groups (marked by executives that are elected by members), however, inculcate that culture more deeply and significantly in their members than groups—like much of the NGO sector—whose organizations are not democratically structured. Moreover, democratically structured groups stay committed to prodemocracy coalitions longer than their nondemocratic counterparts, and also bridge ethnic divides within the organization and in their external activities more effectively (Kew and Obi 2009, forthcoming 2013).

Three country case studies will be used to explore these trends in greater depth in order to analyze civil society's democracy-building role in Africa. Each country represents different stages of the spectrum of democratic consolidation, and civil society in each case has had varying impacts. Ghana arguably offers the best case

scenario in the region: its postindependent history was characterized by military rule which then gave way to a strong democratic transition, and now today is one of the strongest multiparty democracies on the continent in part through both the internal and external pressures of civil society and widespread civic associational life.

Nigeria, a middle case, has had a spotty record on its transition to democratic governance. Its postindependence history has been characterized by military regimes, gross human rights abuses, massive corruption, and political violence. Yet, its associational life has widespread participation, and has been an important check and balance on the government, despite not having varied effects on government policies. Uganda offers a difficult case where civil society has so far had little outward impact on democratizing the system. President Museveni has ruled a de facto authoritarian one-party state since taking power in 1986. Opposition parties were banned until recently, and political violence was the norm. Civil society organizations have not been so widespread and have been tightly controlled and organized by the government.

Together these three cases offer some insights into civil society's impacts on democracy-building across the continent, particularly in regard to the paradox outlined in the literature between civil society's need for autonomous action, and yet its danger of being captured or co-opted, by either local neopatrimonial networks on the one hand or international donor agendas on the other.

Civil Society in Ghana: Setting the Agenda for Reform

Since the early 1990s, civil society organizations in Ghana have been engaged in strategic partnerships relating to democratization through the platform of government development policies and practices promoted by international financial institutions, focused on social accountability of macroeconomic reforms and poverty reduction policies (Hearn 2001). The implementation of structural adjustment policies (SAPs) required by international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) provided an important rallying point for civil society activism, which allowed them to force democracy-building concessions from the government as well.

Close collaboration between the government of Jerry Rawlings and international financial institutions led to the successful implementation of the SAPs. Civil society organizations were later included in the negotiation process, after protests against the Economic Recovery Programme and the introduction of the value added tax (VAT) in May 1995 left five protesters dead (Panford 2001). These protests against economic policies advocated by international financial institutions merged with the struggle for political reform to create sufficient pressure to move Ghana toward a multiparty system of democratic governance. These efforts created a new space between the government and society that allowed civil society organizations to shape and change the process of transition within Ghana profoundly. Since then, civil society organizations have provided an enabling and thriving interface between government and donors by legitimizing key development initiatives, such as the implementation of

the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), various Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) (Jumah 2011).

The 1990s were characterized in Ghana by a rapidly opening democratic governance system, where civil society—both formal and informal groups—was a full participant. A key feature of many civil society groups in Ghana that enhanced their democratic impact was that their memberships tended to transcend traditional class and socioethnic cleavages, thus binding Ghanaian society together and fostering contemporary economic and political development and governance structures (Woods 1992). Civil society groups were instrumental in the consolidation of democratic principles in regard to economic strategies that impacted heavily on development and poverty reduction, leading successive governments to seek endorsements from these various groups, in order to successfully implement economic growth policies. The more the governing actors sought civil society support over time, the more this rebuilt and reinforced the democratic Social Contract between the state and the public.

Civil society organizations were particularly successful in direct democracy building efforts by forming coalitions of networks to promote free and fair elections through the formation of election monitoring and observation groups. They helped to consolidate democratic practices in the general elections in 2000, which saw the first transfer of power through the ballot box in Ghana's history, with victory going to the opposition candidate John Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) over John Atta Mills of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), endorsed by the previous president Jerry Rawlings. The media had particular success ensuring transparency in the election and subsequently holding the government to account (Amponsah 2012). Newspapers and radio stations were successful in debating key issues of candidates and highlighting policy successes and failures of the incumbent party, and FM radio stations sent reporters to polling stations to report on any suspicious behavior.

Nonetheless, civil society organizations in Ghana also suffer from transparency and accountability issues. Their success in negotiations during the Accra Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in September 2008, regarding the reform of aid practices, showed that their legitimacy to represent the poor in negotiations had grown to such an extent that international organizations were actively seeking their validation with regards to the implementation of development schemes worth billions of dollars (Tomlinson 2008). Despite being able to influence these policy discussions with governments and international organizations, however, they had limited success in gaining comprehensive improvement in aid accountability and effectiveness or improved development projects. Thus civil society organizations have gained access and status as a legitimizer of government policies, as representatives of the public interest in these negotiations, but their impact on policy implementation has proven to be a greater challenge than the early democratic struggle itself.

The central role of the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) and the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) in declaring the 2012 election to be free and fair underscored this important status of civil society in Ghana (EISA 2012). Civil society pressure was also important in eventually getting the opposition party and their supporters to accept the results. As a result, civil society in relation to democratic governance in Ghana is flourishing overall. The more mundane details of policy promotion, however, have proven more difficult.

Uganda: Civil Society Under Siege

Civil society organizations have operated within a particularly difficult political climate in Uganda, which has limited their democratic impact. The brutal regime of Idi Amin (1971–1979) outlawed all civil society political activities, thus restricting most associations to health and development initiatives (Omara-Otunnu 1992). Throughout this period, state resources and employment were the main sources available, which ultimately undermined civil society autonomy. In this way, the state subsumed long-standing civil society organizations synonymous with decolonization and the enduring democratization process such as trade unions and key professional associations.

President Yoweri Museveni's rise to power in 1986 saw little shift in the corrupt and undemocratic practices of his predecessors (Omara-Otunnu 1992). Extensive restrictions and bans were placed on political associations not sanctioned by the Ugandan government, and the media came under sustained pressure to conform to the party line. In stark contrast to Ghana at the time, the Ugandan regime channeled the fruits of privatizing public enterprises in the 1990s primarily to its allies among the small political elite, strengthening vested interests at the expense of civil society participation (Hearn 2001).

Although Museveni has initiated many poverty alleviation and health-related programs since coming to power in 1986, service delivery has been marred by corruption and lack of accountability under his one-party state (Kasfir 1998; Omara-Otunnu 1992). Because civil society participation was restricted to development issues outside the political sphere, civil society groups sought to fill these gaps in government service provision. This in turn led civil society organizations to monitor a wider spectrum of government practices (Hearn 2001).

Consequently, despite the lack of autonomy, some civil society organizations have grown to focus on advancing democratic practices through this monitoring of service provisions. Behind the scenes, many groups have promoted democratization and increasingly become a force of resistance to state domination and corrupt practices (CIVICUS 2006). Yet President Museveni has strengthened his hold on the polity. In 2005, parliament voted for the removal of term limits for the president, allowing him to rule for an unlimited number of terms, while the 2011 elections were marred by crackdowns on freedom of expression and democratic dissent (Robert 2005). This depleted space in which civil society groups operate has become regulated with increasing vigor by government forces. After increased criticism of government policies in the media, the regime passed several laws that required all newspapers to register with the government-controlled Media Council that could revoke their licenses (Freedom House 2011).

Increased public anger has rejuvenated political opposition, evident in the decline in Museveni's share of votes between 1996 and 2006 from 75 to 59 %, despite heavy government control of the electoral commission (Rice 2011). As a consequence, the government has increasingly tried to stop the rise of opposition leaders in recent years, harassing them and their supporters following peaceful demonstrations regarding

alleged vote rigging in the February 2011 general elections (The Economist 2011a, b, c). Protests followed around the country over high fuel and food prices, despite police arrests and violence (The Economist 2011a, b, c).

In the wake of these protests, President Museveni placed further restrictions on civil society groups in order to control the political environment, as public criticism has become more open and challenging to corrupt practices by government officials, especially over recent oil finds off the Ugandan coast (Human Rights Watch 2012). Security forces have threatened and harassed civic associations with punitive laws, including a recent NGO registration amendment act that requires civil society organizations to reregister with the government every 3 years, increasing bureaucratic hassles that the government exploits to its own advantage. The government has become more intolerant to the public debates stimulated by civil society groups, and tough measures are being instigated to silence dissenting voices that incite public protests.

Nigeria: Stuck in the Middle

Nigeria enjoys a deep civil society tradition that precedes the colonial era, and remained vibrant through the long years of British colonialism and authoritarianism thereafter under the Nigerian military. Trade union general strikes in 1964 and 1981 were signature events in this regard, bringing the nation to a standstill and forcing the governments of the time to negotiate (Diamond 1988). Civil society groups helped to preserve deep public preferences for democratic government over the long period of military rule (1966–1979 and 1983–1999), and public support in turn responded to civil society leadership at key moments to check military rule.

Civil society activity has been dominated since independence by the older, larger organizations like the trade unions, professional associations like the Nigerian Bar Association, religious institutions, and traditional institutions, all of which have large memberships capable of filling the streets during protest actions. Since the 1980s, however, a growing number of small groups—the NGO movement—have risen on the back of the new technologies of the information revolution to play an important role in the public discourse on democracy and, to some extent, organization of public action. In addition, the NGO movement has built strong relationships with international donors and won a large portion of their funds available in Nigeria (Kew forthcoming 2013).

As in Ghana and Uganda, Nigeria's military government implemented SAPs in the late 1980s that sparked extensive public protests led by the trade unions (Lewis 1996). Two key aspects of Nigerian military rule, however, blunted the impact of civil society political activities of the period. The first was the military regime of Ibrahim Babangida which implemented a gradual democratization program shortly after taking office in 1985, and deflected civil society criticism by channeling it toward improving the transition program rather than removing the military from office (Oyediran et al. 1993). Second, the Nigerian military sat atop the nation's vast oil

wealth, which was gutted by generally low oil prices in the 1980s and 1990s, but was still sizeable and sufficiently concentrated in government hands as to provide important leverage over political and civil actors. As Nigerian per capita incomes dropped from roughly $ 1,000 in 1980 to $ 250 in the early 1990s, and as structural adjustment gutted the nation's public infrastructure and social safety net, government largesse proved increasingly irresistible to political leaders and some civil society actors, and corruption boomed, allowing the military to lengthen its rule (Olukoshi 1993).

Despite the growing corruption amid rising poverty nationwide, civil society actors were still able to organize massive protests that pushed General Babangida from office in 1993 when his long transition program finally proved fraudulent. The NGO movement, spearheaded by human rights organizations, joined forces with trade unions, the Bar, student unions, and most importantly, the leading political opposition party to force Babangida to hand power to a transitional government offering to hold new elections. Amid continuing protests, however, a new military junta seized power under General Sani Abacha in 1993. Abacha soon proved the most brutal of Nigeria's military leaders, installing his own fraudulent transition program designed to install himself as a civilian president, and imposing military-appointed administrators or allies on the trade unions and large civic associations whenever possible, which did not quell civic activities but effectively broke them into pieces. Some NGO leaders were jailed. Many continued the struggle, but without the muscle of the unions and other massive associations, and with no viable opposition party in the Abacha transition scheme, civil society opposition to the military was a much-reduced force by the late 1990s.

Abacha's death in 1998 likely saved the nation from possible collapse over his designs to stay in power, and opened political space for civil society to recover. General Abubakar instituted a swift transition program that handed power to a civilian government in 1999 led by retired General Olusegun Obasanjo and the People's Democratic Party (PDP), a coalition of civilian allies of past military governments who had grown fabulously rich through their political access. In his first 2 years in office, President Obasanjo worked closely with civil society leaders to draft a number of political reform policies. The large civil society groups like the unions, Bar, and other associations quickly recovered their strength and bargained major increases in wages and other reforms like the establishment of an anticorruption commission. In addition, the availability of more public funds at the federal and state levels, as well as increased donor funds, fueled a boom in the number of NGOs nationwide in a host of service sectors like health, education, and development, and in more explicitly political activities like human rights, democratic deepening, and conflict resolution.

By 2002, as the president and the PDP looked to retain office in the 2003 elections, relations between the government and civil society began to shift. President Obasanjo turned to the PDP machinery, which used its access to vast public resources and control over the election system to deliver itself a lock hold on federal, state, and local offices in 2003—a pattern it repeated in 2007 and 2011. Civil society, now vastly larger and more diverse than in the 1990s, split in many directions over the growing oligarchic nature of PDP governance. NGOs from many sectors with government

funding found protest difficult, or actively joined the PDP coalition (Kew forthcoming 2013). NGOs with foreign donor funds have had greater freedom to criticize PDP corruption and election malfeasance, but have been unable to sustain reform coalitions in between election cycles, as occasional government reform policies have attracted support and participation from both the donors and reform NGOs.

Consequently, Nigerian civil society has had no overarching democratization/democracy-deepening coalitions since 1999, when it had the clear threat of the military as a rallying point. Instead, multiple issue-specific coalitions have dominated civic life: election-reform coalitions, anticorruption coalitions, one for the passage of a Freedom of Information Bill, and others. Some organizations belong to multiple coalitions, but no central, sustained alliance exists as in the 1990s. Doubtless, the complicated relationships between the large civil society groups—the unions, professional associations, religious institutions, and the like—and the government has sapped their ability to organize a sustained political reform agenda. As vast, complex organizations, these groups have seen some local and national affiliates deeply compromised by government largesse, while others remain deeply committed to the public interest. Thus, their activities since 1999 have been mixed, checking PDP overreach on specific policies or occasions, such as over fuel price increases or President Obasanjo's failed 2006 effort to change the constitution to allow himself a third term in office, but unable to build a viable political opposition to PDP corruption and election stealing. Such opposition has proven especially difficult as opposition parties grew increasingly feeble after 1999, giving civil society groups or coalitions few alternatives to support.

Some signs of change, however, appeared in January 2012 as a new movement, named Occupy Nigeria by the media, emerged to protest President Jonathan's lifting of fuel price subsidies, effectively doubling the prices of fuel across the country overnight. NGOs and private individuals using Facebook and other online or smart phone social-networking technologies quickly organized nationwide protests, which as in past coalitions, became massive once the trade unions joined and, as in the past, soon collapsed once the unions struck a deal with the government amid widespread accusations from other civil society groups that union leaders were bribed. Importantly, however, many civil society and part-time, tech-savvy activists moved their criticisms online, where they have continued to sustain their relationships and extend their coalition-building efforts. Sensing that public frustrations over PDP misrule have reached a turning point, the four main opposition parties formed a single national party in 2013, the All Progressive Congress(APC), which may provide civil society associations the alternative at the political level that they need as a central rallying point.

Analysis: Accenting the Positives

From the examples of the three case studies above, civil society organizations face several successes and difficulties across the continent. Clearly, in countries where democracy is thriving or where the political space is at least opening, civic participation expands. Participation, however, does not always translate into policy impact,

and civil society groups continue to face such difficulties even under regional democratic leaders like Ghana. In countries where there is little democratic accountability, civil society organizations operate in a hostile environment, especially when they reflect and expose detrimental government policies, as in the case of Uganda. International donors have also worked through African civil society organizations to broaden consensus around their preferred policies.

In countries that have emerged from solid transitions that have led toward democratic consolidation, a strong civil society has been "a boon for enhancing the sustainability of democratic governance and institutional performance" (Tusalem 2007, p. 366). Civic associations in Ghana uphold this view of engagement and participation. In the 1980s, international financial institutions and the government of Jerry Rawlings turned to civil society organizations to garner a broad consensus surrounding structural adjustment programmes. This engagement of civil society organizations in partnerships for policy formulation sought to "improve policy management and improve sustainability of policy change" (Hearn 2001, p. 46). Civil society groups utilized this access to win additional concessions from the Rawlings government that broadened their access and deepened democratic development over time.

Civil society organizations cannot, however, sustain pressure on the state indefinitely, such that they face the prospect that their recommendations are sometimes disregarded. Authoritarian governments prove even more difficult in this regard, and many block participation of civil society organizations by undermining their autonomy through legislation that makes it difficult to operate, as can be clearly seen with civil society organizations based in Uganda. Their co-option into the government through vertical relations and bonds of patronage show the difficulty that civil society organizations face in trying to challenge the state in Uganda.

International donors have sought to compensate somewhat for this power imbalance by providing support for African civil society organizations to challenge powerful government interests and expose corrupt practices. In Uganda, government restrictions on civil society organizations that limited them to providing basic services led international donors to funnel most of their resources through civil society in the hope of expanding its scope (Hearn 2001). In fact, Fig. 2.1 shows that Uganda garnered double the amount of funding in this time period over Nigeria and Ghana.[1]

Donor funds may come at a political price with the government, which may ignore or downplay their recommendations, especially regarding democratic consolidation, accountability, human rights, and economic and fiscal responsibility. Civil society organizations thus face a delicate balancing act, attempting to be seen as acting in the best interests of the people even if foreign donors are financing them. This perceived lack of autonomy could also have implications for civil society's ability to hold their governments to account and help build political opposition.

Specific comparisons among the three cases raise additional concerns about civil society in Africa. In all three cases, SAPs proved to be important focal points for civil society organizing in the 1980s and early 1990s, and since then, bread-and-butter standard of living issues, such as the fuel price increases in Nigeria, remain key

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[1] Available at http://opendataforafrica.org/nkhxqyc?tsId=1284240.

Fig. 2.1 Donor aid to Ghana, Nigeria, and Uganda

rallying points for civil society action. This is no surprise, as moments of decision over fundamental economic concerns have always offered important flashpoints for civil society to mobilize publics worldwide. Clearly, publics share a basic human needs' threshold that sparks protests when governments cross it, although that line must vary over time and for each country. Those moments offer important opportunities for civil society, accenting vulnerabilities within the regime while temporarily strengthening civil society groups with potential followers in the street.

Yet, on this point the cases also demonstrate the centrality of the government response to civil society action in determining its impact. Although initially hostile, Ghana's government eventually invited civil society groups to bargain over the specifics of the SAP, which they were able to leverage to win more concessions for democratizing the state. In addition, pressure from Ghana's foreign donors to include civil society was an asset, which civic groups then used to expand their access during the negotiations. Some credit, however, must also be given to the Rawlings regime for its eventual willingness—opportunistic or not—to open the process. Ghana's record stands in stark contrast to Uganda's, where the Museveni regime severely restricted civil society to service provision activities, and its hostile policies actively sought to atomize civic coalitions.

The depth of authoritarianism in Uganda is an important overall difference among the cases in terms of civil society impact. The Ugandan government's unrelenting antipathy to civil society participation, scrutiny, or opposition has kept these organizations on the defensive and often divided, or at least unable to build coalitions except at great risk. President Rawlings, in contrast, was far more open to political reform, which opened a far greater spectrum of opportunities for civil society even if his intentions were to solidify his grip on the presidency. After two election cycles, civic groups in alliance with the main opposition party were able to get clean

elections and force him to respect the outcome, a respect that held again 8 years later when that party too lost an election.

The situation in Nigeria also appears to not only support the finding that greater authoritarianism constricts civil society activity and impact, but also suggests that in the early stages of deepening authoritarianism, civic groups may gain some momentum as the clear threat provides a central organizing principle for building civil society coalitions. General Babangida's sham democratization program included a measure of political liberalization that at least offered civic groups some space to organize, which they seized upon to great effect. As Babangida's machinations became clearer, the rallying cause of removing the military from power became more urgent, and thus, sufficient enough a superordinate goal to fuse together a massive civil society coalition that helped to push him from power in 1993. Babangida's "light touch" style of military government was replaced thereafter by General Abacha's deep authoritarianism, which by 1998 wore civil society down to several clusters of diehard democracy promotion NGOs and pockets of the trade union movement. The current era of PDP rule shows a similar pattern: after an initial honeymoon period of government-civil society cooperation from 1999 to 2002, rising PDP kleptocracy and oligarchy became a growing threat that focused civil society attention, particularly at moments of decision such as elections or Obasanjo's third-term gambit, upon which civic coalitions have managed to form episodically. We might therefore expect to see more durable coalitions to emerge if PDP rule continues to drift toward authoritarianism.

Such moments of protest also underscore another global trend for civil society evident in our cases: the centrality of trade unions in any major civic action. Only religious institutions can claim more members on the continent, and the unions have deep experience in public organization and mobilization such that they can rapidly fill the streets. Their orientation toward wages and basic need concerns also aligns them closely with most of the fundamental interests of the poor majority across the continent, such that they are often seen as more representative of the public than elected officials, not to speak of authoritarian governments as in Uganda. Yet the unions, as complex bureaucracies, also face particular vulnerabilities to state pressure that can blunt their impact. The fiercely democratic culture of the unions has preserved democratic structures—whose hallmark is elected executives (absent in much of the NGO movement, which is dominated by authoritarian structures) — but civil society elections can also be influenced by "cash-and-carry" politics as in national elections, and the trade unions often see progovernment candidates or favorites of local political kingpins emerge with suddenly deep campaign war chests. Moreover, union leaders at any level or chapter may succumb to government payoffs.

All our cases also demonstrate the great importance of viable opposition parties to civil society activism. The growing strength of the NPP over the 1990s in Ghana was an essential partner for the nation's civil society groups in pushing greater democratization and, ultimately, winning clean elections and forcing the ruling party to respect the outcome in 2000. Once in power, the NPP was obliged to fulfill its promises, which the former ruling party then scrutinized and promised to outdo, contributing to its victory in 2008. This catering of the parties to the public interest through civil

society groups, and the alternatives and alternation in power that opposing parties provide, is an essential ingredient for the establishment of the democratic social contract, which Ghana now enjoys. Nigerian civil society groups had a strong opposition party in 1993, with which they joined in alliance to push General Babangida from power. The demise of that party under Abacha coincided with civil society's declining impact for the rest of the decade. Moreover, the divided opposition parties facing the PDP since 1999 have sapped civil society's influence, leaving it with few alternatives but to work piecemeal with PDP reform policies where available and to build ad hoc alliances to check the PDP's more egregious antidemocratic moves as they took shape. Uganda's one-party state and deep authoritarianism left that country's beleaguered civil society groups with few alternatives to support, although periods when fissures in the ruling party emerged offered brief moments of which civic actors tried to take advantage. Overall, however, the lack of viable opposition parties clearly hamstrung Uganda's civil society already under siege.

Nigeria and Uganda also demonstrate the enduring problem of the neopatrimonial trap facing civil society. The monopoly of the ruling party or junta over state resources, which in Nigeria are exponentially higher with its vast oil wealth, forces a dire choice on civil society groups. They can accept government funding, which will eventually require them to support the relevant political patron in question—or at least not criticize him/her or them—or they can try to rely upon the very few local funders available, or upon member dues, which are limited. Moreover, staff or leaders are constantly vulnerable to bribery or other forms of compromise by state officials. Some organizations are able to turn to international donors for assistance, but the competition for these resources is intense, and as mentioned earlier, makes groups vulnerable to accusations of being part of a foreign agenda. This is not typically terminal for effective impact, but it can make democracy promotion activities more difficult at times.

The rise of Ghana's viable opposition parties has also helped to insulate its civil society groups somewhat from the neopatrimonial trap plaguing Nigeria and Uganda. Corruption remains a problem in Ghana, but the competition between the parties provides civil society some room to play them off against each other, or in more cynical moments, to accept the inducements of both and to proceed with their own agendas. The strengthening of Ghana's institutions has also, however, improved anticorruption activities and allowed more civil society groups to accept government funding without necessarily having to join a patronage network.

One important relationship demonstrated throughout Africa and evident here has been that between civil society development and information technology. Beginning with personal computers and fax machines in the 1980s, civil society groups have managed to use each new innovation in telecommunications to improve their public outreach and capacities for building alliances. NGOs have proven particularly adept at taking advantage of new technologies, but the older, larger civil society groups have also benefitted. Occupy Nigeria demonstrated an entirely new dimension of *virtual civil society*, in which members of organizations, journalists, and private activists at large could continue their prodemocracy networking activities through social media. In the least, social media has allowed prodemocracy networks to stay in

nearly constant communication, but it also shows the potential of attracting a much greater audience to the networks and mobilizing them when opportunities present themselves.

Conclusions

African civil society, as elsewhere, demonstrates its enduring symbiosis with the state. Despite deeply authoritarian governments severely restricting the function and impact of civil society, political liberalization has offered increased room for civic organization and acitivism. Viable political opposition marks the key turning point toward democratic consolidation of the state (Kew 2005), but it does so in part by offering civil society groups a central organizing point for their activities.

Neopatrimonialism remains a deep trap for civil society groups across the continent, where political opposition has yet to strengthen democratic institutional development. International donors offer a partial alternative to the patronage networks, but these funding streams are not always sustainable or readily available, and recipients must be ready to observe donor interests, which do not always coincide with the public interest or the preferred goals of the groups themselves. Nonetheless, donor support has been essential for many groups to keep operating and to criticize their governments. Ultimately, civil society groups must build more independent finances to sustain more independent agendas, and this has proven elusive even in Ghana. The larger, more established civil society groups have typically managed to develop a measure of local funding streams, often through member dues, but their complex organizational structures mean that they face additional vulnerabilities to the neopatrimonial networks.

The spread of more democratic governance across Africa over the last 25 years is now accompanied by improving economic performance and technological change over the last decade to offer greater opportunities for civil society democratic contributions across the continent. The Arab Spring may have blown through without much shaking the trees south of the Sahara, but civil society remains vibrant and its capacity to organize may be growing. If political opposition can also become viable enough so that civil society can cooperate in pushing rulers to make greater democratic concessions, then the next decade may well see Ghana's successes replicated across the continent.

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Chapter 3
Civil Society and Religion

Shobana Shankar

In his seminal review essay, "Beyond the State: Civil Society and Associational Life in Africa," published in 1989, Michael Bratton lays out a clear agenda for political scientists to focus on the "political space beyond the state's purview" (Bratton 1989a, p. 411). Few would challenge his assumption that Africans prioritize religion in their political expression, and to see on his list of political spaces Christian churches in Kenya and Burundi and Islamic brotherhoods in Senegal and Sudan is not surprising. Yet, even if we strip away the modern liberal Eurocentric (Christian) definition of religion as individually chosen private faith, we cannot simply assume that religion easily fits into the model of civil society. Extra-governmental religious actors do not always help define and defend "common good" but sometimes undercut it by entrenching "inequality and discrimination," not to mention moral hierarchies that have little to do with choice (Edwards 2009, p. 56). If anything, religious politics has worked as a double-edged sword in many places and periods of history, and Africa is hardly an exception.

Most observers agree that civil society in Africa is "poorly developed," and it is worth exploring if religious institutions have anything to do with this weakness. Even as there appears to be a consensus that African civil society organizations are weaker than in other regions, Africa's religious organizations continue to be quite strong (Edwards 2009). This contradiction may be a key component of the continent's political difference relative to other regions. Although colonial and post-colonial regimes took a much heavier hand in weakening labor unions, media, and other secular associations, religious institutions seem not to have suffered the same fate (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999). Indeed, religious civil society organizations in Africa gained a renewed lease on life as the faith-based development agenda, arguably a comparatively recent invention of and favored outlet for American influence in Africa, has created a very strong economic incentive for civil society organizations to burnish their religious credentials. Through religious institutions, Africans

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have engaged political authority, from the local to international levels, in diverse and changing ways.

This chapter undertakes an historical and comparative review of both the internal and external factors shaping religion and civil society in Africa. Casting a wide net, across various religious traditions as they have disappeared and transformed, helps illuminate some reasons for the endurance of religious institutions in shaping political authority in sub-Saharan Africa. Terence Ranger, discussing politics and religion in Africa, notes the difficulties of making generalizations about the continent's multiple religious traditions, their distinct time frames, cross-regional orientations, and the problem of defining politics in relation to European colonial regimes or to "successor" African governments (Ranger 1986). Rather than pigeonholing as anticolonial the Christian and "traditionalist" movements that he selected to review, Ranger instead draws attention to continuities and discontinuities between religious movements and nationalist politics. He emphasizes, in particular, the disengagement of rural consciousness, either religious or secular, from "formal nationalism" (Ranger 1986, p. 2). Ranger's case studies range from the Kenyan Christians' churches that organized resistance against the British colonial authorities to the South African Zionist churches that simply withdrew to maintain autonomy. African Christian movements had a number of strategies that had to be understood "on their own terms," not as better or poorer imitations of nationalist movements. Though Ranger deliberately excludes Islamic examples in his overview, withdrawal was a particularly important act of rural protest in West Africa, for example, in preparation for the jihads that lasted from the 1600s to the 1800s (Levtzion and Fisher 1986).

Religious symbols and actions as organizing concepts and practices have their own meanings and, most importantly, distinct ways of constructing a common identity that have been extremely threatening politically. Ranger notes examples of Christian millenarianism, and comparable Muslim millennial movements exist, that demonstrate that African authorities, sensing an imminent transformation, responded with greater fear than European colonialists (Ranger citing Fields 1985). How did they read the signs of a religious movement differently from White rulers?

The second goal of this chapter is to explore this question, following Ranger's suggestion, by analyzing the religious language and practices of organizing collective power and interests, rather than focusing on definitions of civil society that originate with the state, liberal secular political theory, or Euro–American standards that have been acknowledged to be incompatible with the practical realities of African politics (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; also see Chap. 17). Part of the power of popular religious movements in Africa has derived from their alternative definitions of norms—of authority, legitimacy, and behavior—that are defined less by state prescription than by a distinctive, but no less insistent, universalism intended, in many instances, to unite across local kinship, occupational identities, ethno-linguistic affiliations, gender relations, age, and income. Religious institutions turn on key priorities—authority, accountability, and audience—that are equally important for secular political institutions but are defined differently. By analyzing how such norms work in religious civil society organizations, we can better understand why religious organizations endure and how they structure relations between African leaders and followers.

While the Comaroffs have noted that Africans have widely accepted the conflation of religion and civil society as protection from exploitative and destructive state power (see also Bratton 1989a, b), it would be a mistake to consider all Africans as having equal access to such protection within religious institutions. Timothy Longman's recent book on the Catholic Church and the Rwandan genocide illustrates amply Jean-Francois Bayart's observation that, in Africa, where politics is centered on accumulation, religious capital is also a social good for which citizens compete (Longman 2010). Thus, we may fruitfully examine how the unequal distribution of capital flowing from religious civil society organizations has shaped political inequality.

Hence, the third goal of this chapter is to look more closely into cases in which religious institutions have become closely aligned to states to the degree that they have become facilitators of discrimination and violence against citizens. In other words, religious organizations that are not formerly a part of the state have, in countries like Rwanda, Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya, tipped nonstate actors toward violence. As of 1995, Celestin Monga argued that Islamic movements had not dominated politics in sub-Saharan African countries as they had in North Africa (Monga 1995). The situation has changed dramatically in Nigeria, Sudan, and Kenya in the last 15 years, yet not evenly throughout these states and certainly not throughout the entire continent. We still have very little information about the role of Christian organizations in fomenting civil conflict or discrimination, notable exceptions being Longman's study of the Catholic church in Rwanda, and more localized studies of Christian militias and violence in the Plateau State region of Nigeria and faith-based organizations' discriminatory discourses about HIV/AIDS sufferers in Uganda (Higazi 2008; Otolok-Tanga et al. 2007). These studies indicate that scholars and policy makers should not allow a Judeo-Christian bias to focus their attention solely on the negative effects of some Islamic currents on civil society. Christian organizations that began in progressive social agendas—children's education in Rwanda, HIV/AIDS awareness programs in Uganda, and community vigilance organizations in Nigeria—had the unintended effect of entrenching inequality and ethnocentrism. While taking seriously the power of religious organizations in Africa, scholars must adopt a rigorous analytical framework to understand religions as practices of power, not simply as benign belief systems.

Democratizing Religious Authority

Religious authorities of various cosmologies and backgrounds have wielded and competed with political authorities for control over the management of popular discontent. The religious expression of this discontent is most often reformism seeking to correct abuses and misappropriation. Ellis and Ter Haar argue that within African religious motivation, there exists a preoccupation with the invisible or unseen realm as the source of power and evil (Ellis and Ter Haar 2004). One example they use

is witchcraft, a highly problematic and confusing term, but recognizable as an appeal of an individual to unseen powers for control over another person or against the common good for selfish ends (Geschiere and Roitman 1997). Leaving aside explanations of witchcraft as "relics" from pre-Christian or pre-Islamic African religions, it is useful to think of witchcraft as coexistent with and coconstructed by oppressive political regimes that have plagued the continent over many centuries; this cocreation of witchcraft and misuse of power is documentable to the Atlantic slave trade era in Western Africa and to violent upheavals and forced migrations in Southeastern Africa in the eighteenth century. As Bayart suggests, witchcraft may best be understood in the light of African political priorities, which are focused on accumulation and redistribution of accumulated capital; witchcraft in contemporary politics is therefore not at all irrational but a redistributive idiom (Bayart 1986).

Witchcraft offers an example of how religious institutions have organized the idioms of accumulation—seen and unseen—and restoration of balance in ways that are distinct from other kinds of civil discourse. Many religious movements gained popular support against secular authority because they offered "protection" against those who misused power to misappropriate from or manipulate society or accumulated at others' expense. Historical moments of political dislocation seem to offer the best examples of popular movements organized around such idioms. In Central Africa, during the era of the Atlantic slave trade, Christianity helped bring about the rise of prophets, known first as healers, who promised to defend followers from witchcraft, thus putting to rest the claims of their competitors (Ranger 1986). In the Zambezi region, territorial cults held spiritual authority while secular authorities shared power, until increasing militarization of state power in the era of Portuguese intrusion after 1600 into political and economic affairs made cult chiefs seek to expand their power (Schoffeleers 1992). Dislocation made these spiritual authorities not only more powerful but distinctly more political.

At the same time, religious movements outgrow the political circumstances in which they transformed. A good example is the Watchtower, a millenarian movement in Central Africa that arose during the precarious time of British colonization, but later reemerged to answer the pressures of new times (Fields 1985; MacGaffey 1982). The "water drinking" idiom of invincibility, used in the Maji Maji rebellion in German Tanganyika between 1905 and 1907 and elsewhere, covers a wider chronological and geographical area than that the word cult or movement would imply. Its use among young militia fighters recently in Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), suggests that in *maji*, or water, we have an example of a language that has "risen above" religious authorities and political change and stood the test of time as a popular political idiom concerned especially with virility and righteousness (Jourdan 2011; Peel 1990).

The forms of capital within religious discourses—be it the prophet's ability to forecast, the witchfinder's power to identify unsociability, or special water that produces invulnerability—clearly differ by circumstance, but they share the potential for challenging and checking corrupt powers. The control of this potential is competitive and can be more democratic in some instances than others. In Islam, for example, *baraka* or blessedness belongs to some and not others (O'Brien and Coulon 1988).

Baraka is not weighed in material terms but by individual character. Religious leadership is based on the language of election and exclusion, whereas secular political power appears to be more available to more kinds of people. At the same time, a blessed person may not choose to jeopardize his or her credibility by entering the corrupt world of politics. Thus, the accumulation and use of religious capital can produce contradictions around which reformist movements can quickly take shape. Religious learning, however, is a formal credential that can be acquired where *baraka* may not be. The histories of Islam and Christianity, both religions that made literacy possible for a greater number of Africans, show that texts and the ability to control texts became an important new form of political and social capital over which competition grew (Goody 1986; Harries 2001). Indeed, perhaps we should even attempt to historicize media censorship by African states as part of the longer duree of complex negotiations of literacy stemming from Africans' initial encounters with religions of the book.

The tendency to focus on African orality has obscured Africans' intense engagement with texts not only for the technical ability to read and but also for the intriguing uses of texts in healing, prophecy, and garnering of charisma (Kirsch 2007). The different kinds of readers in Islam, for instance, allow practices of divination and geomancy to flourish outside of formal Qur'anic schools (Brenner 2001). With Christian literacy, some White missionaries made "anonymous" Black Southern African migrants into cheap and effective means of spreading the Gospel but also worried that a "political despotism" arose when literate Africans lorded their skill over illiterate "Bantu minds" (Harries 2001, p. 409). The restrictions on literacy did, indeed, produce a vanguard of African leaders of the Mozambican struggle for independence, and Harries' historical view of the developing "ideology of exclusion" in literacy (p. 427) does seem alive today. As Mark Lamont's (2010) research on contemporary Kenya suggests, gospel singers on the streets of Meruland appropriate the written and spoken word to challenge the corruption and sin of church and national leaders, but their critiques lay "hidden" from centers of power. Literacy does not obviate the importance of orality but creates layers of legitimacy and power that are accessible to some but restricted and only an aspiration to others.

Thus, while religious modes of organizing and challenging power have democratized and fractured authority in Africa, grassroots religion in Africa may be cause for the increasingly aggressive appropriation of political leaders of religious authority. In his study of Sufi brotherhoods in Senegal in the 1980s, O'Brien highlighted the power of Islamic critiques of authority and the development of schism within religious organizations that arise from competing claims to leverage these critiques in political spheres (O'Brien in Chabal 1986). In particular, his focus of the growing divergences between Sufis and reformists inspired by Wahhabism and other currents touched on how these religious organizers engage different state forms that have emerged in Mali over several decades. As the system of government changed from theocracy to colony to secular nation-state, the sectarian schisms prevented any monopolization of religious authority and thus aided in the fostering of a fair degree of popular support for military rule in Mali in the 1980s. Today, however, Islamists in

the north of Mali have embarked on a violent exclusionary movement to monopolize power, notably the tombs of Sufi saints, making popular pilgrimages impossible (Soares 2012). While the international community has focused on the political implications of the more obvious exclusion, the ouster of the democratically elected president, the desecration of the saints' tombs is another salvo in a longer struggle over Islam in the public sphere, a struggle that had more precisely to do with the wresting of religious authority from the control of hereditary lineages of marabouts into the court of public Muslim opinion (Soares in Salvatore and Eickelman 2004). The problem with the opening of religious authority—through literacy, conversion, and other means of mobility—and the escalating competition in the public sphere is the challenge of containing it once again, or putting the genie back into the bottle.

A similar sacralization of public conflicts has occurred in Nigeria, from the time of the Maitatsine riots between 1980 and 1984, to today's Boko Haram, which began as an apolitical prayer group feeding the poor. Government oppression revolutionized it, and Boko Haram's use of terrorist tactics has destabilized mainstream Muslim society along with non-Muslims. Its generalized critique of political authority seems to offer shelter to malcontents with different kinds of grudges, some more local, others national, and still others international (*Economist*, September 29, 2012). A multiplicity of movements, some with religious goals, others probably with more nonreligious goals, appears to be finding cover under the overarching movement to restore shar'ia in Northern Nigeria; thus, shar'ia now stands as an idiom for a reclusive leader who has monopolized media attention.

Muslim Africa suffers the overgeneralization of its conflicts because of the international struggle over terrorism, but, to get to a finer-grained analysis of African religious politics, it is useful to compare how religious authority works in Islamic and Christian African societies. Elites in various religious traditions have used religious concepts as critiques of political corruption in different but comparable ways. Contrary to ascetic currents in Islamic movements, Pentecostal Christianity's prosperity gospel explains the contradiction between wealth and piety in a unique way. In Zimbabwe and Ghana, the authority of some Christian leaders has grown as their wealth has burgeoned because material wealth is seen as a result of moral favor. Belief buys well-being, and leaders have "earned" their position through their piety, as measured in material terms (Maxwell 2000; Freston 2004). On the other hand, the Catholic Church has been both critic and reformer of African states from Zaire (DRC) to Togo (Haynes 2004). A distinct difference exists between the grassroots character of evangelical Christianity and the powerful international bureaucracy of the Catholic Church, which may help explain how the former can be more easily locally co-opted and the latter take an official stand from political power. The point, however, seems to be that the democratization of religious authority has empowered nonelites but has produced new struggles for authority. A clearer differentiation between religious and secular institutions ironically appears in Senegal, a largely Muslim country, than in Zimbabwe. This difference may stem from the role that *baraka*, or charisma, plays in Senegal to create bonds of affiliation independent of elected officials and their constituents (Villalon 1993). Senegal's case suggests that religious authority helps to help maintain necessary distance between politics and religion, rather than a direct path from popular to state political culture.

Between Affiliation and Autonomy

A major assumption about civil society organizations is the voluntariness of component associations. Yet, for religiously oriented collectives, it is critical to ask just how voluntary those associations are. Can anyone join? Perhaps, more importantly, how does one leave and find another religious association? Is religious affiliation ever obligatory, coerced or coercive, or merely superficial?

Such questions seem more concerned with sociology or psychology than political science, but they can help elucidate what kind of "public" religious organizations create and sustain. Yet religious motivation is particularly difficult to measure, particularly in relation to political development. The Afrobarometer national public surveys (www.afrobarometer.org) say little about Africans' perceptions of religion as part of democratization, despite the assumed importance of religion in African civil life. The lack of political data—census, voting patterns, campaign donations—relating to religious affiliation forces scholars to look at other ways in which religion, rights, and citizenship intersect.

First, getting beyond the definition of religious identity as individual conscience, the example of religious schools, which have been extremely important for the advancement of formal education in Africa, suggests that strong generational, gender, and class pressures condition religious identity. Recent attempts to quantify the political and economic impact of Christianity globally suggest two important changes brought about by missionary movements. First, Protestant missionaries planted in many non-Christian parts of the world printing presses, schools teaching literacy, economic development (this seems to mean more employment and competition), and "civil society" in colonized areas (Woodberry 2012). While the attempt to quantify these activities in Woodberry's global review of such institutional components does not suggest the local-level political, social, and economic tensions that arose from the process of evangelization in Africa, the rich historiography of Christian missions in Africa makes clear the complexity and conflict that arose from missions. Missions reordered African societies, not always entirely, but class and physical mobility were common experiences even where missions found few converts (Shankar forthcoming). Second, economic analyses of Christianity have demonstrated that Africans who lived in proximity to Christian mission stations have remained Christian over several generations (Nunn 2010). Thus, Christianity's "goods" have spread into Africa through evangelism and have been maintained within families, implying perhaps that their civil society components have not disseminated evenly. Finally, American Christian missions in the last four decades have been able to exploit states' weak development and compete to recruit believers around the world (Hanson and Xiang 2011). Economic and political pressure does seem to drive people in poorer societies toward Christian missions, at least in the postcolonial era.

History, political science, and economic research all confirm that civil society as a concept is deeply shaped by the content of Christian evangelism and that those who have access to its conventional modalities—schoolings, printed texts, church fellowship, and women's groups—are more often identified as Christians. The political

imprint of the history of Christian evangelism in Africa lies in the very fractious debates that have occurred in recent times over religion in the media (Hackett in Meyer and Moors 2006). Hackett has shown that, in Nigeria and in South Africa, "the right to disseminate one's religion easily surpasses the freedom to practice one's religion as the most controversial aspect of religious freedom" (Hackett in Meyer and Moors 2006, p. 168; Hackett 1998). In South Africa, historically, the right of Black churches to reach constituents was clearly important in the struggle against apartheid, but, with the end of White rule in 1992, the struggle became more about the limited purchasing power of smaller and newer religious institutions that had little "patrimonial" affinity with the state. In Nigeria, where divisions are between both Islam and Christianity and intrareligious, between Sufis and Salafis, and between Pentecostal and traditional denominational Christians, struggles for airtime are also complicated by historical flows of money and influence (Hackett 1998).

The Pentecostal Christian propensity to use the media is matched by newer Muslim movements' zealous use of print and audiovisual materials. While, in East Africa, the more recent efforts to translate the Qur'an into African languages are similar to earlier Christian missionary efforts, and debates over interpretation among Muslim scholars have greater relevance beyond the literati with new media (Loimeier 2005). The Wahhabi-inspired Izala sect in Nigeria has used public preaching very effectively to "homogenize" and standardize the idea of Islamic reform, if not actually to gain converts. In all of these disparate examples, homogenization appears to be the result of religious organizations' deeper penetration of mass media. This homogenization is not simply a product of particular forms of messaging but also in how "readers" or consumers of media perceive these messages as part of globally shared cultural values (Kirsch 2007).

How much choice do Africans have as consumers and interpreters of these religious messages? Several studies suggest that, even with the rise of Islamic reformism and more intense messaging about "proper" religious practice and public behavior, African Muslim women, to take an example from Niger, demonstrate a distinct autonomy that cannot be simply categorized as rebellious or as passive but ultimately an alternative means to access spiritual capital (Cooper 1999). Spiritual capital is not, of course, much considered as a motivating factor in civil society organizations, but it can affect deeply the religious commitments and, most importantly, participation in public life of ordinary people. Muslim women in Niger, for instance, have made and unmade the popularity of reformist clerics because of their messages about pertinent issues like bride price payments. While women reject what they perceived as a cheapening of the value of kinship, an ostensibly "private" matter, these same women take very little interest in challenging Islamist discourse in the public sphere (Masquelier 2009). These Nigerien women simply stopped listening to the cleric that young men had found so popular and thus unmade him; they retreated home whereas men who cannot spend so much time indoors and must be out in public, must take a more public stand with or against Islamic preachers. Even in the arguably more "public" realm of the Catholic Church in Maasailand, Tanzania, woman constructed their religious space against the wishes of the missionaries and expressly for the legitimation of women's spirituality, not necessarily for the organization of their material or social relations (Hodgson 2005). Religious authorities can seek to

dictate norms, but women in some cases are more able to evade these norms than men because they have fewer expectations in public life than men in most African societies. In this case, their religious organization may be more voluntaristic but only because it is less civically engaged.

On the other hand, James Searing (2003) has shown how Serer men in colonial Senegal, within one generation, became strongly identified as Muslims because major social and political transformations broke down previous barriers on "traditionalists" conversion to Islam. He describes a process that was neither coercive nor solely an intellectual or personal choice, but, instead, a balance of factors relating to migration, inheritance, education, and ethnic integration. His example suggests that the factors leading to membership in religious organizations may have to do with increasing popular access and autonomy but that this expansion requires the breakdown of previous inequalities occasioned by major transformations and new exclusions. Indeed, in the case of the Serer, a major shift with Islamization did occur from matrilineal to patrilineal inheritance patterns, which made a generation of young men more powerful in domestic spheres than they otherwise would have been.

The assumption of a common audience or public in religious organizations is mistaken and misses the tensions out of which commonality must be actively sought. Religious organizations do not appear to be inherently egalitarian. "Traditional" African identities—religious, matrilineal, or otherwise—must be disavowed, in many instances, to join Muslim or Christian organizations. While African traditional religions can and do coexist with Christian forms, only one very public case of African-Muslim-Christianity or Chrislam has emerged, not surprisingly in Lagos, a city in a region renowned for its syncretism (Janson 2012).

Some religious organizations also disapprove of political engagement on the part of their members. As Schoffeleers has demonstrated, the Zionist wing of African independent churches actively excommunicated adherents from their organizations to promote political nonparticipation in movements for Zimbabwean independence, like Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) (Schoffeleers 1991). These churches' centralization of its healing mission, and its tackling of witchcraft as a public health problem, coincided, ironically, with depoliticization and removal from the arena of challenging White rule. He notes that religious organizations' depoliticization may have been in the interest of participants, who often experience tensions between the personal and the politico-jural domain, because they are not always sure about what pertains to one or the other, or because they think that they can no longer cope with the demands of their society. Healing systems mediate between the personal and the politico-jural domain by means of corrective action at the microlevel; critical politics do the same by means of corrective action at the macrolevel.

Such "pulling away" from politics has occurred in Islamic contexts as well. Within Islam, a very strong tension exists between this world as morally corrupting and the next. The isolationist character of Muslim communities in the Horn of Africa was a strategy of political balance within a Christian-dominated state (Abbink 1998). In French West Africa, Islamic brotherhoods' accommodations with political powers often turned adherents' attention to schooling; while this strategy certainly expanded

opportunities, was it the kind of mechanism of social control that Schoffeleers sees as depoliticization, especially of the young, that healing in Christian churches made happen in South Africa? Religious asceticism or withdrawal as opposed to civic engagement has worked in the interest of political stabilization.

"Pulling away" from religion, or what may be called secularism, has not been much studied as a conscious political strategy, especially in the postcolonial period, since scholars have been much more interested in the ascendance of religious politics (Westerlund 1996). From the late colonial era, more examples are forthcoming, particularly for West Africa, where trade union movements and Pan-Africanism presented seemingly secular challenges to secular colonial states (Loimeier in Westerlund; Wilder 2005). The Mayflower School started by Christian-mission educated former colonial civil servant Tai Solarin in Abeokuta, Nigeria, was an experiment in the removal of religion from education. The original vision was severely challenged in the 1990s because the children themselves, particularly the girls, found exorcism and other secret rituals to be too exciting a way to resist school and parental authority (Solarin 1970; Shankar field notes 1994). The religious fervor of the children baffled the adults, a not altogether rare feeling as Nigeria engages in an ongoing battle with campus cultism (Bastian 2001; Obadare 2007). The reaction of adults to consider this "over-religiosity" is revealing, perhaps, of an African spectrum of religious thought, even if secularism does not exist on this spectrum. In 1936, colonial ethnologist Jack Driberg wondered if Europeans had "attributed to [the African] the virtue of a religious sensitivity greater than even he really has" (Driberg 1936). He explored ancestor-veneration in particular, noting the social and not the religious relevance of African conceptions of the soul, the self, sons, and shrines. While it may be dangerous to overgeneralize from his examples drawn from the Baganda, interpreted through a political reaction against oversimplifications of African "tradition," the point is that the social dynamics within religious organizations may tell us much more about the limits of political belonging than they do about a generic idea of an open civil society.

The point is that Africans have long appreciated autonomy and decentralization in religious life. This quality makes religion in Africa productive for civil engagement but a real force of exclusion and disengagement. Rather than think of religious membership as simply hierarchical, from lay members to religious authorities as brokers to political officials, a landscape map may be more useful in determining the distances and proximities to political power of various religious members. Religious authorities gain benefits in believing they have created microstates within political territories, and political authorities have a strong interest in allowing them to operate as microstates, if religious authorities do indeed seek to maintain social control. Thus, a stronger mutual interest may operate between religious and political authorities than between religious authorities and their followers. The fact that men typically control religious institutions also creates distinct gender dynamics that often make women less public actors, despite the fact that African women in public, typically elites, must have strong religious credentials. Class and rural-urban divide and then become crucial determinants of participation in religious civil society organizations.

Development Dollars and African Faith-Based Initiatives: Religious Elites Remade?

Despite the long history of African religious organizations' involvement in politics and the many interests represented in these religious collectives, recent initiatives in faith-based development imagine a much smaller "tent" than religions have formerly raised. The key relationships, as defined by foreigners, particularly American policy-makers and their sphere of influence in the World Bank, are donors and civil society organizations, and these organizations and their needy constituents (Clarke 2006). The organizations receiving aid in Africa tend to be mainstream Christian churches with which donor countries and multilateral organizations have long worked, despite the fact that faith-based initiatives have been promoted in Hindu and Islamic contexts in other world regions. The narrowness of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in Africa presents many problems. First, by ignoring the dynamic African religious spectrums, it confirms the negative portrayals of faith-based initiatives as rehashed colonial missionization (Stambach 2010). Second, through real and perceived avoidance of Islamic charities in Africa, western faith-based initiatives have been met with Arab-financed Islamic initiatives that appear to be stoking international competition in which Africa may be a playground for the more powerful, in ways reminiscent of the Cold War (Kaag 2008). It would be a mistake to use the violent religious confrontations in Africa to reject religion's potential positive role in development (Ter Haar and Ellis 2006, p. 352), but it would equally be a mistake to ignore the potential local problems that vast sums of money invested by foreign countries and organizations into a competitive religious environment could cause. This takes us to the third problem raised by faith-based initiatives—who is to monitor these institutions and how do African governments stand in relation to them? The lack of data about faith-based initiatives is widely acknowledged, and, since the late 1980s, political observers have warned about the explicitly political, not moral or religious, implications of massive investments in FBOs (Bratton 1989a, b).

Despite the dearth of data, it is clear that the faith-based initiative has fundamentally transformed development in Africa. Between 1990 and 1998, the total amount of funds managed by NGOs in Africa more than tripled from $ 1 to 3.5 billion (Hofer citing Chege 2003, p. 383). Around the same time, the USA channeled more than one-third of development aid through NGOs, and the World Bank's sponsorship of projects involving NGOs increased to over 40 % by 2001. While we can only speculate as to how much of this aid goes to religious NGOs, it is instructive that in 2002 alone, the US evangelical missionary projects had an income of $ 2 billion, equivalent to one-fifth of aid transferred by NGOs worldwide (Hofer 2003, p. 383). The former British Prime Minister Tony Blair met with the American National Association of Evangelicals in 2005, to secure support for the UK proposals at the G7 summit, signaling the recognition among American international allies and wealthy countries that religious NGOs must be courted (Clarke 2006, p. 837). The World Bank estimated in 2000 that half of all educational and health services in sub-Saharan Africa were provided by faith groups and FBOs (Clarke 2006, p. 837).

The label of FBOs in development is broad, encompassing historically older religious institutions, which are informal and can hardly be called NGOs, such as Islamic brotherhoods, and newer organizations that are founded specifically to promote an agenda that is in tune with contemporary definitions of development. While the FBO is only one kind of religious institution and thus may not be a useful point of analysis, it raises the larger point that religion and civil society are two concepts that are in themselves matters of significant debate within Euro-American political discourse but are used in Africa as "already-accepted" legitimate instruments such that they wield significant economic and social power. Historically, short-sighted faith-based initiatives may also not appreciate how politicized their projects may be within older tensions existing within African societies.

For instance, Stambach details the efforts of an American Christian project to teach English in East Africa. Literacy, as noted before, has created competition and exclusions in countries like Kenya since the colonial era and, in the postcolonial era, is very political given the efforts to promote indigenous languages as a measure of national integration. Tanzania, for example, has promoted Kiswahili as the national language since the *ujamaa* programs initiated by the first President Julius Nyerere in 1963. Yet, the powerful monetary incentives to allow American evangelicals to do development work in poor areas has forced the hand of the Tanzanian government to yield on longstanding domestic priorities and allow "private" English classes that compete with and undercut government schools because of their prestige, low cost, and globalization pressures that privilege English (Stambach 2010). Thus, the kind of homogenization of religious norms—both Islamic and Christian—occurring with mass media is further entrenched by some faith-based initiatives funded by international norms. What's more, this homogenization is penetrating the very rural areas that Ranger found to be disconnected from the national arena. It is not at all clear that rural communities were altogether disempowered due to their disconnection from urban African centers, but, now, as work and environmental crises brings more Africans into cities, rural Africa is disadvantaged. Religious development projects, while nobly trying to integrate these areas, are tying them more effectively into the projects that reduce African cultural diversity.

Unfortunately, the better standard of living offered by foreign faith-based Protestant NGOs seems to be fairly uniform in promoting the prosperity gospel as a mirror and goal of development discourse (Bornstein 2005). Most significantly, analyses of such projects suggest that balance of the benefits goes to the individual person or family—the English language student, for instance—while communal projects, such as bringing pipe-borne water, are not prioritized. This emphasis on the individual does not square with historical and contemporary African religious systems in which social order was key, sometimes in conflict with individual well-being (as in the case of witchcraft). This problem is not unique to religious NGOs or development projects, but the seemingly religious ways in which Africans interpret neoliberal development does appear to be distinct (Smith 2006). Increasing episodes of witchcraft and spirit possession of children, for example, are not unique to Christian parts of Kenya or Muslim Nigeria or Senegal (Weiss 2001; Mgbako 2011). Instead, there

appears to be a homogenization in the idea of prosperity as measured by private material wealth as well as a generalized mode of expressing illness, poverty, and despair of lack of development. Religious development discourses, in other words, threaten the diversity of Africans' modes of critiquing material excess and moral failings.

Putting aside the presumed American Christian domination of funds for religious nongovernmental actors, a fundamental problem appears to be the local monopolization of these religious civil society organizations by a particular set of African elites. Janet Museveni, the wife of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, belongs to a branch of the Assemblies of God Pentecostal Church of Canada and another church founded in Brazil, while commanding influence at the head of several evangelical Christian charitable organizations working in HIV-prevention and treatment (Hofer 2003, p. 386). She resembles many other first ladies of Africa, 18 of who launched a major HIV-prevention initiative at Davos, Switzerland in 2002. Part of the collective mission is to break down national and regional boundaries in Africa in the interest of fighting the epidemic, but cross-regional and private–public partnerships can promise better pay and social networking than government programs can. But, of course, the power behind such efforts comes in part from demonstrating to the global community the charitable impulse of African elites toward fighting "their own" problems.

The same kindness with which such efforts are viewed in the USA and Europe is not extended to Islamic nongovernmental organizations, which have undergone their own transformations since the economic crises of the 1980s and neoliberal development policies in the aftermath (Salih 2002). According to Salih's analysis, Islamic development organizations in Africa have for many decades operated according to basic religious principles relating to *zakat* (payment of alms, incumbent on all Muslim, for care of the poor) and the dispensation of alms by Muslim governments. Yet, Islamic nongovernmental organizations have added new dimensions to their work, notably the stamping out of non-Islamic influences, including Christian or indigenous African practices and beliefs, and the integration with the world Islamic community, *umma*, not solely as a religious unity but as a political position against the non-Muslim world. Such organizations, seeking increasingly to support theocratic type states as in Sudan Republic or the shari'a states of Northern Nigeria, are quite distinct from the older Sufi *turuq* and other organizations long present in Africa, which in the main have eschewed worldly politics. The problem with Islamic voluntarism, Salih argues, is the "selectivity" in levels of integration into and engagement with global and regional Islamic and secular socioreligious systems (Salih 2002, p. 13). His perceptive remark about this situational identification of donors and constituents by Islamic organizations appears to have salience for Christian cases as well, though very little comparative research has been done on Muslim and Christian development work in Africa.

Without diminishing the potential good work religious activism can realize, it is crucial to acknowledge the elite paternalism and patrimonialism that the religious NGO model fosters within African countries. One tendency that currently available research suggests is for leaders of faith-based development agendas to use homogenizing labels—beginning with faith-based but also including evangelical Christian,

Islamic, reformist, and transnational—that represent some value added to the existing meanings of religious labels. Religious organizations, even as they try to offer services to all, regardless of religious affiliation, do seek to proffer their own faith credentials—either to link historically with powerful churches or sects, to seek outside funding for particular sources, or attract a specific following. It is strange to think that religious labeling has not caused anxiety or fear in the international community about religious tensions. Moreover, why doesn't the international community, notably the World Bank, fear corruption in such efforts while it has tried for decades to bypass investing in corrupt secular African political regimes?

Part of the answer to this question lies in the altogether reductive ways in which religion in Africa has been taken to be a civilizing influence, at its best, or as a cultural survival of Africa's "traditions," at its most ahistorical and stereotypical. Another part of the answer lies in the implicit rejection of the idea of African secularism, by non-Africans, and by Africans who see secularism as a western invention. It is clear that self-avowedly secular African civil society organizations may incur the wrath of religious reformers or anti-Western activists. Yet evidence suggests clearly that religious organizations have received a greater boost both within and outside Africa than organizations based on class, occupational, generational, or even ethnic identification. While many African countries may have avoided the agglomeration of corporate ethnic identities such as those that proved so destructive in Rwanda, they may not escape the polarization of religious differences based on income disparities. Worse yet, the deep commitment of external donors to religious organizations as part of the solution will make them very wary of seeing faith-based initiatives as any kind of detriment to Africans, either to their historical religious diversity or to their historical attachment to grassroots religion as source of disengagement from worldly affairs.

Conclusion

A creative and important tension between religion and worldly political power has long existed in African societies. The endurance of this tension suggests that Africans have used religion to control and direct the flow of authority, toward the state or away from it, depending on the actors. Rather than conceive of religiously oriented collectivities as static organizations, what seems more salient to study is the material and moral norms that define authority and the processes by which those norms are transformed. Religious authority and state power can be said to be cocreated in some situations in Africa; therefore, it would be very useful to study these factors as interpenetrating one another.

In approaching these interrelated phenomena historically, the cases discussed in this chapter suggest that the process by which wealth has become a basis of divine benediction has also created a monopolization of power at the state level; Zimbabwe appears to be the best example. Ironically, reformism based on the rejection of materialism, often a characteristic of Islamic purifying movements, may actually

lead to the more rapid democratization of authority in the short run. In the long run, reformism appears to become an ever-present state of vigilance, an end in itself, rather than a means to a renewed society.

Material wealth as a religious aspiration appears also to disturb the balance between individual and communal well-being, which is central to most African societies. Therefore, faith-based initiatives that are loaded with material incentives to the individual do present some kind of danger. Such projects also threaten the credibility of nonstate religious actors because they are not removed from politics but tied to international organizations and nations that envision their efforts as part of neoliberal economic development. Such parties view development as material prosperity and are uninterested in or ignorant about the indigenous moral economies in which material excess, which are defined in local not international terms, is a social threat. In other words, faith-based development that does not consider the deeply political meanings of religious practices like sacrifice and charity that may undercut the means Africans have used for reform. At the same time, reformism must be understood as a the religious term for development. As faith-based development initiatives increase, these materially and externally oriented projects take the place of African believers in defining the spectrum of acceptable religious practice versus overzealousness. Outsourcing this authority to define religious "goods" from Africa to the World Bank or the USA would undercut, rather than promote, the potency of civil society.

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Chapter 4
Theorizing Media as/and Civil Society in Africa

Wendy Willems

Introduction

In early 2011, with events around the uprising in North Africa, what became known as the Arab Spring, new media such as mobile phones and social networks like Facebook and Twitter were attributed with a key role in having enabled the protests. The central role of media in the protests led to the coining of terms such as the "Facebook revolution" or the "Twitter unrest." However, these accounts, which appeared in media globally, were quickly met with accusations of technological determinism, with commentators pointing to the way in which ordinary people had taken to the streets to protest their governments such as the daily gatherings at Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt, hereby often risking their lives. The extensive interest in the role of new media in enabling protests probably explained more in itself than that it necessarily revealed. Mainstream media's interest in the role of new media in the protests should be seen as much as a fascination with the "newness" of new media and technology more broadly, and the curious interest of audiences in what they might be able to bring about. As some commentators argued, there is nothing intrinsically new about the role of media in protests.

Against this background, a key aim of this chapter is to historicize the symbiotic relation between media and civil society in Africa, hereby acknowledging the important role of media in giving voice to civil society, channeling the perspectives of social movements, and aiding occasionally in the organization of protests. While I also recognize the crucial part played by civil society in defending a variety of media freedoms, this will be beyond the scope of this current chapter. The key question that is examined here is how to theorize the way in which different forms of old and new, privately owned and state-owned media have promoted and/or constrained the growth of forms of civil society and activism in Africa. I interrogate this question

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by drawing from secondary literature on a number of case studies from the African continent. While the chapter does not aim at providing a continental overview, it will attempt to highlight some broad trends in the relationship between media and civil society. I argue that dominant approaches to media and civil society in Africa have deployed definitions of media and civil society that have masked more than they have revealed. Drawing on more detailed conceptual debates on the connection between media and civil society in the emerging field of "alternative media studies" will help us understand this relationship in more depth.

Conceptualizing the Relationship Between Media and Civil Society

Early studies investigated the way in which mainstream media framed protests, often by delegitimizing those protesting in favor of those in power, i.e., governments or capital. Gitlin's (1980) classic study examined US mainstream media coverage of those social movements opposing the Vietnam War. Instead of considering mass media as a crucial enabler of civil society, Gitlin (1980) emphasized the ideological way in which media castigated forms of protest and framed the antiwar movement as an illegitimate force. Apart from focusing on mainstream media framings of civil society, scholars have also showed interest in examining framings of protest outside the mainstream. These studies are part of an emerging a field that could be referred to as "alternative media studies." However, as Hadl (2007, p. 2) rightly points out, this subfield currently is far from constituting a coherent and "disciplined" terrain:

> However, its [alternative media studies'] key terminologies and theories are still unformed. A variety of approaches, only vaguely aware of each other's histories (and even their own), are currently competing and merging into a post-modern pasticcio that obscures important differences of power and ideology. This lack of clarity on ideological position, historical context and definition of objects hinders the progress of the field.

As Hadl intimates above, a wide range of terms have been invoked in order to refer to those forms of media distancing themselves from the mainstream, including "community media" (Howley 2005), "grassroots media," "autonomous media" (Langlois and Dubois 2005), "citizen journalism" (Allen and Thorsen 2009), "alternative media" (Atton 2005; Couldry and Curran 2003; Bailey et al. 2008), "tactical media," "citizens' media" (Rodríguez 2001), "small media" (Sreberny and Mohammadi 1994), "radical media" (Downing 2001), "underground media," "pirate media," "social movement media" (Downing 2008, 2011), and "civil society media" (Carpentier et al. 2003). While all these terms have different analytical implications—which due to space limitations cannot be elaborated on in this chapter—what they share is a common suspicion of corporate or state-controlled media, a commitment to media which serves the interests of citizens (and particularly those on the margins), and a belief in alternative funding structures of media. For example, for Atton (2005, p. 4), alternative media "are crucially about offering the means for democratic communication to people who

are normally excluded from media production" whereas for Hamilton (2000, p. 373), the value of these media lies "in their exploration of new forms of organizing more participatory techniques of media and more inclusive, democratic forms of communication."

Furthermore, what most of the authors above tend to stress is the intimate entanglement between media forms and civil society. While Gitlin (1980) highlighted the manner in which mainstream US media constrained the operations of the anti-war movement, studies in the subfield of "alternative media studies" tend to provide a more upbeat account of the supportive role of media to various sections of civil society. For some, this almost leads to a disappearance of the analytical distinction between media and civil society. For instance, Downing's (2008, 2011) term "social movement media" suggests a blurring between social movements and media institutions where civil society organizations engage in content production and *become* media producers, and vice versa, where media institutions because of their opposition to both state-run and corporate media *become* part of civil society. While not invoking the term "civil society media" explicitly, Carpentier et al. (2003, pp. 57, 58) argue that "[t]he explicit positioning of community media as independent from state and market supports the articulation of community media as part of civil society." Others have, however, argued that considering alternative media as part of civil society has led scholars to neglect the manner in which these media institutions frequently form links with both the state and the market for tactical reasons. Hence, they do not completely operate in the realm of civil society, i.e., the domain outside market and state. Inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) metaphor of the "rhizome," this approach sheds light on how alternative media forge "horizontal" alliances with a range of like-minded organizations in order to challenge "vertical" relations of power vis-à-vis a range of hegemonic institutions such as the church, the state, or "the market" (Carpentier et al. 2003, p. 61).

The metaphor of the "rhizome" is not only useful in order to gain a better understanding of the pragmatic alliances between alternative media, state, and market but also serves us particularly well in the age of new media which, according to Castells (1996), has seen the rise of the network society, and also saw a new body of media research focusing on the relationship between new media and civil society. In this regard, scholars pointed to the important role of the internet in making possible collective action by citizens, also known as "cyberactivism" (Hill and Hughes 1998; McCaughey et al. 2003). In similar vein, mobile phones have been credited with enabling seemingly spontaneous "smart mobs" (Rheingold 2002) as well as popular uprisings against the Philippine President Joseph Estrada in January 2001 (Paragas 2003; Rafael 2003; Pertierra 2006; Linchuan Qiu 2008), mass demonstrations in the aftermath of the 2004 Madrid bombings in Spain (Castells et al 2006), and mobilization in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami (Robinson and Robison 2006). The success of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, a revolutionary leftist group based in Southern Mexico, in running networked campaigns via the internet has often been cited as exemplary of the way in which the internet gave way to new forms of online activism.

A central focus of this body of literature was on the way in which the internet or mobile phones enabled innovative—often transnational—forms of organizing and made possible mobilizing in contexts where it was deemed difficult for activists to organize themselves offline, hereby arguably leading to new forms of "networked politics" (Kahler 2009). More recently, of course, the empowering potential of social media has been highlighted such as the part Twitter played in postelection protests in Iran in June 2009 (Sreberny and Khiabany 2010; Khiabany 2012) and even more famously, the role of Facebook in enabling the so-called "Arab Spring" in North Africa and the Middle East in early 2011 (Hounshell 2011; Axford 2011; Khondker 2011; Nanabhay and Farmanfarmaian 2011; Cottle 2011; Khiabany 2012).

Conceptualizing Civil Society in Africa

While scholars studying alternative media have warned of the dangers of deploying rigid, prescriptive terminology to make sense of media operating outside the mainstream, African(ist) scholars have noted a similar trend in relation to the use of the term "civil society" in the context of the continent. It is worth briefly revisiting this debate here.

In the African context, the concept of civil society gained popularity in the early 1990s in the wake of the so-called "third wave of democratization" which comprised a gradual disappearance of autocratic one-party and military governments and the introduction of multiparty regimes in Eastern Europe and parts of Africa. The rising popularity of the concept of "civil society" in both policy and academic accounts on Africa should be understood against the background of the end of the Cold War and the declining legitimacy of communism as ideology (Abrahamsen 2000). While previously a strong state was considered to be crucial for economic growth, the Washington consensus that emerged in the 1980s prescribed a reduction of the state and an increasing role for civil society. Civil society then primarily emerged as policy prescription in order to improve the performance of African states (Lewis 2001). While the state was perceived as bad, civil society was considered to be inherently good. The concept of civil society features prominently in the discourse on "good governance" which has been a major policy priority of Western donors.

In the post-Cold War context, civil society was thus seen as both a counterweight to a "bad state" and a replacement for a "reduced state." For example, Harbeson et al. (1994, pp. 1, 2, quoted in Lewis 2001, p. 5) argued that "civil society is a hitherto missing key to sustained political reform, legitimate states and governments, improved governance, viable state–society and state–economy relationships, and prevention of the kind of political decay that undermined new African governments a generation ago." The emphasis here is on "missing key" which suggests that Africa does not have a "civil society," and that it therefore needs to be "established." In this context, civil society in Africa then largely became equated with the activities of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which frequently received aid from overseas donors and either carried out activities of an advocacy and campaigning nature, but

more often than not focused their work on delivery of services, including health care, education, and social welfare—all crucial services normally expected to be offered within the realm of the state.

The recurrent deployment of civil society as policy prescription for Africa in the 1990s in both policy and academic discourse provoked a critical response from scholars in African Studies (Mamdani 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Maina 1998; Obadare 2004, 2011). They argued that the prescription that Africa should "build" its civil society assumed that Africa did not have a "civil society." The dominant normative discourse profoundly masked the historical legacy of civil society organizations on the continent and also excluded African organizations which did not neatly fit with assumptions made about civil society because these organizations were not defined in opposition to the state but organized along the lines of kinship, ethnicity, or local "tradition." Mahmood Mamdani has criticized the practice of carrying out "history by analogy," i.e., to assume that "civil society exists as a fully formed construct in Africa as in Europe, and that the driving force of democratization everywhere is the contention between civil society and the state" (1996, p. 13). Mamdani is concerned about the way in which the concept of civil society has been deployed as normative concept, i.e., where it is expected to operate as a counterforce to the state. Instead of using civil society as a programmatic and prescriptive tool, Mamdani proposes to deploy the concept as an analytical and historical tool. In this regard, he has advocated for "an analysis of actually existing civil society so as to understand it in its actual formation, rather than as a promised agenda for change" (1996, p. 19). Mamdani does not consider the emergence of civil society in Africa as a recent phenomenon that took off in the 1990s but treats anticolonial liberation movements as perfect examples of African civil society organizations (which later often established themselves as postindependent African governments).

In their edited volume *Civil society and the political imagination*, anthropologists Comaroff and Comaroff (1999) also deem it necessary to move away from the Eurocentric tendency to limit civil society to a narrowly defined institutional arena. They advocate for the acknowledgment of African forms of association, often perceived as "uncool," "partisan," "parochial," or "fundamentalist" in donor policy discourses. Instead of asking what the idea of civil society can tell us about contemporary Africa, they propose to ask what a specific set of African cases can "tell us about the planetary appeal of the Idea of civil society" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999, p. 3). Given the historical roots of the concept of civil society in European eighteenth century thinking, the Comaroffs ask: what were the circumstances under which the idea of civil society gained prominence in the European context, and what could civil society mean in the African context? Like Mamdani, they propose to look at "actually existing civil society" instead of transposing a prescriptive concept of civil society onto the continent. While civil society as policy prescription merely seeks to highlight the absence of civil society in Africa in order to justify intervention from Western donors who have a vested interest in a weakened state and a stronger civil society dependent on donor funds, the deployment of the concept of civil society as

explanatory concept assists in revealing a complex, vibrant, diverse, and historicized picture of associational life on the African continent (see also Willems 2012a).

Dominant Approaches to Media and Civil Society in Africa

Within the context of hegemonic understandings of civil society in Africa, largely comprising of donor-funded NGOs, accounts on the relationship between civil society and media have been twofold. First of all, scholars have focused on the strategic use of media by NGOs, hereby often focusing on the deployment of internet and mobile phones (Mercer 2004; Mudhai 2004, 2006, 2012). This approach tends to be based on "the assumption that new media enhance the efficiency of civic actors in carrying out their routine functions that may or may not result in their exercise of 'soft power'" (Mudhai 2012, p. 7). It advances a depoliticized, technocratic/technodeterminist perspective which implies that media can help make the work of African NGOs more effective and aid them in achieving a bigger impact in their advocacy work. While for some, this discourse is part of a broader "ICT (Information Communication Technologies) fetishism" among Western donors interested in "engineering an elite civil society" in Africa (Mercer 2004, p. 49), the assumption made is still that civil society largely is equal to the activities of NGOs.

This instrumentalist approach that considers the supportive role of media in NGO practices is part of a broader professional discourse within the Western donor community that often measures organizational impact through media coverage and visibility. Donor-funded projects often include budget lines for sponsored radio or television programs in which NGO representatives appear to discuss key areas of their work, or newspapers carry themed inserts or awareness-raising adverts. For many media institutions on the African continent, this type of NGO advertising has in fact become a lucrative source of income. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation procedures of donor-funded projects will often require NGOs to record occurrences in which they were quoted in media in their narrative reports to donors. The powerful role attributed to media fits within a wider trend in which NGOs "increasingly utilize public relations techniques and rely heavily on corporate communication consultancies to assist them in reaching the hearts and minds of key publics and policy-makers" (Greenberg et al. 2011, p. 73). What this trend assumes is that media in Africa have the same, powerful outreach as they have in parts of Europe and the USA, and that audiences can easily be influenced through media coverage (which has long been disproven in the field of media studies through numerous critiques of the simplistic media effects tradition, see Gauntlett 1998 among others). Closely tied to this trend is academic research—often commissioned by donors and therefore firmly "embedded" within the development industry—that seeks to assess the impact of NGO's media strategies.

The second dominant approach in examining the relationship between media and civil society in Africa has been scholarship that has treats media as part of civil society, often with the aim to gain a better understanding of media's contribution to a healthy civil society and its role in the broader process of democratization (Agbaje

1993; Sachikonye 1995; Rønning 1995, 2003; Camara 2008; Okigbo 2000; Arthur 2010). In this body of literature, civil society tends to be defined in a broad manner as referring to the realm outside the state and the market. For example, Rønning (1995, p. 349) has argued that in the context of Africa, "[t]he media constitutes one of the central institutions of civil society, as an area of contradictions and political struggle in a wide sense of the word. They are essential to the democratic process by being the arena where government is being held accountable to society." As discussed above, the notion of civil society became widely adopted in relation to the African continent in the post-Cold War period during which it largely came to function as a policy prescription. A healthy civil society that could hold the state to account was considered to be a crucial part of a well-functioning liberal democracy. The civil society policy agenda did not only refer to the need to "build" NGOs but also to the importance of creating "independent media." State ownership of print and broadcasting media was considered to hamper a healthy civil society. As Sachikonye (1995, p. 2) pointed out in the mid-1990s: "The most important institutions of civil society seem to be the universities and the church, whereas the role of media is less important than one might have expected, because of widespread state control and state ownership." Liberalization of Africa's media landscape and privatization of state media monopolies was considered to be crucial in enabling media to function as watchdogs rather than lapdogs. Privately owned media were thus attributed with a key role in the democratization process. However, private ownership on its own was not sufficient; private media institutions were also expected to conduct themselves in a "professional" manner. For example, commenting on the role of private newspapers in Cameroon, Nyamnjoh et al. (1996, p. 55) have argued that "the lack of adequate professional organization, unity and solidarity among journalists" has been "responsible for the failure by the media to play a significant and positive role in the democratization process and in the promotion of civil society."

Toward An Alternative Research Agenda on Media and Civil Society in Africa

The two dominant approaches to media and civil society discussed above suffer from a number of limitations. First of all, these studies have adopted the framework of liberal democracy as normative ideal against which they measure the performance of African nation-states (Willems 2012b). Media, in these approaches, are equated with privately owned, professionally operating media institutions and civil society tends to refer to donor-funded NGOs—both of which are seen as adopting an adversarial position to the state. In this manner, this body of work fails to take into account the crucial role of other forms of media(tion) outside mainstream media (Willems 2011a), and other—whether formal or informal, organized or unorganized—expressions of civic agency than those channeled through NGOs. Due to the equation of civil society to donor-funded NGOs, these approaches have also been largely ahistorical, focusing

the bulk of their attention on postcolonial relations between media and civil society at the expense of examining colonial antecedents.

In addition, the second approach, in particular, has failed to make a clear analytical distinction between media and civil society. Typically, analyses within this strand of research have summed up the relative contribution of different actors including the church, media institutions, and NGOs (often discussed in separate sections of journal articles or chapters of books) to a healthy civil society and the process of democratization. Adopting a bird eye perspective, these analyses tend to provide very little insight in the relationship *between* media and civil society (organizations). While a comparative macroanalysis of the different elements of civil society may be useful, it does not offer us a detailed understanding of how media institutions impinge on civil society, and vice versa. As the section above indicated, outside the field of African Studies, a significant body of work exists as part of the growing subfield of "alternative media studies" that offers a much more in-depth and comprehensive picture of the way in which media and civil society interrelate. In an attempt to offer an alternative canon, the following sections will review a number of existing studies that normally do not tend to be discussed when examining literature on media and civil society in Africa. However, as I hope to demonstrate, these studies offer huge potential for an alternative research agenda which is more grounded in empirical African social contexts as compared to the "elite civil society" that Western donor have attempted to engineer in Africa (cf. Mercer 2004).

Broadening Our Definition of Media

As argued above, dominant approaches to media and civil society in Africa have largely focused on the role of privately owned, professionally run media institutions in holding the state to account, hereby operating as a "fourth estate." This has precluded us from understanding the role of alternative forms of mediating civil society. This is even more important in contexts where there are constraints to press freedom, and where formal media institutions struggle to operate. In such contexts, we see that other forms of expression become crucial in channeling critical perspectives to citizens. For example, Mano (2007, p. 61) has pointed to the importance of popular music in the context of Zimbabwe in the 2000s, where the state had imposed a number of restrictions on the operations of private media:

> [P]opular music can act as a variety of journalism at certain historic moments and in specific contexts. Where mass media are weak and opposition political parties are frail, music can serve as the voice of the voiceless by offering subtle avenues of expression. Popular music can perform the journalistic function of communicating daily issues in ways that challenge the powerful and give a voice to the disadvantaged. Popular music competes and rivals mainstream journalism in the ways it addresses political, social and economic realities in repressive contexts.

Through the use of metaphors in ambiguously phrased song lyrics, Zimbabwean musicians were able to critique the state in subtle ways. Music has not only been

an importance source of social commentary in postcolonial Africa but of course also played a crucial role in resisting colonial regimes such as in colonial Mozambique (Vail and White 1978, 1983), and apartheid South Africa (Drewett 2003, 2004; Drewett and Clegg 2006; Gilbert 2007; Olwage 2008). Other scholars have pointed to the sharing of information not via mass media but through public spaces, referred to by Ellis (1989, p. 321) as "radio trottoir" ("pavement radio" in English), defined as "the popular and unofficial discussion of current affairs in Africa" (1989, p. 321). Related to verbal, interpersonal forms of communication are the part played by popular rumor, humor, and jokes in challenging those in power in postcolonial Cameroon, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe (Mbembe 2001; Obadare 2009, 2010; Willems 2008, 2010, 2011b, c). Finally, a number of scholars have highlighted the role of what has been referred to as "guerilla journalism" in the context of Nigeria under military rule, particularly in the period between 1993 and 1998 when the country was subject to General Sani Abacha's regime (Olukotun 2002a, b, 2004; Dare 2007; Adebanwi 2008, 2011). As Olukotun (2004, p. 78) has pointed out, underground publications such as *Tempo* and *NEWS* magazine and pirate radio stations like *Radio Kudirat* constituted

> [. . .] an alternative media and a counter-hegemonic forum that allowed civil society a space in which to express itself in the face of authoritarian closure. The popularity of the illicit publications and radio and the active support given by civil society to journalists on the run, in the shape of shelter as well as direct funding, suggest that the underground media were one way in which civil society countervailed and curbed a repressive, authoritarian state.

Far from the type of "fourth estate" journalism carried out by privately funded, professionally run media houses described above, "guerilla journalism" involved "a hit-and-run style in which journalists operating from hideouts continued to publish opposition and critical journals in defiance of the state" (Olukotun 2004, p. 78). This approach, in many ways, was also adopted by the "resistance press," "alternative press," or "progressive press" in apartheid South Africa which included newspapers such as *South*, *Weekly Mail*, and *New African*, and grassroots publications such as *Grassroots* and *Saamstaan* that sought to counter the Apartheid state of the 1980s (Tomaselli and Louw 1991; Switzer 1997; Switzer and Adhikari 2000). Hence, adopting a broader definition of media enables us to consider other crucial genres and forms of communication which have greatly aided in mediating the concerns of civil society.

Widening Our Definition of Civil Society

Dominant approaches to media and civil society in Africa have not only primarily examined the role of privately owned, professionally run media institutions in countering the state but have also tended to concentrate their attention on professionalized, urban-based NGOs, frequently in receipt of donor funds and often staffed by university-educated professionals. In this perspective, NGOs have often been considered to be inherently "good" and "civil" while other forms of association not fitting

the characteristics of NGOs have been perceived as "uncool," "partisan," "parochial," or "fundamentalist," as Comaroff and Comaroff (1999, p. 3) have highlighted. The equation of civil society with NGOs forms part of the broader project of liberal democracy, and has tended to neglect more radical, grassroots organizations which have emerged more organically from African social contexts.

The term "new social movements" came into vogue in the mid-1960s in Europe, and referred to often grassroots, issue-based organizations which did not necessarily emerge from a common class position (as trade unions, for example, did) to oppose class domination, but instead fought other forms of oppression, and defined themselves as "urban, ecological, antiauthoritarian, anti-institutional, feminist, antiracist, ethnic, regional, or sexual minorities" (Laclau and Mouffe 1985, p. 159). Social movements have been associated with the project of "radical and plural democracy" which is understood "as a new stage in the deepening of the 'democratic revolution,' as the extension of the democratic struggles for equality and liberty to a wider range of social relations" (Laclau and Mouffe 1985, p. xv).

Whereas a handful of scholars has made attempts to apply social movement theory to other African contexts (Mamdani and Wamba-dia-Wamba 1995; Prempeh 2006; Press 2008; Ellis and van Kessel 2009), the bulk of literature on social movements in Africa has concentrated on South Africa, and focused on grassroots—often concerned residents'—associations such as the Treatment Action Campaign, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, the Anti-Privatisation Forum, Abahlali baseMjondolo, the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign, and the Landless People's Movement (Desai 2002; Ballard et al. 2005, 2006; Gibson 2006). However, given social movement theory's origins in the context of Europe in the sixties, scholars have argued that this approach cannot simply be transplanted to the African context.

As Ballard et al. (2005, p. 632) have argued, South African social movements

> [d]o not neatly fit into any of the three broad categories of movements offered in the literature: the so-called 'old' movements which directly challenged the state, seeking reform or revolution, the notion of 'new' movements based on identity-oriented concerns whose target was less the state itself but rather society and social change more broadly, or the 'new-new' global movements which together challenge a single understanding of, and pathway for, globalization. South Africa's new movements introduce elements of each of these three heuristic models.

Others have warned that "the Left needs to be careful not to over-romanticize their [social movements'] contribution to a more democratic South Africa" (Sinwell 2010, p. 37), and have argued that the label of "social movement" has potentially functioned to label certain organizations as legitimate, while in fact little exists beyond the brand.[1]

Regardless of these concerns, the concept of social movement enables us to examine a wider range of organizations beyond "civil", donor-funded NGOs which often

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[1] See also Walsh' (2008: 255) article which seeks to deconstruct "the problematic way the 'Poor' are represented by the [South African] intellectual 'Left' as a fixed, virtuous subject". The article is followed by responses from Bond, Desai and Walsh.

are more connected to transnational networks than rooted in local contexts. It is encouraging that an increasing number of scholars has indeed begun to investigate how social movements have been framed in mainstream media (Barnett 2003; Jacobs and Johnson 2007; Kariithi and Kareithi 2007) and how they have deployed new media to mobilize their constituency, to voice their concerns or to influence mainstream media coverage (Wasserman 2005a, b, 2007; Willems 2011d; Chiumbu 2012; Dawson 2012). While many previous studies on the contribution of media and civil society to Africa's process of democratization failed to examine the relation between the two in a detailed, in-depth manner, this body of work has started to unpack this relationship, hereby often drawing on critical research in the subfield of "alternative media studies." However, most of these studies draw on the South African context, and there is still a need for further investigations in other African countries.

Historicizing Relations Between Media and Civil Society

Adopting a wider definition of civil society also enables us to gain an understanding of the relationship between media and civil society during the colonial era in Africa. As highlighted earlier, Mamdani (1996, p. 19) has advocated for "an analysis of actually existing civil society so as to understand it in its actual formation, rather than as a promised agenda for change." This means civil society in Africa does not strictly refer to new forms of association emerging in the post-Cold War era but includes a much wider range of organizations that were instrumental in countering colonial rule on the continent, including liberation movements, trade unions, and religious organizations. In a historicized approach, civil society does not magically arise in the 1990s, primarily as a result of Western donor interventions, but instead has a much longer history on the continent.

For example, liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC), the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) used highly creative methods in order to communicate with their constituencies, including songs (Pongweni 1982) and shortwave radio (Mosia et al. 1994; Davis 2009; Lekgoathi 2010). While the ANC broadcast via *Radio Freedom* from a range of African countries, ZANU's *Voice of Zimbabwe* and ZAPU's *Voice of the Revolution* illegally broadcast their programs on the shortwave in colonial Rhodesia (which was renamed to Zimbabwe after achieving independence in 1980). Programs were mostly beamed from radio stations based in African countries that had already obtained independence. For example, ZANU and ZAPU were given space on radio stations such as Egypt's *Radio Cairo* (from 1958), *Radio Tanzania* (from 1963), *Ghana Broadcasting Corporation* (from early 1960s), *Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation* (from 1967), *Radio Moscow* (primarily ZAPU from 1968), and later *Radio Mozambique* (primarily ZANU from 1975; Mosia et al. 1994, p. 12).

A historical approach is also crucial as it allows us to draw comparisons between and parallels in colonial and postcolonial media-civil society relations. For example, we see that because of the relative accessibility of radio in rural areas, both the colonial and postcolonial government in Zimbabwe retained firm control over the

airwaves by maintaining a state monopoly on broadcasting. However, both during the liberation war and in the context of the Zimbabwe crisis of the 2000s, shortwave radio stations emerged which sought to contest the broadcasting monopolies of the *Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation* and the *Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation.* While ZANU's *Voice of Zimbabwe* and ZAPU's *Voice of the Revolution* broadcast their alternative view of the liberation struggle to audiences in Rhodesia, a range of "pirate" or "clandestine" radio stations emerged in the 2000s which sought to offer their perspective on the Zimbabwe crisis via shortwave, including *SW Radio Africa*, *Voice of the People*, *Radio Dialogue*, and *Studio 7* (a program on the *Voice of America*) (see Moyo 2007, 2010; Batist 2010; Mhiriphiri 2011; Moyo 2012; Mabweazara 2012; Mare 2013). Hence, a historical approach helps us to contextualize the colonial roots of media-civil society relations in the postcolonial period.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have proposed an alternative research agenda on media and civil society in Africa that goes beyond the restrictive understanding of media (as formal, professionalized forms of mass media) and civil society (as NGOs) common in much of the current literature. By understanding media in a broader sense, we are able to shed light on the range of genres and media forms that have helped to mediate the concerns of African civil society, including popular music, humor, and guerilla journalism. Furthermore, adopting a historical and less prescriptive definition of civil society has enabled us to gain insight into the broader spectrum of civic agency on the continent, and the role played by both old and new media in either constraining or promoting these expressions in both colonial and postcolonial Africa.

While the emerging subfield of "alternative media studies" has offered a range of conceptual approaches toward investigating the relationship between media and civil society, the bulk of literature on African media and civil society has been hampered by a lack of theorization. Most accounts have failed to analyze this relationship in depth, and instead have largely understood media as one component of a larger civil society comprising of a range of actors including the church and NGOs. However, in the South African context, an emerging body of research offers a more detailed investigation of how mainstream media have framed social movement protests, and how social movements have sought to influence mainstream media coverage on the one hand, and how they have made attempts to create their own content through websites and social media pages, on the other hand. It is hoped that this body of work will further inspire empirical studies on the mutually constitutive relationship between media and civil society in other parts of the African continent.

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Chapter 5
"Good" State, "Bad" State: Loss and Longing in Postcolonial Zimbabwe

Julia Gallagher

> We need a social contract and then things can be clearer.[1]

This statement was made by a Zimbabwean woman during a discussion with colleagues about recent political developments in Zimbabwe. Much of the discussion had focused on what people in Zimbabwe felt about the state—its failings and what they wanted it to be—but in this comment the woman was referring to the relationship between Zimbabweans and Britain. It might appear that she was giving up on the Zimbabwean state altogether, arguing for a new working relationship with Britain. However, this was not the case. Instead, she was reflecting the fact that, for Zimbabweans, the global and the state are intimately connected, and Zimbabwean subjectivity is shaped and conditioned by its connections with Britain and the wider world.

This issue relates to the two key problematics explored in this chapter. The first is the continuing belief many Zimbabweans have in the state, despite its failures and the problems they have had with it in recent years, and the importance of getting their relationship with it on the right footing. The second is the fact that their idea of the state is deeply and inextricably connected to the wider world, and to Britain in particular.

Taking up this reference to the social contract, and to its embeddedness in discussions of the "good state," I trace the ways Zimbabwean conceptualizations of the state sit within the work of two canonical formulations of the state. Jean Jacques Rousseau's "social contract" establishes an ideal way to organize the relationship between the state and society, in which the state is subject to the general will of the people; and Georg Friedrich Hegel's "good state" posits its role as the ethical embodiment of the people (Rousseau 1997; Hegel 1991). Both suggest that only through a relationship with a "good state" can ethical freedom for citizens be fully realized. For Rousseau, the ideal state, embodied in the social contract, is for the

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[1] Comment made during a group interview with informal workers, Harare, 6 September 2011.

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future, contrasted against the already existing state, which enchains the individual, in which, "he has lost his self" (Perkins 1974, p. 327). Hegel's "good state" too, is contrasted against the actual, flawed state which "exists in the world, and hence in the sphere of arbitrariness, contingency and error, and bad behavior may disfigure it in many respects" (Hegel 1991, p. 279). However, the essence of the "good state" remains as an ideal buried in the heart of it: "The ugliest man, the criminal, the invalid, or the cripple is still a living human being; the affirmative aspect—life—survives in spite of such deficiencies" (Hegel 1991). For both, the aspiration to the ideal state is a fundamental basis for human subjectivity and ethical freedom.

European political philosophy may have limited power of explanation when it comes to African state–society relations, but, I will argue, these particular ideas do inform the underlying assumptions of many Zimbabweans about how the state should work. Most crucially, the ideal state and ideal state–society relationship remain powerful ideas that make it possible to continue to keep faith with the idea of the state even when the reality is far from ideal. This is the case in Zimbabwe where, despite several years of living with a far from ideal state, many Zimbabweans continue to imagine and wish for a good state. They are not withdrawing from the idea of the state, or looking for alternatives to it. They simply want a state that works better. This provides two challenges to much of the literature on attitudes towards the state in Africa. The first is a need to complicate an assumption that state inadequacy has led many Africans to withdraw from it; and the second is to question the assumption that Africans have become increasingly critical of western capitalism and powers. What I have found, and outline here, is how many ordinary Zimbabweans have not withdrawn their belief in the possibility or potential of the state, and that for many, this good state is imagined in western form.

Thinking about Rousseau and Hegel's conceptualizations alongside what Zimbabweans make of their state demands two important qualifications. The first is that, rather than the "social contract" or "good state" appearing to emanate from the particularity of a person, their distinctiveness from the rest of the world, it is in fact shaped also by the absorption of ideas from elsewhere: Zimbabwean subjectivity involves an acknowledged introjection of foreignness. The second is that the idealized good state can be dreamed of or expressed in a concrete form as a particular other place, a place that is both different from and contained within local experience. If Rousseau and Hegel's ideas centered on a utopian state, for many Zimbabweans utopia has a form, Britain, the former colonial power, a place that most Zimbabweans have never visited, but know of through its peculiar manifestation in the colonial state, and through media representations and hearsay from friends and relations who have moved there.

In this chapter, I discuss the ways in which Zimbabweans experience their state—the "bad state"—and the ways in which they imagine an ideal, "good state." I do this by relating some of the stories of the state that were told to me by Zimbabweans during fieldwork I conducted in 2011 and 2012.[2] In a series of individual and group

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[2] Interviews were conducted in Harare and Bulawayo (the country's first and second cities) and in Chitungwiza and Old Pumula (two large high density settlements within 30 km of each) with more

interviews, I asked Zimbabwean citizens to tell me their stories. Two types of story emerged, each relating the life of the individual to the life of the country and the state. In the first category were the stories of "now." These detailed the ways in which an absent or an aggressive state undermines well-being and limits self-realization. In the second category were stories of a partially remembered or projected ideal state. These were invariably linked either to memories of the colonial or Ian Smith eras,[3] or to what life was imagined to be like in the UK.

I want to argue that the connections made between the "good" or "bad" state and the ethical potential of citizens within it echo Hegel and Rousseau's conceptualizations of an ideal political life. I argue that this Zimbabwean approach demonstrates a firm commitment to the idea of the state, and even more, that this idea is explicitly located in an idealization of the European state. In the first section, I discuss existing work on African attitudes to the state and their historical origins. In the second and third sections, I detail Zimbabwean stories of the actual "bad" state, and the idealized "good" state respectively. I assess the characteristics of the good state and where Zimbabweans imagine it is found. In the final part of the chapter, I explore the implications of this work for ideas about state–society relations more generally.

A Complex Relation to the State

It is perhaps not an anomaly that the foundational idealizations of the good state and social contract discussed in this chapter come from Europe: for the majority of Africans, so does the state itself. State–society relations are, and always have been, underwritten by people's conceptions of the foreign and the global.

Much of the literature on African politics since independence has quite reasonably been preoccupied by questions about the state, and in particular its "fit" in African contexts: what it looks like, how effective it is, what authority it has, and from where it is derived. Preoccupations with the formal institutions of the state as flimsy—whether bifurcated, weak, or quasi—have particularly shaped this literature, as have discussions on alternative forms of statehood—shadow, rhizome, or neopatrimonial—that might make more sense in African contexts (Zolberg 1968; Migdal 1988; Jackson 1990; Reno 1999; Bayart 2009; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Engelbert 2009). Much has also been written about African state elites' tendencies

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than 100 civil society and political activists and residents in each of the four areas. Interviewees were selected using a snowballing method, beginning with an initial contact through whom new contacts were made. Interviews were conducted in English, Shona, and Ndebele with translators where necessary. Most interviewees live primarily in urban areas where engagement with the state has been particularly acute in recent years and where opposition to Robert Mugabe's government has been more organized and vociferous. For practical reasons, I have not been able to conduct research in rural parts of Zimbabwe. No names have been used in the chapter in order to protect the identity of interviewees.

[3] Ian Smith declared independence from Britain in 1965 and led Rhodesia's white minority government until independence in 1980.

towards violence and self-enrichment—in the prebendal or vampire states of Richard Joseph (1987) or Achille Mbembe (2001).

The Zimbabwean state might be well understood through several of these approaches. Its increasing incapacity to exert positive sovereignty was seen, for example, in the erosion in education and healthcare services over the 1990s, its dramatic economic decline, particularly from the late 1990s, and the withering of its formal institutions. Alongside this, is its increasing tendency to turn on its own people, described in careful detail by Lloyd Sachikonye (2011), seen from the Gukurahundi campaign against Ndebele dissidents in the 1980s to the leveling of "illegal" urban dwellings in Operation Murambatsvina in 2005, the orchestrated intimidation of opposition activists and voters during recent elections, and suggested in internally directed displays of coercive power from the frequent deployment of military helicopters flown low over Harare to the massive Chinese-built military training barracks beside the Mazowe Road outside the capital. Here, we have evidence of a state that is both inadequate in terms of providing for the population and increasingly inclined to express its relationship with them through coercion and repression.

Some of the literature assumes that the resulting opposition to or rejection of states like Zimbabwe equates to a rejection of the state per se. In these accounts, the state, being either vacuous and empty, or brutish and aggressive, is increasingly abandoned in pursuit of more meaningful political and social groupings. In such accounts, states offer far less, materially, emotionally, or morally to African citizens, than alternative forms of community: they have a weak hold over ethical life.

According to Patrick Chabal, these alternatives are found both by reaching inwards to "translocal" groups and relationships, and outwards, to global or spiritual communities. "In cases where institutions have ceased functioning altogether, citizenship becomes virtual" while people's new preoccupations and bases of identity not only replace the state but further disrupt "received notions of identity, reciprocity and even nationality" (Chabal 2009, pp. 101–102).

Chabal's suggestion that challenges to the state's place as underwriter of individual well-being (both moral and material) can come from the local and the global is traced in two strands of the literature. The rivalry between the local and the state is found particularly persuasively in Peter Ekeh's seminal article, "Colonialism and the two publics in Africa" (1975). Here, the civic public, or state, a colonial legacy, is depicted as disengaged and alienated from the individual. It is within the primordial public, which draws on precolonial notions of morality and communal duty, that the individual achieves an ethical life through his or her relationships. Ekeh argues that the lack of connection between the civic public and the individual's ethical life means that it can be looted with impunity, while only in the primordial public is ethical behavior necessary. The state—regarded in purely instrumental terms—elicits no affection or sense of responsibility from citizens, who reserve all their sense of duty for their local communities.

Other work explores the way in which the regional or global provide challenges to the state in Africa. Peter Vale, for example, stresses the weak political roots of states in Africa, arguing that European conceptions of statehood and belonging made an uncomfortable transition to the African continent, producing "alien routines" that

from the beginning failed to represent more natural conceptions of community (Vale 2003 p. 181). An alternative, more resonant account is represented, he suggests, in the writing of the South African author Bessie Head who, in her restless crossing and recrossing of the region's borders, and her ability to establish relationships and a sense of home within its different boundaried states, "mapped an entirely different southern African community than the maps hanging in schoolrooms, conference centers, and cabinet rooms. Her communities are not enclosed by the power represented by borders; they challenge borders in order to sustain and build community" (Vale 2003 p. 157). Continuing this theme of supranational identity, Charles Piot writes about the way in which Togolese citizens increasingly identify themselves with forms of the global—either through membership of Pentecostal Churches with their connections to the international and spiritual realms, or through a continuous struggle to remove themselves from Togo through emigration (Piot 2010). Citizens withdraw from the state in favor of new connections with other-worldly or foreign political communities where life can be imagined as more ideal. The large African diasporas in turn have played a significant role in challenging conceptions of citizenship, as both citizens and states work out how to deal with dispersed populations who live out citizenship in far-away places (Obadare and Adebanwi 2009).

However, the global has always played a complex role in relation to the idea of the state in Africa. It has not simply been an alternative to the state, as these formulations would have it, but intimately tied up with the idea as well as the reality of the state. For most Africans, statehood was a foreign creation, conjured up through and by foreigners. As Donal Cruise O'Brien suggests, the arrival of the colonialists was seen in terms of the imposition of a global politics (Cruise O'Brien 2003). However, it was a phenomenon that demanded and was quickly framed within an engagement that also drew on a global repertoire of meaning: although foreign, statehood and its connection to the global was absorbed and became part of the way Africans imagined themselves. This can be seen, for example, in the widespread adoption of global religions which, Cruise O'Brien suggests, enabled Africans to make better sense of the colonial state than local religions that operated on a smaller scale. They were not an alternative to, but part of the repertoire of engagement with, the state. It was expressed in resistance to colonialism which was organized on nationalist terms, often around socialist principles; the rejection of the colonial state was framed around an acceptance of the principle of statehood. Thus, even as African populations were resisting foreigners, in a sense they were embracing the global as a necessary and continuing part of themselves. Post-independence African leaders continued this trend by building domestic authority from their foreign connections and credentials—their western education, their ability to attract European or superpower support, or their opportunities to project themselves and their states on the world stage.

It was never a question of the global versus the state, but rather one of how far the two were intertwined. This point leads to two arguments I want to make. First, however brief the colonial period, and however alien the institutions of statehood it established, the state and its peculiar connection to the wider world did come to form a part of African subjectivity. If this is the case, then Rousseau and Hegel's notion of the "good state" as providing a way to secure the well-being and full realization

of the individual, might well resonate with African subjects. But second, ideas of the state have been modified by African experience: the particularity of African state formation demands a qualification to the European notions of state and state–society relations. This can be traced to the preoccupation—found in both Rousseau and Hegel—with the individuality and imagined separateness of the state. For Rousseau, the social contract is predicated on the idea of the uniqueness of a particular person's character and genius which must be kept separate from the rest of the world if it is to remain uncontaminated (Fidler 1999). For Hegel, full state subjectivity is achieved only through processes of negation, of struggles for differentiation from other states (Jaeger 2002). This means that for both thinkers, the state is set up in comparison or opposition to the rest of the world. In African contexts, I suggest, state subjectivity has involved an acknowledged absorption of ideas from elsewhere: the imagination of the state is connected to, not purely distinctive within, the global.

In the next two sections, I use examples from interviews to illustrate how these ideas inform the attitudes of modern-day Zimbabweans when they think about their state and their own lives. The first, which details descriptions of the "bad state," underlines the way in which the state, far from being irrelevant to ethical life, permeates and undermines every aspect of it. The second describes ideas of the "good state" which are drawn from imaginations and idealizations of Britain. This pushes towards the idea that for Zimbabweans the state's links with the global or international are robust, and even provide a sense of political well-being and connection to an ethical life.

Seven Stories of the Bad State

Many Zimbabweans have reason to mistrust their state, or to view it as a "bad state." The question I explore here is the degree to which their encounters with and attitudes towards the "bad state" affect their sense of themselves as individuals and as part of a community. The key characteristics of the "bad state" are explored through the reflections and stories of Zimbabweans I interviewed. Every interview began with the question: "Tell me the story of your life." Most people spoke about their parents, their spouses and their children, where they came from, and how their stories meshed with the story of Zimbabwe through their interactions with the state. In all the stories I heard, the "bad state" is not happening to other people, "over there," but directly impacts on the way people live and see themselves. First I will relate seven of the stories I heard, before discussing the overarching picture of the state conveyed in them.

The first is from a 46-year-old man who lives in Mbare, an impoverished area in the south of Harare. He describes the 2005 Murambatsvina operation in which many of the houses in Mbare were destroyed and the residents evicted.

> I built my three-room house for my wife and children. It was a well-built house... a very big house in my father's yard... The operation started and came straight to Mbare. They were policemen, one with a rifle and the other with hammers. They started destroying my house

and telling me to help them destroy. Imagine a gun pointing at you, in front of your children. We destroyed the house. I had two vehicles, a pickup and a car, so I used to sleep with my children in these vehicles. Then I and my brothers and all our families squeezed into my father's house. That's when everything started going downwards for me and my family.[4]

The second story is an account from the election campaign in 2008, in which opposition activists were particularly targeted by the security forces. Many fled their homes and even the country. The following is an account from the wife of an opposition activist who I interviewed along with her husband in Chitungwiza. His comment follows hers.

> It was 31st March. They came looking for [my husband] and when they said, where is he, I said, no, he was not here, he is still at work. They said, is he not here? They got in and started to eat the food which I had left for him... They first came in and started beating up my son, then my daughter-in-law. Then they got into my bedroom and started beating me. They looted everything—the groceries, some of our clothes, including a new overcoat, my underwear, salt, soap and milk... Some were soldiers, some in police uniforms. Men and women. Then they took me while they were beating me up and beat up another activist and then I was forced into the army vehicle.

> She was so badly beaten I had to carry her to the ambulance in a sheet. It took a month for her to get better.[5]

After she left the hospital, the woman went to Cape Town where she worked as a maid for a white family. But her husband remained behind, and after a while she returned to Chitungwiza. She said:

> For quite some time, I was so traumatized that I could not stand to see anyone in uniform or even army trucks... It's like death everywhere.

The collapse or withdrawal of the state also had dramatic and catastrophic effects on people's lives, and on the fabric of society. There are many stories detailing the effects of hyperinflation on individuals and their family and wider relationships. The third story comes from a man who told me about the collapse of his business.

> It's not good, it's miserable, because of inflation. We used to carry the Zim dollar in bags. I had a business, it was a supermarket, including a butcher and bottle-store in Mashonaland West. You couldn't bank any money or do anything. It was terrible. You could sell even a beast [ox], at the end of the day that money is worth a goat, the following day it was worth a hen. I had my money in the bank and it was eroded. It was $ 3,000. I couldn't carry on. I couldn't have money to buy stock, you couldn't calculate profit. I had to leave.[6]

This man now supports his wife and children by hawking airtime (phone cards) in Chitungwiza and Harare. The family supplements his income by all working for an Irish charity which organizes community cleaning.

The effects of state failure on the fabric of society were detailed by many. In the next story, a group of workers' representatives discuss the effects of the economic crisis on the wider society.

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[4] Interview in Harare, 2 September 2011.

[5] Interview in Chitungwiza, 4 September 2011.

[6] Interview in Chitungwiza, 4 September 2011.

It tore the social fabric and relationships amongst the people. Suppose death has fallen in my house. As an individual you have failed to make ends meet. You expect neighbors to come to help but they just fold their arms and look at you. And from this moment you start to disassociate yourself from the rest of your relations.

That quest for the dollar also tore apart families. The husband or wife would go and disappear. It tears the family apart, until you decide to do the same thing.

If you get a few goods, previously you could give your groceries to a person to pass on to your parents in the rural area. [But] during that time no one would deliver to the right place. I cannot pass on a bag of mealie meal to people.

I think it was survival of the fittest. Everyone became a criminal—whatever you could grab you would do that. It also increased the rate of prostitution because that was what they had to do.[7]

The fifth story is about the way in which the withdrawal of the state undermines social order and norms. It comes from a 64-year-old woman, who describes her life in a hostel in Mbare.

Now we are staying in a hostel, just one room for 14–15 people, father, mother, grandchildren and children all in one room. The toilets have no doors and no flush systems. In the basins we just wash together with babies and small kids in the corridors. People just come, smoking dagga. They are selling these and little boys and girls they are drinking Zed [beer]. The police give the beer to their boys to sell to children. If you go and report to the police nobody will do any action. If you go and report to the police they just write on a paper, saying they will arrest those people but they never come. With schooling, there are no playgrounds. The MPs put their own business there. They took so many lands and houses and gave them to their neighbors. . . So we are starving. Orphans and widows have got nothing to do.[8]

This theme is echoed in the sixth story, that of a 30-year-old man from Chitungwiza, who told me about what life was like for him and his friends.

We were born in Chitungwiza. Morning, you wake up, the time you open your eyes you think where am I going to get money for bread? Then you get money for bread, you think, where is money for lunch? Here in Zimbabwe, we do not have lunch. [At school] grade one to seven was free from 1980. It was great then because our mothers were looking after us. But we cannot leave home. We are supposed to be independent, but it's not like that. Our sisters go that side and get babies and then they just come back. At my home I've got cousins, these guys can catch my sister and give her a baby. So we have these children. So then, one house, 15 people. . . I think I am more educated than you. I am a loafer. I went to school. I was doing Cambridge. I got six As and two Bs. Since I'm born in the hood, you know what I did? I didn't have the money for 'A' levels.[9]

Like many other young men, he has occasionally worked for the ZANU militia intimidating and breaking up opposition rallies. "You take money where you can get it." He told me: "Politicians are not supposed to be around. They [act like] heroes in front of us. We are supposed to govern ourselves."

The final story comes from a 40-year-old woman who lives in Old Pumula, a high-density suburb 30 miles from Bulawayo. She told me that she is a human rights activist, and she talks about not simply the failure of institutions, but the way in which state officials use them for their own ends.

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[7] Group interview with workers' representatives, Harare, 1 September 2011.

[8] Interview in Harare, 1 September 2011.

[9] Interview in Chitungwiza, 4 September 2011.

> There's police brutality. People are beaten while demonstrating. We are not allowed to talk [about] what we want. If we go and protest about the constitution they deny us, so they beat us or arrest us, which is not good in a country which they are saying is free [laughs]. Soldiers, they keep on recruiting soldiers. We don't know why. What are they doing it for? The police don't even do their work properly. They want bribes, even, the judges and magistrates. If you are beaten, if you are raped, if you don't have money, you don't have someone to support you. But if you give bribes to the judge they will take your case as a serious case. On health, the maternity are asking for money for the woman which is US$ 50 and many people are dying because they don't have that money to go to the maternity clinic. There's no medicine and the machines for x-rays are very high fees. And the nurses are very rough—they don't care about the patients.[10]

The power of the "bad state" is apparent throughout these stories: it reaches into the most intimate living spaces, it destroys property, livelihoods, and family life. It spoils the prospects of the young, who are denied independence and adulthood, and a role for the elderly who are left with "nothing to do." The "bad state" results in the decay of social rules and norms, the evaporation of respect for authority and thus it undermines society: people become criminals and social trust breaks down. In the final account, the state, propagating violence in an attempt to protect itself against the people, is in effect destroying the meaning of statehood itself.

These stories describe how many Zimbabweans view their relationship with the state as fundamental to their welfare. Its decay profoundly affects every aspect of life, and, *pace* Ekeh, the state *is* inextricable from the personal ethical realm. Instead of being a source of material benefit, the civic public has become a cause of deprivation; instead of inadvertently supporting the primordial public, it is undermining it. A 64-year-old Mbare resident described it thus: "Everywhere we walk around there are problems everywhere as if this is not the country of our birth";[11] while a Harare-based civil society leader said: "The opportunity to become a real Zimbabwean is lost in the struggle to live."[12]

Given this dramatic feeling of let-down, one might expect Zimbabweans to be looking for alternatives to the state. This is not the case: their preoccupation with the "bad state" underlines the loss and longing they feel for a state that works. Part of this is located in the way that many Zimbabweans hold on to the ideal, "good state," an idea that has the potential to provide an ethical underpinning to the life of the individual in the community. I will detail ideas of the "good state" in the next section.

Stories of the (Lost) Good State

In his book about workers in Zambia's copperbelt in the late 1990s, James Ferguson describes their disillusion with modernity. Having been let down by its promises of

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[10] Interview in Old Pumula, 30 May 2012.

[11] Interview in Harare, 1 September 2011.

[12] Interview in Harare, 30 August 2011.

material advance, and having abandoned "traditional" links in its pursuit, Ferguson's subjects are left in a postmodern state of suspension, borrowing fragments of meaning from a repertoire of sources, but unable or unwilling to draw them together into a solid, rational approach to their lives. At best, the good life remains a longed for, distant ideal, found particularly in the wistful letters with which Ferguson ends his book (Ferguson 1999). This is not quite what I found in Zimbabwe. Although people had experienced a dramatic loss of certainty and security in their lives they continued to attempt to construct a sense of collective meaning, or an idea that there was a way to live an ethical life that was both ideal and rooted in Zimbabwe itself. One powerful way in which they did this was to imagine an ideal state.

Very concretely for many Zimbabweans, Britain represents the "good state." It does so powerfully because it can be idealized "out there" and also is felt to be something that substantively constitutes "here." Britain's political and economic systems are admired; it is assumed that everything works perfectly "out there." A 50-year-old Chitungwiza resident said: "Britain means development—that's where the industrial revolution happened."[13] Another 35-year-old man of said: "Britain's got good structures and democracy... From 1980–2000, you've had so many prime ministers, but here we don't have any change."[14] A 65-year-old woman told me: "The times when I hear of Britain I also cherish the idea of how we could live a better life where they have almost everything unlike here where we struggle to make ends meet."[15] A Harare-based NGO volunteer told me: "I think ordinary Zimbabweans like Britain and Europe. That's where people will aim ... Britain is good for the people."[16] A Harare-based teacher observed: "The ordinary Zimbabwean vision of England is of a green land. It's an idealized picture of England. We all emulate white as good, black is bad. It was drilled into our parents. I can't get my father to understand that whites make mistakes. This is where the idea that Britain can rescue us comes from."[17] Also, an NGO leader who works in the poorest parts of Harare said: "People cling to the idea of Britain as benevolent and paternal."[18]

At the same time as holding up an ideal Britain, many Zimbabweans are drenched in an awareness of their historical and cultural links with the former colonizer, and these are seen to have firmly shaped the country, its people and its president, in good and bad ways. Part of this is about the physical things the British did—the buildings, the state structures, the education system—and part is about culture, language, and outlook. Many people pointed out that everything in Zimbabwe was set up in a British mould; it made for a comfortable fit. One man talked of the familiarity he felt with the British who "developed Zimbabwe's military, health, and education

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[13] Interview in Chitungwiza, 28 August 2011.

[14] Interview in Chitungwiza, 4 September 2011.

[15] Interview in Chitungwiza, 4 September 2011.

[16] Interview in Harare, 2 September 2011.

[17] Interview in Harare, 29 August 2011.

[18] Interview in Harare, 30 August 2011.

systems. The plans we are implementing today are laid out by the British."[19] People said: "Zimbabweans took British culture, we behave like Britons. That is true of the entire society—we are British in thinking"; "Look at how we dress and speak—we are just the same except the color of our skin. We are so proud of our connection with Britain"; "[Britain] is part of our culture"; and; "We are more British than the British themselves."[20] Another man said: "All our machinery and equipment is British-made, so new Chinese models are a problem. It's like British culture. . . We understand how to work this machinery and the parts fit."[21] And one woman told me how she had felt at home on a visit to London: "I was walking around London without anyone. I could get by. Put me in Germany, France, I am lost. . . A Zimbabwean would be more at home living in England than South Africa."[22]

The state, the economy, the people themselves: all have absorbed and "become" British, and this extends to nobody more than the president. "Mugabe is pure British. Mugabe and Blair are one and the same. He dreams English, he speaks English, he *is* English"; and, "Robert Mugabe is more English than the English. He felt himself to be British. He was the good boy. Then they said, we know what you are doing, and then it all went bad."[23] Mugabe's "Britishness" might be seen as good, part of his claim to authority, or sometimes more ambiguous, as in the comment that the president's wife Grace was "more of a Lady Diana than anyone else," her extravagance being seen as one of the causes of the country's economic collapse.[24]

Zimbabweans' sense of their Britishness means that a crucial characteristic of the "good state" is that although ideal, it is not viewed as other and alien, or unknown, but as something inherent to Zimbabweanness, but lost. For some, the "good state" is found in memories of an idealized colonial era. A 64-year-old woman reminisced about Ian Smith's regime, when "Britain" ruled the country. I quote her here at length because she so clearly depicted the idea of the lost "good state".

> While we were staying with Smith in Rhodesia we have been staying well. The school fees for the children were so little, the clinics were clean and good and they were for free. Our rents were paid according to our wages. Accommodation we have been given for free. We were not so crowded in one room. Schooling, adults were given and clubs and places for netball for children, and crèches, and swimming pools. On the streets, there were no street kids. There was care for crippled people. A person, where there is a cripple, they have been given help very much. The blind were kept very well—they had a place. Little kids were not giving birth—now a 12-year-old child can give birth but at that time there was none. The police were standing on every corner. If a person was arrested he was supposed to attend on his own. Now a person can go to jail even if he didn't do anything. Policemen nowadays

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[19] Interview with a civil society leader, Harare, 30 August 2011.

[20] Interviews with a 55-year-old man, Chitungwiza, 28 August 2011; a civil society leader, Harare, 30 August 2011; a trade union activist, Harare, 1 September 2011; a trade union activist, 5 September 2011.

[21] Interview with a 52-year-old man, Chitungwiza, 28 August 2011.

[22] Interview with a trade union activist, Harare, 31 August 2011.

[23] Interviews with a trade union activist, Harare, 1 September 2011; and a 52-year-old man, Chitungwiza, 28 August 2011.

[24] Interview with a trade union activist, Bulawayo, 28 May 2012.

are encouraging young boys to steal for them and if he is arrested they will support him. Every parent was to look for his children very carefully, not to let them go everywhere. If a child was picked up, the parent was chastised. Children these days give false statement. In those days parents had more control. Vehicles they were not supposed to go as they do these days. If you just park anywhere you are getting arrested. In the location there were pedestrian areas and cars. Now these days it's crowded, all together. If a person urinated on the way, they were not supposed to do that. Now there is urinating everywhere. There were toilets on the streets. Feces now are everywhere, even in the hostels.[25]

Of course it is not as simple as nostalgia for the colonial era for everyone. In particular for those who are more politically active—trade unionists, members of political parties, and civil society activists—the British shaping of Zimbabwean culture and state is more ambiguous. These groups do not any less accept Zimbabwe's "Britishness," but will be more likely to question how far its influence has been benevolent.

Britain as a disturbing and even corrosive internal object begins with the racism and dispossession of colonialism, the state in which the black majority were denied citizenship. Further, there is a questioning of the inner workings of the state itself. Some people suggest that the British-style institutions and laws that educate people in particular ways or grant state officials the ability to oppress and restrict citizens have been adopted and enhanced by the postcolonial state. An informal workers' representative questioned the education system left by the British: "We were taught only to go to work. We were never taught how to be business people. We have people now coming from the formal sector and there is a lack of creativity."[26] A trade union activist said: "The Harare government and the UK government are cohorts in terms of oppressing the people of this country. The policies put in place by Ian Smith—they are still in existence and used by the government to oppress the people they have claimed to fight for. The British left this legacy."[27]

Mixed feelings about Britain also emerge in encounters and events such as the land deals done at independence (generally regarded as unfair), British interference in Zimbabwean economics and politics (some blame the British for the Structural Adjustment Program implemented in the early 1990s), and in the strong sense that some people have that the British, having encouraged them to pursue democracy, failed to support them when they were punished for doing so: "During the 2008 elections, that was the time when we needed the international community and Britain—they were our colonial masters, they had a duty to step in."[28] Questions are raised now over the use of sanctions which are seen by some as a key contributor to economic decline: "Why did you want to kill the child coming from the womb? . . . The colonizers chose to close this country."[29]

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[25] Interview in Harare, 1 September 2011.

[26] Interview in Harare, 6 September 2011.

[27] Interview in Harare, 5 September 2011.

[28] Interview in Harare, 1 September 2011.

[29] Interview with a civil society activist in Bulawayo, 30 May 2012.

Whether idealizing or criticizing the colonial regime, Zimbabweans tend to cast Britain as both inside and outside the state. Britain is inside in its shaping of Zimbabwean identity—from state institutions to culture, from machinery to laws, and from language to poverty. It created the state, the people—even the president himself. At the same time Britain beyond Zimbabwe represents for many a hopeful ideal, a rescuer or a lodestar.

It is not straightforwardly possible to disentangle the "bad state" from an ideal but lost "good state." However, what is interesting is the way in which Zimbabweans continue to factor Britain into their calculations of what the "good state" should be. If there is a need for a new "'social contract", such a thing must take account of Zimbabweans' relationship with Britain.

Conclusion

This discussion of Zimbabweans' characterization of their "bad state," and their ideas of the "good state" highlights both the importance it continues to have for them, and their sense of its connection to Britain. Britain for Zimbabweans is both, distant and internal; other and self. For many Zimbabweans, it appears at times ideal—like a good object—but also very well-known—like something that was once part of the self but has been lost. For others, the sense of connection remains strong, even if they question its virtues. Yet even for those who do question, it is this relationship with Britain that remains at the heart of how they imagine a refashioning of their state, the basis on which to build a better social contract. Very concretely for many Zimbabweans, incarnations of Britishness represent the lost "good state."

There are two possible ways to read this connection between the "good state" and Britain. The first is that Zimbabweans' state template is the colonial state, a European creation. It is therefore understandable that many look back to Britain when searching for ideas of the "good state." In such a template, as Rousseau's social contract dictates, "all domestic structures are designed to encourage and protect private capacity" (Perkins 1974, p. 271). This is how we might then interpret Zimbabweans' frustrations with their "bad state" which focus on the way it inhibits their own self-realization—as property owners, businessmen, political activists, wives, fathers, grandmothers, grownups, etc. This conjuring up of the lost "good state" might be seen as a defense against the deep anxiety occasioned by living in a damaged state, a way to retain a sense of the good and a connection to an ethical and meaningful life.

However, another way to look at it would be to view Zimbabweans' imagination of the "good state" as one rooted in a place that is far away, partially unknown, unconnected to real life. It is this element of the "good state" in Zimbabwe—its foreignness—that most clearly illustrates Rousseau's idealized social contract. James Miller points out that Rousseau dedicates *The Social Contact* to Geneva, the place of his birth and early childhood. Yet the book was written before his return there, the dedication was drafted as he stayed in a hotel on a mountain overlooking the city.

Rousseau's idea of the workings of the social contract, a utopian political order, is one that did not have to make compromises with reality (Miller 1984, p. 25). The "good state" has therefore an "other-worldly" flavor, just as the state as a colonial imposition always has. In this sense, Britain as the "good state" is akin to Utopia as the "good state," a distant, unrealizable fantasy. This understanding of Zimbabweans' conceptions of a social contract, therefore, I think underscores Rousseau's own formulation. However, by bringing the global element into the social contract, Zimbabweans are adapting a European formula that relies on the idea of the individuality and separation of the state, replacing it with one that is more embedded within its international relationships and history.

This throws up broader questions about state subjectivity. It could be that such a conception of the state as interconnected and contingent is peculiar to postcolonial states whose citizens draw on particular histories and relationships, unable to deny their connections to the wider world. Alternatively, this more raw perception of introjection experienced by citizens of a postcolonial state could perhaps highlight a more general phenomenon that state subjectivity is always shaped by absorbing external ideas and influences. Introjection might thus be something that remains hidden to western understandings of the state, lost within a European idealization of the differentiated, autonomous individual. In either case, European ideas of state subjectivity such as those of Rousseau and Hegel may be able to say something significant about African experiences of statehood, but postcolonial experiences might also lead to wider understandings of state–society–international relationships.

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Chapter 6
NGO Accountability in Africa

Ronelle Burger and Dineo Seabe

As the number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) has grown exponentially worldwide over the past three decades, so has the amount of funds that have been channeled through these organizations for various kinds of "development" projects (Wright 2012; Werker and Ahmed 2008; Anheier and Salamon 2006). Analysts ascribe this trend to growing disillusionment with governments in developing countries and perceptions that NGOs have a comparative advantage and may be more effective (Edwards and Hulme 1996). This expansion in the size and reach of the NGO sectors in developing countries has increased interest in measuring NGO effectiveness, culminating in the Paris declaration on aid effectiveness in 2005 and the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008. Gradually, initial romanticism and idealism have cleared the way for a more sober and empirical approach to understanding the role and contribution of NGOs, disputing naive and oversimplistic models that made strong assumptions regarding the altruistic motivations of NGO workers and activists (Murphy 2011; Christensen and Ebrahim 2006; Najam 1996). During this period, the NGO sector experienced a loss of public trust, which coincided with a heightened awareness of the threat of terrorist activity and an association of terrorist activity with NGO front-ends. This has amplified calls for greater transparency and accountability in the NGO sector.

The NGO sector has had a mixed reaction to calls for greater transparency and accountability. Research suggests that the emphasis on formal accountability mechanisms may have resulted in accountability being associated with form rather than content, and the external pressure from donors and government has caused resentment and frustration among some NGOs (Ebrahim 2003b). Mainly due to disillusionment

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and frustration, many NGOs comply with formal accountability measures imposed by third parties such as donors or the government, but have no substantive commitment in using the principles of transparency and accountability to improve and transform their organizations.

In addition, because this movement has largely been driven by donors and governments, the focus has often been on the responsibilities and obligations of NGOs toward donors and governments. This emphasis appears misplaced given that governments and donors already exert substantial influence over the NGO sector via funding and legislation. In contrast, it can be argued that NGO accountability toward community beneficiaries requires more attention and more advocacy because they (i.e., beneficiaries) are often dependent on NGOs that have been contracted by third parties to serve them, but are voiceless and powerless in this relationship. As a result, community beneficiaries frequently struggle to hold NGOs accountable. All in all, there have been calls for new ways of thinking about accountability (AccountAbility 2007) and a focus on improving the quality and appropriateness of accountability mechanisms (Droop et al. 2008). In African countries especially, there is an additional impetus to reexamine existing mechanisms because of concerns about the suitability of many of them to the context and circumstances of the continent.

The first section examines the theoretical rationale for accountability. The second section explores the nature of NGO accountability by outlining the relationship between NGOs and each of the stakeholders to whom NGOs are accountable. This discussion introduces the third section, which investigates the challenges of NGO accountability, including the difficulties relating to NGOs' obligation to multiple stakeholders. The fourth section takes a critical look at the top down model of accountability and asks whether accountability can be imposed or encouraged by external agencies such as donors or government. Section five and six describe how donor and government oversight, respectively, have created distortions and perverse outcomes. In reaction to these insights, sections seven and eight not only consider how self-regulation and beneficiary oversight can help to counter these distortionary effects, but also outline the weaknesses and shortcomings of these approaches. In the conclusion the authors summarize the main findings and suggest areas for future research. Given the inadequacy of the top down model of accountability and its inappropriateness in the African context, it is concluded that future research needs to explore more authentic and arguably more valuable forms of accountability that are focused on the relationship between NGOs and project beneficiaries.

Foundations of Accountability

The accountability movement is fuelled by the belief that accountability can transform the motivation and performance of the NGO sector. NGO accountability is associated with improvements in organizational performance and an enhanced reputation via better oversight and the promotion of a culture of learning. In achieving

these shifts, the role of information and transparency is acknowledged to be pivotal (Murtaza 2011).

These postulated links are supported by economic and management theories. The most important economic theory underpinning the benefits of accountability is the principal–agent model. The principal–agent model highlights the problems inherent in the subcontracting relationship, i.e., due to information asymmetries the principal is only partially effective in influencing the agent to do what he or she wants via rewards and punishments. The agent is motivated to perform a task mainly via the payment or reward he or she receives from the principal, but because the principal observes the agent's effort and behavior imperfectly, linking this transfer to observed behavior cannot fully overcome this problem. Consequently, there is a tension between the priorities of the agent and that of the principal.

In the case of NGOs, donors and beneficiaries of the NGO can be viewed as acting as an agent on behalf of two principals, namely the donor/funder and the beneficiary. The donor is a principal in the traditional way, in that it subcontracts an NGO to deliver a service on its behalf for which the latter is then remunerated. The beneficiary is a principal in an unorthodox and more abstract way: they cannot fulfill their own needs due to lack of capacity or resources and therefore trust the NGOs to assist them. The idea is that transparency and accountability can improve these relationships by enhancing information flows and incentive structures. Theoretically, the main potential benefit may be from better information flows between the beneficiaries and the donor, which could help the donor to better understand whether beneficiaries are experiencing the NGO project as valuable and could help amplify the voice of the beneficiaries by incorporating information about the beneficiary experience and perceptions in the donor decision making process.

However, it is important to note that some critics claim that this economic theory model may oversimplify social processes. For instance, Ebrahim (2006) is critical of this view of information asymmetries and describes these theories as "positivist and modernist perspectives which assume that the availability of information can reveal the truth... about the behaviour of non-profits, allowing for corrective measures to be taken". (p. 9). The accountability movement also relies on the legitimacy and credibility of widely used managerial practices and tools. For instance, the periodic reporting requirements of donors are expected to both discourage and identify improper conduct. Similarly, well-designed contracts are expected to align the interests of NGOs with those of donors, and thus help to mediate conflicting accountabilities.

Accountability to Whom?

There is an ethical rationale for NGOs to be accountable both to the broader public—based on NGOs' status as public entities and their public benefit *raison d'etre*—and to specific stakeholders—because these individuals and organizations provide the NGOs with information, ideas, advice, feedback, resources, and opportunities. The question regarding who is owed accountability is complex and

contentious, but pivotal. This question has sprouted a number of categorical distinctions, most notably perhaps that between upward, lateral, and downward accountability.

Upward accountability refers to the accountability of NGOs toward donors and governments. As a rule, upward accountability is easily enforceable because these stakeholders tend to have the power, capacity, authority, and resources to enforce compliance via their voice or their threat to exit (O'Dwyer et al. 2008).

Lateral accountability refers to accountability toward staff members, volunteers, community agencies, and the board of the NGO (Christensen and Ebrahim 2006).

Downward accountability refers to accountability to beneficiaries. Various community participation mechanisms such as needs assessment and feedback focus groups can be employed to implement and facilitate downward accountability. Here, beneficiaries have little power to demand and enforce accountability (O'Dwyer et al. 2008) and consequently, Ebrahim (2003a, p. 814) argues that NGOs implement such measures because of so-called "felt responsibility". However, there are also organizational benefits associated with downward accountability, including enhanced responsiveness and an increase in legitimacy.

Two other pairs of conceptual distinctions are also often used to distinguish and classify accountability based on the stakeholder type. These are:

- The distinction between **internal** and **external accountability**: Internal accountability refers to accountability to the stakeholders involved with the NGO operations such as staff and members and external accountability is an obligation to meet prescribed standards of behavior as stipulated by external parties (Ebrahim 2003b). Legislation and reporting requirements are examples of external accountability and contrasted against self-evaluations and internal reviews, which are examples of internal accountability processes.
- The distinction between **functional** and **strategic accountability**: Functional accountability (also known as hierarchal or procedural accountability) emphasizes financial management and the measurement of short-term impacts (O'Dwyer et al. 2008) while strategic accountability (also known as holistic accountability) is concerned with longer-term impacts and the mission of the NGO.

The Challenge of Nongovernmental Organizations Accountability

Mediating the tensions between the competing accountability relationships with its stakeholders is viewed as a key challenge for NGOs (Edwards and Hulme 1996; Christensen and Ebrahim 2006). The NGOs face more complicated and fragmented accountability relationships than other organizations because they typically have a large and diverse set of stakeholder communities including government, donors, staff, beneficiaries, sector peers, and the broad public. In addition, NGO accountability may be more demanding because there are fewer external mechanisms in place to ensure that NGOs act responsibly toward their stakeholders. In this regard, the question by Milofsky and Blades (1991, p. 372) hits the bull's eye: "Governed neither by

the profit motive nor by the need to face voters, what makes non-profit organizations accountable for the assets of society that they accumulate and distribute?"

NGO accountability can be defined as the obligation of NGOs to provide their stakeholders with explanations and information about their decisions and actions and their stakeholders' right to such answers (Lawry 1995). This definition acknowledges the complexity of such a stakeholder's claim over the NGO because there is no reason to assume that there will be an alignment between how the stakeholder and the NGO view this claim.

Due to the social and relational nature of accountability, Ebrahim (2006) concludes that accountability is a social construct. Elsewhere, Ebrahim (2003b, p. 196) describes the fluid and contested nature of accountability relationships as the "push and pull of constituent interest". Consequently, he proceeds to argue that "accountability may be viewed as relational in nature; it does not stand objectively apart from organizations, but is reflective of the relationships of power among organizational actors". Due to the social embeddedness of accountability, there is a risk that accountability mechanisms may entrench rather than challenge reigning power structures (Slim 2002).

Nurturing a Sense of Accountability in African Nongovernmental Organizations

Christensen and Ebrahim (2006, p 208) have argued that "a central challenge for non-profits and funders alike lies in creating a culture of accountability that is built on mission and purpose rather than external scrutiny". In the context of African NGOs, the challenge of nurturing an authentic and internalized sense of accountability is threatened by narrow and prescriptive models of accountability imposed by donors and government, respectively. A generic and top-down approach to accountability that does not take the circumstances of African NGOs into account will raise the burden associated with adopting accountability guidelines and mechanisms. If the accountability framework is not attuned to the circumstances faced by African NGOs and is not designed to improve feedback, learning, and performance in these organizations, there will be an incentive to simulate compliance.

There is also concern about the appropriateness of applying a generic approach or a developed country model because the circumstances and context of African NGOs are substantially different from those of their developed country counterparts.

To begin with, the physical, social, and cultural distance between NGOs and donors are considerably larger in African countries than it generally is in developed countries (Agyemang et al. 2009). This is attributable partly just to the presence of foreign aid organizations in the NGO sector. However, the situation is further complicated by the African continent's unique cultural nuances. For example, Jackson (2003) noted that one may not be able to apply Western textbook methods in "a hierarchical, uncertainty avoiding or communalistic cultures" (Jackson 2003, p. 4).

Cultural differences may cause deep divides, affecting conceptions of leadership and ethics.

As significant is, donors' insistence on managing grant contracts from their developed country offices, often with minimal staff presence in the recipient country and consequently infrequent visits to the site of the projects. Jackson (2011) provides an example of the cultural distance when he explains that in the African context great importance is bestowed on the intrinsic value of a human, i.e., viewing a person as an end and not a means to an end. He argues that this stands in contrast to a managerial approach where a person is viewed as being valuable primarily as an instrument to achieve a particular end. In addition, he warns that problems may arise when attempting to transfer knowledge from individualistic cultures to collectivistic cultures because it may be hard for collectivist cultures, which rely on tacit knowledge, to grasp complex systems from the individualistic cultures, which rely mostly on explicit codified knowledge. Such cultural differences can hamper both the design of appropriate accountability tools and the monitoring of the NGO project funded by the donor, because it will impede the donors' understanding of NGO operations and decision-making and also their ability to make sense of any information reported by the NGO.

Further, there are concerns about excessive donor influence in African countries because donor flows represent a larger share of revenue than it does in other countries. Consequently, it is feared that they (i.e., donors) will exert more power over NGOs than in other places, and that there will be a greater temptation to abuse this power and interfere with the purpose and mission of the NGOs.

We also need to consider the imprint that a protracted period of colonialism followed by a long rule of authoritarianism has left on African countries. For many of these countries, the experience with independence is brief and recent, while democratic structures are still young and fragile. Institutions are therefore not as mature or as deeply entrenched as they may be elsewhere. Many African countries for instance lack a well-functioning judiciary or a stable democratic state. These are important considerations because of the implication that there may be less institutional support for accountability via traditional mechanisms such as legislation and contract enforcement. In addition, this may prove a challenge for accountability because there may be little or no tradition of appreciating and celebrating complementary political values such as diversity, dialogue, and transparency.

Research suggests that this is not just a theoretical problem. For example, Olarinmoye (2011) finds that a broad spectrum of accountability mechanisms ranging from legal to financial oversight, beneficiary oversight, and peer regulation, proved inadequate because they failed to hold NGOs accountable due to the "political and structural inadequacies born out of the weak nature of the Nigerian state" (Olarinmoye 2011, p. 28). Similarly, Adeh (2004) finds that due to the hostile local political environment, many organizations in Zimbabwe were not transparent or chose to be selective in their transparency, for instance, by revealing more information about how they managed resources to donors outside the country than to local stakeholders.

The lack of stable and strong democratic institutions in African countries may also prompt other fears. Collusive and patrimonial NGO–state relationships may increase

the threat of government abusing its position of power to threaten, control, and repress NGOs. This has been a problem in many African states. Recent research on repressive legislation in Ethiopia suggests that it has reduced activity in the advocacy sector and may have resulted in self-censorship of NGOs (Beyene 2012). Navigating such a complicated institutional environment may require a pragmatism that could violate purist or theoretical notions of accountability. For instance, in Nigeria, institutional poverty has led to "grey practices" such as NGOs bribing civil servants to ensure that the government serves their beneficiaries. This example illustrates the tensions that can exist in practice between NGOs' moral accountability to beneficiaries, and procedural accountability (Routley 2011).

There are also challenges pertaining to the accountability relationship between NGOs and beneficiaries. Due to the comparatively low levels of economic activity in many African countries, aid remains a reasonably large source of income for the NGO sector, dwarfing membership, and user fees. Because these funds represent such a small proportion of the NGO revenue stream, it means that project participants and community members have less leverage over NGOs compared to large donors. If you add this to the fact that many of the beneficiaries of development projects may be reluctant to provide feedback because of negative cultural norms relating to assertiveness, a lack of political empowerment, or low social self-esteem (due to poverty and inadequate schooling), it becomes clear that in this context, the beneficiary-NGO accountability relationship faces substantial challenges.

The next section looks at the problems in the accountability relationship with specific stakeholders in greater depth. First, we consider the demands that donors and governments make on African NGOs in the name of accountability. Then, we explore whether expanding and improving accountability relationships with community beneficiaries and via peer networks could compensate for some of the distorting influences introduced by governments and donors.

Distortions Due to Donor Accountability Demands

According to Bornstein (2003, p. 395), more than just money flows via the so-called aid chains. Aid buys influence, so often there is pressure on developing country NGOs to adopt the ideas, preferences, and management practices of the developed country donors. Robert et al. (2005, p. 1849) has for instance noted that within the NGO field there has been a "globalization of managerialism of a distinctly Northern type". According to Wallace et al. (2007, p. 22) three factors have contributed to the increased influence of business models in the development aid and NGO sector: the shift in the ideologies of international institutions such as World Bank and IMF, the growing disillusionment with the effectiveness of aid, and the need to reduce transaction costs. The work of Claeye and Jackson (2011) suggests that the prevalence of managerialism may have been further enhanced via isomorphism, causing NGOs to conform to these practices.

This dominance of developed country perspectives[1] and managerialism is also evident within the NGO accountability movement's reigning models. Consequently, compliance with such requirements may require a significant sacrifice for many African NGOs. These dominant models of accountability often appear to not take into account the specific challenges of accountability in a developing country context. Jackson and Haines (2007) find that NGOs are resistant to the results-driven approaches adopted within the dominant management practices due to the misalignment of developed country management values with the values of the local culture. For example, they find that performance-based rewards are seen as unacceptable because they promote selfish behavior.

Similarly, while some NGOs are appreciative that prescriptive accountability tools such as logical frameworks and participatory processes provide them with a framework and structure to guide their work and also exposes them to best international practices (Agyemang et al. 2009), others see these tools as a burden distracting them from their mission. NGOs frequently complain about the rigidity and volume of reporting, stipulated by donors and government, which often requires NGOs to duplicate work as each funder tends to have its own format and style, ostensibly at least partly because funders do not value the time of grant recipients (Easterly 2002).

Agyemang et al. (2009) report criticism that accountability tools do not promote learning or help improve performance because the formal accountability mechanisms leave little or no room for unintended consequences and failures, which is necessary to learn from past mistakes. Ideally, this tension should not exist because accountability and learning should be viewed as "part and parcel of the same need for responsibility" (Gujit 2010, p. 289). However, in practice there is often a tension and formal accountability mechanisms favor periodic ex-post assessments rather than continual, interactive, and dynamic review and feedback processes. The overemphasis on quantifiable outputs and outcomes and short-term rather than long-term results is also often raised as a critique. According to Mohan (2002) log frame accounting techniques are designed to help guide and assess projects with short-term results, but are not compatible with long-term development goals. Rebelling against such narrowness, Slim (2002, p. 3) proposes that a more encompassing range of indicators is required, including "reporting on relationships, intent, objectives, method and impact" and "information which is quantitative and qualitative, and hard and soft".

Furthermore, Burger and Owens (2010) have highlighted that reported information may not always be reliable and that this may cast doubt on claims that donors contribute toward NGO effectiveness and improving NGO performance. Their research shows that information reported by NGOs may frequently not be reliable, especially where there is an incentive or a rationale for them to present a rosier picture. They use this as a basis to criticize an over-reliance on reported information

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[1] The organization AccountAbility finds that a generic approach to accountability is not feasible because what needs to be accounted for will be determined largely by the different cultural and political context. It reports that a "good translation of accountability in other languages is hard to find" (AccountAbility 2007, p. 23). The report finds that in some countries the concept meant better auditing and participation, in others output targets and efficiency measures.

in accountability mechanisms, claiming that monitoring and oversight based exclusively on reported information may be of little value due to the inaccuracy of this information.

In addition, there are also concerns that donors tend to overemphasize upward accountability and that this has crowded out downward accountability. Schmitz and Mitchell (2009) find that NGOs have a desire to practice downward accountability but due to their dependence on donor funds, the incentives they face favor upward accountability. Such distortions can result in the design and implementation of projects that are out of touch with the needs of communities (Bebbington 2005).

Because donors control the purse strings, they have considerable power over the NGOs, and as such, NGOs may find it difficult to negotiate with the funders on an equal footing about issues such as these. Consequently, despite widespread dissatisfaction and continual NGO complaints, accountability mechanisms have remained more burdensome and distracting than they need to be. However, the literature suggests that there have been exceptions. Some organizations have found ways to work within these reigning models or reject them. Rauh (2010) examines various strategies employed by developing country NGOs to resist restrictive management practices and finds that NGOs tend to respond in five strategic ways, namely, acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation.

South African NGOs in the Eastern Cape chose to adapt and reinterpret practices to suit their culture and context via creative resistance and mimicry (Claeye et al. 2011). According to this study, organizations did not just accept the managerial modes of thinking, but transformed them to suit their needs and context, creating a hybrid which incorporated both the standard managerial discourse and local values such as Ubuntu.[2]

A study of 40 South African NGOs by Bornstein (2003) reported that larger NGOs could find ways to operate effectively within the system and some even challenged donors about their policies. However, their research implied that it was more difficult for small NGOs to act assertively and find ways to navigate their way around the aid system.

Distortions Due to Government Accountability Demands

Governments can help to create an enabling environment for NGOs, but Jordan (2005) warns that there are risks that they could abuse their regulatory powers to silence, threaten, or close down NGOs that are critical of government or involved in advocacy work. In African countries, there have been many examples of governments enacting repressive legislation under the guise of regulating the NGO sector to promote accountability and transparency, or in the name of national security and counter-terrorism (Moyo 2009; NED and ICNL 2008).

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[2] Ubuntu is derived from the isiXhosa "Ubuntu ungamntu ngabanye abantu" that means "people are people through other people".

Consequently, many authors and commentators have been extremely critical and suspicious of stringent government regulation in African countries. For instance, after examining NGO legislation in Zambia, Ethiopia, and Zimbabwe, Elone (2010) concludes that regulation is nothing but a "backlash" against democracy and return to autocratic tendencies. It is a "strategy for politically insecure governments to clamp down on dissent" (Elone 2010, p. 7). Legislations in these three countries share many features, including barriers to entry, barriers to operational activity, curtailment of freedom of speech and barriers to resources (Elone 2010).

Similarly, Ali (2010) argues that the Sudanese government's regulation of NGOs is an attempt to control the growth and influence of the NGO sector. Ali distrusts the intentions of the legislation and views it as politically motivated and targeted at organizations involved in political reform. The victimization of NGOs with political agendas is a widespread problem and may be attributable to African governments not being accustomed to oppositional NGOs. Many governments see NGOs' role as operational and not political. During Ghana's 20 years under Rawlings, it was clear that government and NGOs had different views relating to the role of NGOs which inevitably led to government antagonism toward Ghanaian NGOs (Atibil 2012). NGOs in the Ghanaian government's eyes were supposed to be "apolitical and charitable organizations" (Atibil 2012, p. 55). Conversely, organizations who adopted a critical stance toward government policy were perceived by government as "behaving out of character and in need of regulation" (Atibil 2012, p. 55).

Along the same line, Oshewolo (2011) finds that Nigerian NGOs are often reluctant to become involved in policy dialogue because criticism of government proposals tends to result in harassment (Oshewolo 2011). In Tanzania, organizations are not allowed to participate in political activities (Aga Khan Foundation 2007). For example, BAWATA, a women's organization in Tanzania involved in voter education, was threatened with deregistration because of official allegation that it (BAWATA) incited women to vote for the opposition (Iheme 2005).

There are countless other examples illustrating the sweeping powers and the extent of discretion afforded to regulation authorities. Often the problem is that the criteria and terms used in the legislation leave considerable room for interpretation and discretion at the implementation level, and this can easily result in inconsistent and biased application of the legislation. For instance, in Egypt, the regulatory authority can reject applications for NGO registration when NGOs are seen as "threatening national unity or violating public order or morals" (McGann 2008, p. 32). Similarly, Uganda's NGO Registration Act of 1989, the NGO Registration Amendment Act of 2006, and the accompanying NGO Registration Regulations of 2009 allude to lofty ideals such as promoting the public interest, preventing fraud, and to "guide and monitor organizations in carrying out their services". The reasons for revoking a permit or requiring the dissolution of an NGO are often vague and give considerable discretion to the government in interpreting and implementing the legislation. In fact, this was one of the NGO sector's main objections against the legislation.

The literature on government NGO regulation in African countries highlights cases where regulation has stifled civic engagement rather than protected public interest. Saki (2010) finds that the Public Order Security Act was employed more as

an intimidation and harassment tactic against civil society than as a tool to protect public interest. However, it is vital to note that government regulation can also play a positive and constructive role. Burger (2012) has noted that the merits of government regulation are reliant on the strength of the counterbalancing institutions and the design of the scheme. Rwanda provides a noteworthy African example of government regulation aimed at protecting the public interest: its Organic Law no. 55/2008 of 10/09/2008 governing NGOs was formulated and drafted in consultation with a broad representation of stakeholders (ICNL 2012).

While government regulation has the potential to contribute to accountability, the point remains that due to the political environment, government regulation schemes in African countries have often been repressive and threatening, contributing to self-censorship, discouraging transparency, and dissuading political involvement and advocacy work.

Self-Regulation as a Potential Solution

There is a large range of self-regulation options, but essentially self-regulation amounts to an effort to establish norms and standards shared amongst NGO peers (Lloyd and De Las Casas 2006). Self-regulation could be an ideal way to hold NGOs accountable but it is not without problems. The main issue is that such schemes frequently lack both clear operational standards and enforcement mechanisms and sanctions. For example, Hariss-Curtis (2002) criticize the South African NGO Coalition's (SANGOCO) Code of Ethics for not having clarity on the implications of noncompliance. In addition, because such schemes are in most instances voluntary, they are susceptible to selection bias in which only NGOs that are already complying with the code or guideline, and thus expecting to obtain accreditation or a favorable review, are likely to join the scheme.

Another problem is that due to the shared fate of NGO networks and NGOs, there is a substantial cost associated with exposing the improprieties of members. Consequently, peers have an incentive to conceal damaging information. It is therefore not surprising that such peer networks tend to select "light touch" regulation options. Gugerty's (2007) study of self-regulation mechanisms in 20 African countries finds that while the most prevalent form of self-regulation is a code of conduct, it is also the weakest form of self-regulation. Hammer et al. (2010) have confirmed this finding. Significantly, Lloyd and Casas (2006) review 35 codes of conduct and certification schemes and find that greater emphasis has been placed on conforming to standards set by donors and government, while accountability to beneficiaries has been neglected. This point is reiterated by Bendell (2006) who argues that self-regulation tend to favor and promote upward accountability. Self-regulation is therefore unlikely to provide an antidote to the distortions introduced by donor and government demands for NGO accountability.

Community Participation as a Potential Solution

Community participation involves beneficiary communities in decision-making and allows them to act as monitors for NGO projects. Cornwall et al. (2000) argue that participation can enhance accountability under specific circumstances including institutional changes with regards to decision-making and resource management and a beneficiary community that is educated about their entitlements and obligations. This means that NGOs need to change their approach in such a way that beneficiaries are awarded responsibility for the development project and the resources that come with it. For instance, the case study by Musembi and Kilalo (2000) of a program piloted by World Neighbors in Kenya finds that communities that understand their rights and responsibilities regarding their own health and services are in a better position to influence the type of services provided.

Brennan (2010) in her examination of how downward accountability is operationalized by international NGOs, finds that these organizations tend to appreciate the contribution of community participation in theory, yet seldom allow the community to make important decisions. Partly, the influence of community voice is constrained due to the overwhelming power of donors, but communities may also contribute to this situation with their reluctance to speak out due to fears of losing access to NGO services.

Beattie (2011) also finds that the reluctance of community members to voice discontentment with the services provided by the NGO was a significant constraint to effective NGO accountability. For example, in one instance where there was a problem, the community was reluctant to report it because criticizing an individual openly went against the culture. This is evidenced by one of the key informants comments "How open they'll be with you, I don't know because another issue between the NGOs and the Sudanese community is trust and it's tied in with a whole lot of things like Sudanese hospitality, and they don't want to say anything bad to a guest" (Beattie 2011, p. 60). The author also notes that NGO staff suspected that the community members may be hesitant to provide negative feedback because they did not want to upset the donor. The community was grateful for the services they were receiving from the NGO and explained that the Tear Fund staff travelled to their village from far away because they are committed to working with the poor.

While more community participation could, in principle, help to balance the distortive influences of donor and government demands, there are clearly many issues that constrain the effectiveness of this approach—foremost perhaps the influence that donors have on the way that community participation is implemented and understood.

Conclusion and Agenda for Further Research

While there is a strong theoretical case for promoting accountability—especially within the African context—there is little evidence to suggest that the dominant models of accountability have been successful in promoting ethical behavior, transparency, and effectiveness among African NGOs. Due to the dearth of empirical

research on the topic it is not clear whether the lack of success should be attributed mainly to issues of design or if the reason lies deeper, i.e., that a commitment to accountability is an inherent conviction and external factors may be unable to effectively facilitate and nurture accountable and transparent behavior.

The literature appears to suggest that the accountability demands of donors and government may be creating distortions that are discouraging more authentic and arguably more valuable forms of accountability that are focused on the relationship between NGOs and project beneficiaries. This is in line with the findings of Burger and Owens (2010) that concluded that NGOs often conform to imposed accountability guidelines only on a superficial level. The empirical analysis suggests that the gap between what they say and what they do emerges because of funding pressures and conflicting demands from various stakeholders.

More empirical work is required to examine under what circumstances accountability schemes may contribute to NGO performance. For instance, given the widespread implementation of more restrictive legislation on NGO regulation and the introduction of peer review schemes, it may be worthwhile to assess the impact of such schemes across a number of countries.

Furthermore, there are only a few studies that explore the roots of accountability and the implicit assumptions behind it. There is definitely room for more conceptual work in this area. Finally, more case studies are needed to showcase successful alternative models of accountability that may be more suitable to the African context.

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Part II
Regional Perspectives

Chapter 7
Civil Society in the Maghreb: Lessons from the Arab Spring

James Sater

Introduction

The sudden eruption of revolutionary movements in North Africa, the Maghreb, and the overthrow of three leaders in 2011, Muammar Gaddafi, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, and Hosni Mubarak, have given rise to a number of questions with regards to concepts and theories used in Middle East scholarship. Probably the most important question has been about the validity and maybe misguided use of the "resilience" hypothesis (Gause 2011). This hypothesis asserted that in spite of political openings in virtually all Arab states, authoritarianism remained well entrenched and has merely been "upgraded." According to this analysis, there were very little prospects for real democratic changes, a conclusion that has been proven wrong with the events of January and February 2011. Other questions concerned the role of international actors, the emergence of new geopolitical maps in which smaller, oil-rich countries are taking a more assertive regional role, if not lead. Domestically, questions occurred concerning the role of youth and poverty in non-oil-rich countries such as Tunisia and Egypt in sparkling revolutionary movements.

With the revolutionary changes occurring, it is interesting to review in more detail some of the other hypotheses and concepts that scholars have used. One such concept is that of civil society which, discursively at least, has been at the heart of many political transformations that took place in North Africa since the early 1990s. These transformations not only concerned civil society proper: Algeria has witnessed parliamentary elections since 1991, followed by a military coup, civil war, and a return to unstable peace under military rule since the late 1990s. Morocco has witnessed two constitutional amendments (1992 and 1996), one complete constitutional overhaul (2011), as well as regular parliamentary elections since Mohamed VI's accession to the throne in 1999. Until its ultimate overthrow, the Tunisian regime established a police state after a brief period of multiparty elections and overall political liber-

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alization. All of this occurred in the aftermath of Habib Bourguiba's removal from power by the then Prime Minister Ben Ali in 1987 (Murphy 1999).

The burgeoning of civil society groups in the Maghreb has been shaped by these events, as I will elaborate in detail underneath. To begin with, it is noteworthy that human rights groups, women's rights, and minority rights organizations, have become very active in Morocco and Algeria. Developmental and neighborhood nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have also proliferated in these countries. In contrast, Tunisia's police state and virtual single party regime made civil society groups partisan, and put severe limitations on the freedom of association and speech until this regime's ultimate overthrow in January 2011.

The Idea

In the study of Maghrebi politics, civil society has been used as an analytical tool in relation to the study of democratization and democracy. In a nutshell, during the 1990s partially influenced by democratic transitions in Eastern Europe and Latin America, as well as by the transition paradigm established by O'Donnel et al. (1986), some authors have viewed civil society as a precondition for, and as a factor positively influencing the establishment of democratic rule. Other scholars working later in the 2000s and influenced by theoretical paradigms of Gramsci (2011), adapted to Middle East scholarship by Nazih Ayubi (1995), viewed civil society in the Maghreb neither as a precondition, nor as a factor necessarily positively influencing democratic transition. Instead, they understood civil society as a new aspect of state society relations that emerged in the late 1990s as part of the reestablishment of authoritarian rule in the Middle East region (Liverani 2007; Sater 2007; Cavatorta and Durac 2011).

Consequently, the concept of civil society as the social–political space between the family and the state received a lot of attention from scholars and policy makers. While not all authors believed in the normative dimension with regards to democratization (as a precondition for, or factor positively influencing the establishing of democracy), normative analysis still framed much of the discussion given the authoritarian character of North African states. This is because civil society is conventionally understood as primarily consisting of NGOs, which pursue economic, political, legal, social, and/or religious objectives, and therefore remains a key component in participatory democratic theory (Putman 1994).

Yet, even if normative analysis was not directly expressed as was the case in the 1990s, it still informed analysis quite substantially when civil society was considered as an independent variable for the analysis of political change. For example, a recent, thorough analysis of civil society in the Arab world which aimed at being primarily empirical concluded that "if civil society activism is . . . charged with realistic expectations, it might yet turn out to be a significant agent of change." (Cavatorta and Durac 2011, p. 159) The reasons why the development of civil society did not lead to democratic changes were not only related to the state's reluctance and its coercive

apparatus, but also particular features that characterized civil society under authoritarian conditions. This led to the following characterization of Arab civil society (ibid. pp. 142–143):

1. Absence of a strong prodemocracy civil activisms and tendencies for cooperation with the regime due to authoritarian constraints.
2. Legal and institutional limitations of associational activities.
3. Divisions between secular and Islamist actors of civil society.
4. Sectarian and tribal divisions.

All these characteristics did not lead to the conclusion that civil society has been absent in the Arab world. Rather, these features mean that organizations work under particular constraints that make it difficult for them to push for democratic changes. In fact, as Cavatorta and Durac have observed, recent scholarship on civil society has also revised the role played by such groups in the democratic transitions in Latin America and Eastern Europe, where other factors, such as new reformist actors (Gorbachev), or in the case of Argentina, failed military adventurism in the Malvinas (Falklands) may have played a far greater role (p. 9). More than that, in the Arab world it has been repeatedly argued that the toleration and promotion of increased civil society activity should rather be regarded as an aspect of "Upgraded Authoritarianism" (Heydemann 2007) that Middle East countries have been undergoing since the early 1990s.

As I will argue in this chapter, after the Arab spring it appears not only that liberalized civil society could be regarded as one aspect of upgraded authoritarianism. Rather, it is a striking feature that the two Maghrebi countries with most oppressive restrictions on civil society, Tunisia and Libya, are now in the process of establishing (liberal?) democracies. Hence, the resilience of authoritarianism and the existence of a liberalized civil society in Algeria and Morocco have been two factors that have had a strong correlation in the Maghreb and, arguably, the Mashreq too.[1] This means conversely that there is a strong negative correlation between the repression of independent civil society activities and political stability of authoritarian rule.

The reasons why there has been a negative correlation can be derived from an analysis of some of the key features of civil society.

First, as I will show, secular and Islamist divisions remain strongly antagonistic, and have not led to a unity of forces between prodemocracy movements.

Second, these divisions have been successfully used by authoritarian rulers to create a divide and rule strategy.

Third, by allowing for limited civil society activity, Arab authoritarian states have been able to co-opt a sociopolitical elite into the authoritarian state, mobilizing the argument that the certainty of limited liberalism is more desirable than the uncertainty of democratic election and the rise of populist-Islamist forces. In this sense, the actual rise of populist-Islamist forces in Tunisia after the demise of Ben Ali remains an important continuation of established political practices.

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[1] The Mashreq is commonly referred to as consisting of Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Palestinian territory.

Fourth, a liberal sphere of social-political activism together with legitimacy based on limited liberalism can play an important role not just in co-optation of individuals, but more importantly in the co-optation of, and defusing of potentially challenging public discourses. As I show presently, given the extensive clampdown on independent journalists and human rights organizations in Tunisia, this has been the most striking difference between civil societies in Algeria and Morocco on one hand, and Tunisia on the other.

Clearly, the revolutionary movements in Arab republics can easily be analyzed with reference to institutional differences between Arab republics and monarchies that Anderson showed (1991). Yet, a closer examination reveals that the state's ability to defuse potentially challenging discourses has left in the Maghreb both a monarchy *and* a republic relatively untouched. In turn, Tunisia demonstrates that repressive tactics are not enough to contain challengers, and that "old" authoritarianism is significantly weaker than its "upgraded" counterpart in Algeria and Morocco.

Legitimacy in Crisis

To understand the appearance and strengthening of civil society in the Maghreb, political economy approaches have pointed at the retreat of the developmental state that monopolized economic and political authority in the postindependence period (Hudson 1979). By the late 1970s, it became clear that the state could not live up to its postindependence promise of providing municipal services, jobs, economic development, healthcare, as well as quality education. Instead, it was virtually immobilized by a debt crisis that, until recently, plagued its public finances. The legitimacy crisis was probably the most pronounced in Algeria, where the rhetoric of a "breached pact" was used by many political actors. Ultimately, this culminated in the so-called bread riots in Algiers of October 1988, and civil war from 1991 to 1999. In Tunisia, the legitimacy crisis was not quite as profound as the state had already pursued a liberal-economic policy since 1969. Still, in the 1980s Morocco and Tunisia actively pursued privatization campaigns and decreased public sector expansion, with political rhetoric focusing on partnership and private sector responsibility for the creation of jobs and economic development (Catusse 2008). Due to lack of extensive oil income, the Tunisian economy did not crash quite as hard as Algeria's did in the 1980s when oil prices hit rock bottom throughout the second half of the 1980s and 1990s. Yet, partially as a consequence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) prescribed Structural Adjustment measures, the secular state's promises of rapid economic growth, employment, and prosperity rapidly faltered throughout the 1980s. With the rise of Islamic movements in the Middle East and in particular the influence of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, all three Maghrebi countries witnessed the rising influence of Islamic political movements and opposition.

The legitimacy crisis was met by Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia by a period of political liberalization, which meant *inter alia* the legalization of plural political parties and elections as a way to contain the rising political frustration of a new generation

born in the late 1950s and 1960s. This was especially important in Algeria, where neither the struggle for independence nor the colonial period, were any longer part of the living memory of the younger population. With regards to the rising influence of the Islamic movement, Tunisia and Algeria quickly moved from liberalization policies to confrontation and oppression, and in the case of Tunisia, a reestablishment of former single party rule Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD). This oppression was couched in terms of saving the modern state from being overrun by conservative Islamic forces aspiring to create an Iranian-style Islamic republic. Given some of the violent excesses, the unclear vocabulary used by Islamist forces especially in Algeria, as well as the crushing electoral victory of Islamists in Algeria's municipal and national elections in 1989 and 1990, the secular elite often supported the authoritarian state's fight against Islamists. In Tunisia, Murphy (1999, p. 214) called this "L'Effet Ben Ali" which meant a large amount of unity in support of Ben Ali in the early 1990s, from organized labor, secular women's groups, as well as the old state bourgeoisie (Angrist 2007, pp. 180–182). This expressed itself in the country's 1994 presidential election, when Ben Ali won by a landslide. The support for authoritarian clampdown was expressed by the leader of the Tunisian Unionist Democratic Union (UDU) trade union in the following terms:

> As a democrat, my conscience is not clear. I know that there have been human rights abuses. But look at the countries where the Islamists have come to power—Iran, Sudan—none of them are democracies. I know Ghannouchi and Mourou [Ennahda's second in command] very well. But if they came to power, they would have my head. I can't leave that kind of situation to my children (cited in Alexander 2010, p. 66).

From Clashes to Consolidation

It was in this context of ideological clashes that Morocco and Algeria saw the rise of liberal-secular associations working especially in the field of human, women's, and Berber rights on one hand, and the rise of Islamic political-religious charity organizations on the other (*Al Adl Wal Ihssane, Front Islamique du Salut, Jamaa al Islamiya*). Tunisia witnessed a clampdown on, first, the Islamic political organization *al Nahda*, and then the general harassing of groups that attempted to remain independent from the state. From this resulted that civil society was increasingly identified with groups and nongovernmental political activities in Algeria and Morocco, while Tunisia's civil society became partisan and governmental, i.e., mainly allied to the ruling RCD party and controlled by the prime ministerial office *Centre d'Information, de Formation, d'Etudes et de Documentation sur les Assocations,* to which Tunisian organizations had to report. Alternatively, groups were facing harassment (European Union 2012, p. 6). Indeed, the first two countries continued with semicredible electoral politics and changing governments under military supervision (Algeria) and a religious-tribal Kingdom (Morocco). In both countries, Berber rights' associations, women and human rights organizations became powerful vehicles for a new generation of political activists to pursue political changes by resorting to

protest movements, whilst also establishing a fertile ground for the European Union and the USA to provide a veneer of democracy promotion aid in line with new policies established in the post-Cold war era. In contrast, "many Tunisians believe that Ben Ali has been much more inclined ... to use security forces to intimidate the press, the judiciary, and any form of potential opposition. ... The assaults, particularly on journalists, lawyers, and human rights activists, actually have become more frequent in recent years" (Alexander 2010, p. 64). When Tunisia hosted the World Summit on Information Society in 2005, a report by the The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) criticized severe police repression of independent civil society groups, as well as the illegal practices by the above mentioned *Centre d'Information* administrative unit of not issuing receipts to associations that have declared their existence. The lack of such a receipt put these associations' members at risk of legal persecution (FIDH 2005, p. 5). Public protests on socio-economic issues were compared with the era under Bourguiba, limited as they were no longer associated with party politics and barons. Instead, the only vehicle of opposition became human rights groups, whose public appeal though remained fairly reduced (Alexander 2010, p. 65).

In Morocco, the above appeasement and inclusion of civil society groups had an important precedent in electoral politics. Starting from the late 1970s King Hassan II ensured that opposition political parties recognized the monarchy's right to rule, by making political leaders of these parties participate in governments. If these politicians criticized any of the King's decisions or questioned his prerogatives, he would alternate the carrot with a stick policy of selectively imprisoning individuals (Deneoux and Maghraoui 1998, pp. 104–130). The successful imposition of this policy by the late 1980s meant that human rights organizations were offered more space to investigate human rights violations, and King Hassan could himself respond to such criticism, thereby guaranteeing an even larger consensus in the developing civil society concerning the monarchy's way of government. He established human rights ministries and consultative councils in which since the early 1990s leading human rights activists and lawyers, such as Omar Azziman, were given prominent positions. The human rights organization *Organisation Marocaine des Droits de L'Homme* was allowed to operate in 1989 and others such as the *Association Marocaine des Droits de L'Homme* were no longer harassed (Waltz 1995). Very soon thereafter, women's rights activists became very active in collecting one million signatures in 1993, asking for critical changes in the country's family code that significantly restricted women's equality with men, the *Moudawana*. Berber (*Amazigh*) rights activists also rallied in newly founded organizations, such as Tillil (freedom), to demand the official recognition of the Berber language (*Tamazight)* and culture.

It should be pointed out that these activities as well as parliamentary institutions did not challenge the regime *per se*, as long as they did not directly question the monarchy's ultimate authority to make decisions on behalf of the Moroccan people. Instead, they remained outside of the power struggle between contenders for power, i.e., authorized political parties and the monarchy, which by the early 1990s, have ceased to be confrontational. A process of mutually acceptable political unification had been under way since Hassan II and his "opponents" called for an *alternance* government, in which these opposition parties were to obtain governmental responsibility

under Royal supervision.[2] When this project of *alternance* succeeded in 1997–1998, it fundamentally facilitated all these associational activities, and as early as 1996, the state became a proactive supporter of discourses and reform projects that were initiated by civil society groups.

In spite of the very different circumstances characterized by a civil war between the state and Islamist insurgents, a similar consolidation occurred in Algeria. In 1999, Clement Henry asserted Algeria's exceptionalism compared with other authoritarian Middle East states due to its "vibrant civil society." This "vibrant civil society" even became paradigmatic for some scholars, to the extent that Layachi argued that "instating civil society" rather than "instating the state" would be a more viable option for a new Algerian polity (Liverani 2007, p. 72).

While such exaggerated opinions should be viewed with caution, the rise of civil society was also here closely linked to state policies. Starting from the mid-1980s, the state adopted a new discourse with the objective of "encouraging the blossoming of associative movements" with the result that in official discourse "associational life [became] the embodiment of a new form of citizenship" (Liverani 2007, p. 82). It also appears to be linked to decreasing state protection in economic life. As Liverani pointed out, the new liberal association law 90–31 of 1990[3] was passed only a few weeks after a law was passed abolishing permanent employment contracts (Liverani 2007, p. 82). Musette even argues that after 1990, it was the state that created the first associations as civil society activity was viewed with little enthusiasm by the general public (2000, p. 103). As Liverani contends, this was all related to the exit of Algeria's professional elite in the second half of the 1980s, especially to France, which left no middle class bureaucracy in Algeria willing to assume either political or economic responsibility. Consequently, the state assumed continuous responsibility for civil society groups, in particular by funding and thereby distributing its oil and gas income. Since the 1990 law on associative freedom, at least 11 ministries have opened substantial budget lines for associations working in their various fields of activity, including covering such associations' operating budgets. In some cases, there were not enough associations for the monies distributed through the various ministries and local administrative networks, so that state administrators went on to create new ones (pp. 84–85). This created a substantial amount of state patronage, and associations became part of Algeria's rentier state economy through which oil revenue was distributed to various political clients. As an Algerian journalist has put it: "Associations, like the rest of Algeria, run on gas. If oil prices are high, then that year the associative movement will be rich" (p. 84). Add to that the emergency law of 1992, in place until 2011, and the administrative control appears extreme (Cavatorta and Durac 2011, p. 40).

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[2] Mohamed Tozy called this type of politics "defused" (Tozy 1989).

[3] The old one followed a 1964 decree which stated that walis (prefects) should "impede the formation of associations that, under the guise of social, cultural, or artistic activities, tend to pursue political ends that undermine the internal and external security of the State" (cited in Cavatorta and Durac, p. 39).

Clearly, with Algeria's fragile security situation, this control appeared important to ensure the protection of the state from Islamist insurgents. However, additional protection was also required to stabilize the regime internally, and in particular to protect the institutions of the state that were involved in the civil war as well. In practice, this meant safeguarding agents of the state from legal action or other infringements on their reputation, in order to create a consensus inside of the state and to avoid backstabbing that would threaten political stability. Therefore, the 2004 Charter for Peace and Reconciliation, a generalized amnesty of those accused of crimes during the civil war, did not include any mentioning of crimes that had been committed by agents of the state, as if there had not been any.[4] To add insult to injury, another law was introduced shortly thereafter which provided imprisonment of up to 5 years for statements or actions that "harmed state institutions," "the good reputation of its agents," or "the image of Algeria internationally" (cited in Cavatorta and Durac 2011, p. 43.)

Divisions and Co-Optation in the 2000s

In addition to such state measures, the civil war left Algerian society scarred, while divisions concerning civil rights easily surfaced. The first issue was that of how to deal with the history of civil war and reconciliation. The second was that of women's rights.

History of Civil War and Reconciliation The terror tactics that many Islamist armed groups used against the civilian population in their fight against the secular state divided secular human rights activists. Those who advocated in favor of the rights of victims of state violence (many of those victims were Islamists) invariably placed themselves against the secular state that has prevented an Islamist takeover, and could potentially be viewed as sympathizing with Islamists. Consequently, the state successfully positioned itself against potential distracters, both democracy and human rights advocates, as the protector of the Algerian nation and its values.

This precarious position of civil rights groups and ensuing divisions are even more noticeable in the case of the above mentioned amnesty that the state legislated. Those who were against "Peace and Reconciliation," were they positioning themselves against peace? This logic has hampered cooperation even among organizations which defend the rights of victims of primarily Islamist violence. For example, the *Organisation Nationale des Familles Victimes du Terrorisme* (ONFVT) expressed the view that it was necessary for Algeria to move on. As Cavatorta and Durac reason:

> A number of families might genuinely believe that the reconciliation plan implemented since 2006 is the best option for them personally, and for the country, because it allows a certain level of responsibility to be allocated, but also permits a degree of political flexibility in moving on. A lack of complete accountability is traded in favour of future stability (2011, p. 48).

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[4] For an account of the involvement of state authorities in some of the atrocities, see Habib Souadia, 2001, *La Sale Guerre*, Paris, La Decouverte.

This discussion shows the divisiveness of rights-oriented issues in the aftermath of civil war and violence, given the multiplicity of causes and concerns. In such a situation, the role of civil society in promoting a unified platform remains very limited, and the authoritarian imposition of values and rules meets little resistance. Effectively, the state can overcome its partisan role, and can promote itself as a guardian state.

Women's Rights The question of women's rights has become an even more divisive topic due to Islamists' use of terror tactics such as rape and forceful use of "temporary marriages" that directly targeted women during the civil war. In addition, Islamists' radical "moral–ethical" objectives, such as excluding women from the workplace and compulsory veiling, formed a crucial part of the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) political ideology. To counter such tendencies, there are many associations that advocate equality between the sexes especially with reference to the legal disadvantages that the 1984 *Shari'a*-inspired family code established with regards to divorce, tutorship, polygamy, etc. For most of these organizations, the Algerian military state with its generals "were seen as better than the alternative," i.e., Islamist insurgents (Ibid). This created a natural proximity between the authoritarian military state, and secular women's rights organizations. In spite of this proximity, though, women's rights activists continued to rally in favor of changes in the family code, while expressing their opposition to Islamist politics. This opposition also means a lack of cooperation with many other Islamist organizations that promote primarily economic participation and welfare of women along Islamic lines.

Above all, the questions of (1) civil war and reconciliation and (2) women's rights meant that in spite of increasing activism in civil society, the authoritarian state was not challenged. The only challenges occurred during clashes with youth in Tizi Ouzout, the Kabylian capital and the heart of Berber cultural and political revivalism in the early 2000s, and during parliamentary and presidential election campaigns which usually see some violence and protests. Yet, the quiet changes inside Algeria during the Arab spring demonstrate how such challenges have been fairly marginal and well managed due to both the control of, and the financial rewards given to civil society groups on one hand, and the overall divisions and ambivalence toward the state on the other.

In Morocco, neither such strong divisions nor a similar amount of financial control exist. There are only a handful of organizations that benefit from the status of *Utilité Publique,* and most receive their funding from foreign agencies. In addition, a longer history of political pluralism has made the use of liberticidal laws less politically acceptable. In turn, given the nonchallenging character of demands emanating from civil society groups which focused on abuses that took place under the ancient regime of Hassan II prior to the current regime's coming to power under Mohamed VI in 1999, neither financial nor security control was required to secure the state from challengers as in neighboring Algeria. Yet, this did not mean that the Moroccan state was oblivious to Islamist or secular challenges. On the Islamist front, it included and legalized the more docile Islamist Justice and Development Party. On the secular

front the state initiated and responded to these demands by emphasizing new regime characteristics under Mohamed VI in contraposition to those of his father, Hassan II.

This process started one month after his accession to power when King Mohamed VI declared in August 1999 that women's rights have been ignored, and that the Moroccan woman needed to have her rights protected. This continued in November 1999 when he inaugurated a "New Concept of Authority" in which the protection of individual rights was to become a priority. As a first sign of his seriousness, Mohamed VI dismissed the much-loathed minister of interior, Driss Basri. Other strong policies further transformed "reform" together with the demands of civil society into a major pillar of state legitimacy. In 2002, the King responded to Berber demands by establishing a Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture (IRCAM). In 2003, a Royal commission chaired by the King presented its reform of the conservative women's rights code, the *Moudawana.* In this reform, most, if not all, demands that women's rights organizations have articulated since the 1993 one-million signature campaign were realized.

Yet, probably the most significant response to reform pressure that emanated from civil society came in 2004, when the King announced the establishment of public hearings for victims of state violence during what Moroccans call the Years of Lead under Hassan II. Family members of disappeared political opponents, prisoners who experienced torture, and who witnessed extra-juridical killings, could speak on public TV about their experiences. Called Equity and Reconciliation (IER), this process was the Moroccan version of South Africa's Justice and Reconciliation Commission, as a way to reunite the people with its own past. Politically, it served the above purpose to clearly define the new regime as opposed to the previous one.

In all these instances, the King quite clearly took a lead concerning demands that emanated from secular civil rights organizations, and in many cases appointed their leaders, such as Driss Benzekri, to head these new institutions (IER). The advantage of this strategy is that the monarchy could thereby define the debate in greater detail, and avoid being challenged in ways that would put at risk the monarchy's authoritarian role in government. While King Mohamed VI used this very strongly to draw a distinction between his rule and that of his father, it needs to be remembered that this has been a constant feature of governance in Morocco. Sater (2007) illustrates this using the following chart, a quantitative study of articles written on the topic of human rights. It illustrates how the state already dominated the human rights discourse already in the years preceding Mohamed VI from 1995 to 1999 (Fig. 7.1).[5]

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[5] "Civil society activity" is defined as covering the work of human rights groups, publication of human rights groups' statements, but also articles that have as their topic human rights without being written on occasion of state-activity or civil society-activity (for instance human rights in Palestine, women and human rights, etc.). In order to illustrate the state's domination, this approach seems justified. "State-activity" is usually the organization of a conference, the publication of a minister's speech covering human rights, the King's reception of a delegation of Advisory Council members, etc. This analysis is based on 115 articles that were published in *Le Matin du Sahara et du Maghreb, La Vie Economique, Maroc Hebdo International, L'Opinion, Libération, Al Bayane* from 1994 to 1999. (Sater 2007, p. 124).
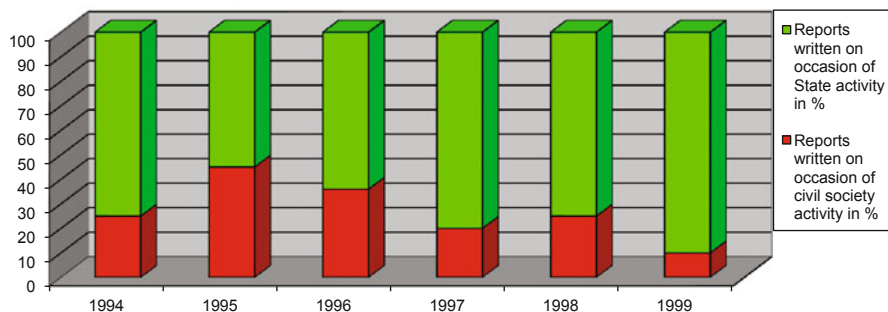
Fig. 7.1 State and civil society participation in the human rights discourse, 1994–1999 in Morocco

Conclusion: Civil Society and the Arab Spring in the Maghreb

From the above analysis, the general features of civil society as outlined in the introduction appear quite clearly. While there is a notable absence of strong prodemocracy civil activisms and strong tendencies for cooperation with the regime, legal and institutional limitations as well as financial control of associational activities are particularly prevalent in Algeria, and divisions between secular and Islamist actors of civil society lead to a lack of reaching out and mass-based street politics. At the same time, the only notable protests to the regime were based on Berber, Kabylian youth activists, which remained geographically and, arguably, ethnically isolated. It is therefore no surprise that a recent evaluation of civil society and the Arab spring in the Maghreb observed the lack of mobilization from civil society during the protests in Morocco, (Dalmasso 2012) and the timid participation in Algeria (Willis 2012, pp. 151–153). As I have argued here, the features that have characterized civil society in both countries can be used to explain why the Arab spring has kept the authoritarian structures in both countries largely unchallenged, whereas Tunisia's authoritarian regime disappeared as it had no resources available, nor any experience in dealing constructively with street pressure.

First, in Tunisia the mass indignation and protests after the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazziz in Sidi Bouzid was so unexpected and resonated so strongly partly because the number of socioeconomic protests were quite limited. Hence, there was no independent and credible organization available that channeled economic and social grievances of Tunisians toward the regime. Consequently, there were also no political channels that the state could instinctively revert back to, in order to pursue credible appeasement policies. Instead, the presidency isolated itself by firing live ammunition at unarmed protesters. This is what Alexander identified as insulation and isolation of the Tunisian presidency (2010, p. 66). In turn, both Morocco and Algeria have witnessed such self-immolation of unemployed graduates and protests with such regularity that public protests were hardly revolutionary. To the contrary, there have even been protest structures with links to the regime that if not controlled, then at least pacified them. The case of the Moroccan unemployed graduates association

that has been protesting since the early 1990s and whose leaders have regularly been given jobs in the Moroccan administration is particularly instructive (Bogaert and Emperador 2011).

Second, especially Algerians' history of conflict has produced strong divisions not only along Islamist or secular lines but also more importantly along security versus liberal lines. This means that on one hand, the Algerian state is contested as evidenced by the Berber movement, the Islamist challenge of the 1990s, as well as the secular parties that form part of the political opposition. Yet, like in Morocco these movements have been unable to produce an alternative vision of the state that could inform protesters.

Third, not only that there were strong personal, financial, and organizational links, probably more important is the experience of the state in co-opting and thereby defusing potentially challenging discourses that evolve from civil society. When during the Arab spring Moroccan demonstrators demanded a constitutional monarchy in which the King would reign and not rule in line with a new constitution, the King could convincingly appear on national TV and proclaim that he understood the legitimate demands of the Moroccan people, and that he wished to introduce constitutional changes. In response to this attempt at silencing the revolutionary movement, TelQuel—a widely read Moroccan weekly reformist journal—cynically emphasized the King's ability to co-opt even revolutionary movements in the following way: it pictured the King on the throne and titled: *The King is the Revolution*. As mentioned above, civil society as a sphere where public discourses are produced has been particularly able to allow authoritarian rulers a very important degree of control, which they could use to defuse threatening discourses. Clearly, the Ben Ali regime had no such experience and, together with some of its Middle Eastern counterparts, had no experience with adapting to pressure when it had to. This means that both the resilience and the civil society hypotheses reinforce each other, in that liberalized civil society can turn out to be quite supportive of authoritarian rule. This does not mean that the Arab spring has been the litmus test for the role that civil society plays in the resilience of authoritarian rule; other factors such as personality cult, political economy of rent, relative autonomy of security services, and tribal and sectarian identities play an equal, if not more important, role. Yet, civil society remains an important piece in the political puzzle that may explain the occurrence of revolutionary movements, or the lack thereof.

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Chapter 8
Civil Society Organizations and the State in East Africa: From the Colonial to the Modern Era

Priscilla Wamucii

Introduction

Civil society is generally recognized as a central component of democracy and development in the contemporary world. Its apparent emphasis on pluralism, political participation, accountability, and transparency constitutes the potential to transform African governments and societies. Although successes in achieving these ideals vary, there is a general agreement that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have left an indelible mark on governance by directing popular engagements toward political activism. In spite of the virtues associated with CSOs, conceptualizing the term has been contentious mainly because African collective organizations prior to colonialism might not have supported civil society as currently defined in contemporary contexts. Notwithstanding, existing literature suggests that precolonial African political systems recognized the role of popular participation in decision-making and governance (Oloka-Onyango and Barya 1997; Nasong'o and Murunga 2007). Opoku-Mensah (2007) has noted that civil society as it existed in the precolonial period in Africa was composed of community institutions, including self-help and solidarity groups whose primary objective was to cultivate solidarity among members and promote the development of groups of individuals settled or originating from similar localities.

Indeed, a close examination of CSOs development in East Africa's Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, reveals that a combination of kinship, age groups, lineages, self-help groups, trade associations, and communal labor groups were a part of the social fabric in precolonial times. In Kenya, for example, the regulation of public affairs depended on the horizontal networks of kinship rights and obligations that were advanced by the structure of the extended family (Nasong'o and Murunga

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2007). These social systems allowed for guaranteed access to the means of production. Groups of people related by kin often pooled resources to accomplish tasks that would benefit the community as a whole.

In light of the foregoing, this chapter defines civil society as "an aggregate of institutions whose members are engaged primarily in a complex of nonstate activities—economic and cultural production, voluntary associations, and household life—and who in this way preserve and transform their identity by exercising all sorts of pressures or controls upon state institutions" (Makumbe 1998, p. 305). Examples of civil society formations include nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), religious organizations, trade unions, professional groups, youth movements, women groups, business groups, and the media. My main objective is to situate CSOs in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania within a historical template. This chapter unfolds as follows: First, a background of CSOs in the colonial period is presented. This is followed by an examination of CSOs after independence. The third section locates CSOs within contemporary times by discussing the organizations' achievements, relationship with the state, and constraints faced by the sector. In short, this chapter illuminates how various economic models and political transformations shaped CSOs' identity. More specifically, contradictions emerging from successful collective action that led to the collapse of colonialism are presented against the backdrop of subsequent constriction of public spaces which occurred after independence. Finally, this chapter highlights some challenges faced by CSOs in the three countries as well as the organizations' limitations.

Origins of CSOs in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania

Current perceptions and growth of civil society in the three countries under review can be explained through an analysis of their respective political and socioeconomic landscapes. Political systems played central roles in the development of CSOs in the three countries. Colonial politics led to the exclusion of various groups resulting in the emergence of pioneer social movements. In Kenya, unions such as the Young Kavirondo Association (later the Kavirondo Taxpayers' Welfare Association), Young Kikuyu Association, Kikuyu Central Association, Taita Hills Association, Akamba, and other ethnic groups were created between the 1920s and 1940s.

Social movements and organizations also emerged in Tanzania during the colonial period. Such groups included trade unions, cooperatives, religious, sports clubs, dance societies, ethnic associations, and occupational associations (Lange et al. 2000). Other groups such as the *Maji Maji* resistance movement played a crucial position in the war against the Germans in the early 1920s. In addition, groups such as the African Association formed in 1929 later evolved into the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), a political party that won the majority of votes in the country's first elections after independence.

Uganda's history is similar to Kenya and Tanzania's. The colonial context was characterized by professional groups, trade unions, and cooperatives. As early

as 1922, the Uganda African Civil Servants Association was established to contest African exclusion from the extension of government bonuses to Europeans and Asians (Oloka-Onyango and Barya 1997). Cooperative organizations, mainly grounded in rural communities, directed their activities toward the Indian's community's monopoly of cotton ginning and coffee processing (Oloka-Onyango and Barya 1997). Mass action first took place through a formal boycott that was organized in 1954 by a loose coalition of traders' organizations. This rally advocated for the African workers rights (Mamdani 1975). Other pioneering associations included the Buganda African Motor Drivers Union and the Uganda African Workers Association (UAWA). Similar to Tanzania's African Association, the Bataka Movement, Uganda Farmers' Union, and the *Bana ba Kintu* were the predecessors of the Uganda National Congress, the country's first political party established in 1952.

Collectively, these emergent groups focused on colonial taxation and unequal labor practices. Religious groups also emerged to counter the influence of Christianity by drawing on African cultural beliefs and traditional religion. As a result of the shrinking associational space, social organizations began to organize more discretely, resulting in the establishment of informal social groups that eventually set the stage for the emergence of resistance groups such as the *Mau Mau* in Kenya.

The colonial governments responded to the above developments by legislating tighter controls on African associations' registration. In Tanzania, authorities barred African civil servants from joining these societies on the pretext that the societies were a cover for political activity as they developed well-organized networks with branches in all the major towns (Lange et al. 2000). In Uganda, statutes such as the 1946 Cooperative Act, which effectively placed the cooperatives under state supervision, were utilized (Mamdani 1975).

Independence

In the 1960s, the multiple and coordinated efforts of CSOs culminated in the independence of the three East African countries. Trade unions, ethnic groups, and resistance movement mobilized supporters both at local and at national levels, exerting pressure on colonialists to relinquish power. The struggles' successes were illustrated by the political independence of Tanzania (1961), Uganda (1962), and Kenya (1963). However, CSOs' momentum in the three countries was significantly reversed after independence as they all gradually reverted to single-party political structures.

In all the three countries, a conservative turn was reinforced by the pioneering presidents' newfangled rhetoric which emphasized national unity. For instance, Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta emphasized the pooling together of resources or *harambee* as an appeal not only for self-help, but also for national unity (Maxon 1996). Harambee formed the foundation for nonprofit initiatives in the country through its emphasis on the spirit of volunteerism (Kanyinga and Mitullah 2007). During the first 2 years after independence, Kenyans responded positively to the call. In addition to building

of roads and the construction of dams and water pipelines, self-help efforts were directed to the construction of health centers, and schools. As such, these efforts became a tool for national mobilization. However, *harambees* gradually became (re)politicized as provincial and administrative structures and local agents of KANU attempted to control civil society by monitoring their activities. Self-help groups, cooperatives, and unions operating in the voluntary sector were infiltrated by KANU agents, and their activities were increasingly undermined (Kanyinga 1998). Trade unions were also muzzled through the Trade Union Dispute Act (1965) which outlawed industrial action. The unions were further restricted by the unification of trade unions under the umbrella of the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU), with the government playing a central role in approving the union's leadership. Through the Societies Act (1968), the state controlled the registration and activities of associational organizations.

Surprisingly, President Daniel Arap Moi (1978–2002) adopted the policies established by his predecessor through the *Nyayo* philosophy literally translated as following Kenyatta's footsteps. Again, CSOs were restricted mainly through legislation. NGOs were banned, co-opted and their leaders arrested. The 1980s saw a peak in NGO activity. The number of grassroots' self-help organizations, for example, numbered 26,000 in 1988, up from less than 5,000 in 1980 (Fowler 1991, p. 55). This period also heralded a shift in focus from concerns about relief and development to political activism and advocacy (Matanga 2004). Moi had a tenuous relationship with CSOs, especially NGOs, because CSOs were the only credible alternative voices in the absence of formal political organizations from 1982 to 1991—a period when Kenya was a one-party state (Matanga 2004). Some of the organizations that fell victim to Moi's wrath were ethnic welfare associations such as the Akamba Union, The Abaluhya Union, the Luo Union, and Gikuyu, Embu, Meru Association (GEMA). GEMA had amassed power and financial resources during President Kenyatta's regime and upon his death made attempts to prevent Moi from constitutionally assuming the presidency (Matanga 2004). NGOs, for instance, the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake—the largest national women's organization were also co-opted by government. In addition, the Student Organization of Nairobi University (SONU), the Matatu Vehicles Owners Association (MVOA)—representing private mini bus owners, and the Public Service Club were banned (Ndegwa 1996). The regime also interfered in the internal elections of the Law Society of Kenya.

The aforementioned events elicited discontent from various quarters. The Catholic Church, the National Council of Churches, various political and academic leaders, and other civic bodies worked toward mobilizing the masses around antidemocratic practices. Church groups and urban-based NGOs in 1987 vigorously opposed the new electoral system of queue voting amongst other alleged abuses of the democratic process (Matanga 2004). In an unprecedented move, other organizations such as the Green Belt Movement led by the late Nobel laureate and environmentalist, Professor Wangari Maathai openly challenged the government's decisions by taking legal action against the state. Civil society became a threat to government, prompting Moi to announce the creation of a directorate to coordinate NGO activities and to ensure that their activities were compatible with the "national interest" (Ndegwa 1996).

This development eventually led to the 1990 NGO Act that was aimed at stalling the activities of strong critics of the Moi regime.

Tanzania's situation was similar to Kenya's in a number of ways. Shortly after Tanzanian independence in 1963, President Julius Nyerere and the TANU officially banned opposition political parties with the intent of unifying the country under a single political banner. Consistent with the Kenyan case, local participation was encouraged but only within the confines of the state and the ruling party. For example, the Tanganyika Federation of Labor, TANU's supporter in the nationalist movement, was banned and replaced by the National Union of Tanganyika Workers (NUTA), which was controlled by the government. The cooperative movement was also banned and substituted with the Union of Cooperative Societies, initiated by TANU. Other organizations affiliated with TANU were the Union of Tanzanian Women (UWT), the Youth Organization, and the Tanzanian Parents Association (Lange et al. 2000). All unions based on ethnic identity were also banned, while religious associations were deterred from engaging in political activities. The chiefdom system was abolished in 1962 leading to the demise of some traditional organizations.

Tanzania's adoption of *Ujamaa* (African socialism) through the Arusha Declaration in 1967 also shaped CSOs' trajectory in the country. Although *Ujamaa* was presented as a popular model that could promote rural development and one that was geared toward local participation, the model had a number of limitations. First, the village councils derived from the model lacked autonomy because they were controlled by the central government. Second, *Ujamaa's* promotion of the nationalization of private entities resulted in the pauperization of the middle class and private businesses. Achievements in the health and education sector were also reversed (Ngowi 2009). In the 1980s, as the government began to acknowledge its limitations because of social and economic decline, nonstate actors were encouraged to form social welfare organizations.

In contrast to Kenya and Tanzania, Uganda's history was marked by political instability evidenced by multiple coups, violence, and conflict. Although the slogan "One Nation, One People" was popular after independence, political and civil activities were not encouraged (Oloka-Onyango and Barya 1997). Subsequently, Uganda experienced a succession of civilian and military regimes. Of these regimes, Idi Amin's government was notable due to its record of unprecedented human rights violations which effectively divided the country and severely curtailed CSO activities. According to Oloka-Onyango and Barya (1997), the repression of civil society assumed "genocidal dimensions." Cases of abductions and disappearances were not uncommon. The government took over the media and some religious groups were outlawed. The women's movement was banned in 1978 when women voiced resistance against the government's policies. The only organization that was exempt from this ban was the National Council of Women that was created by Amin's government (Tripp 1998). Other national organizations disappeared, kept a low profile, or became temporarily inactive during Amin's murderous presidency.

In 1986, Uganda's situation changed after the National Resistance Movement's (NRM) Yoweri Museveni became president. Driven by Uganda's turbulent political history, Museveni's government restricted political and civic activities under

the pretext of national healing (Mwenda 2007). This was an acceptable approach because of its refreshing focus on advancing national unity, eliminating sectarian violence and rebuilding the country's political and economic sectors (Kasfir 1998). However, even as the political situation improved and economic recovery took place, Museveni's hostility to alternative political voices remained. In 1995, constitutional changes sidelined political parties, while autonomous NGOs were co-opted or silenced (Dicklitch 2002). The NRM encouraged some societal engagement, but instructively only within the Movement's system through the establishment of grassroots Local Councils/Committees (LCs). The Movement also created a number of democratic institutions, including the Constitutional Commission (1988), the Human Rights Commission (1986), and the Electoral Commission (1995; Dicklitch 2002).

As seen above, the three countries adopted approaches that were based on popular principles including an emphasis on collective action in nation building. However, these overarching principles were not always accompanied by participatory engagements of citizens. Political leadership marked with authoritarianism constrained independent civil formations. The subsequent era of multiparty politics seemed to signal optimism for civic avenues as African countries adopted liberal democracy.

The Advent of Multiparty Politics

The 1990s marked a defining period for CSOs in East Africa. NGOs grew in the three countries. These developments were mainly precipitated by donors' preference for nongovernmental actors, the promotion of liberal democracy ideals, and the deteriorating social and economic conditions. Consequently, there were shifts in the balance of power in civil society as organizations with a mass membership, such as trade unions, lost considerable influence while NGO intermediaries and business associations grew in number and influence (Robinson and Friedman 2007; cf. Chap. 14 by Jacob Mati in this book).

In Kenya, as economic conditions worsened, particularly in the 1980s, individuals created new organizations to meet these needs. This epoch coincided with the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) or political conditionalities that required African states to adopt liberal democracy which among other things obliged governments to become more receptive to civil society. In 1992, Kenya's Moi, under pressure from donors and local CSOs, allowed for the reintroduction of multiparty politics. CSOs, however, continued to be restricted through legislation. As the calls for political pluralism reached a crescendo, bilateral donors withheld program aid funds as a means of asserting pressure on the Moi regime to open up the democratic space for its citizens. Many donors instead diverted their funds to urban CSOs focusing on human rights and governance.

In neighboring Tanzania, after Nyerere's term and the end of socialism, subsequent leaders embraced capitalism and social market. The economy improved. In the late 1990s, for example, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) declared

Tanzania the best macroeconomic performer in Africa, based on indicators such as economic growth, inflation, and public expenditures (Hyden 1999). The shift to capitalism impacted CSOs in a number of ways. Private ownership began to take root in the country. The country was also integrated into the global economy which led to an increase in financial assistance. Furthermore, although state socialism was successful at a cultural level, economically the country witnessed a setback. State ownership had concentrated the country's resources in the hands of leaders of the *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM), leading to a lack of accountability and transparency, and corruption (Hyden 2005; Kelsall 2002). Consequently, the country did not grow at the expected speed, leading to the international institutions' demand for CCM to open up the political system to multiparty politics. At the beginning of 1992, the government approved constitutional changes allowing the registration of new political parties. The first multiparty elections were held in 1995. Generally, although many CSOs still focus mainly on social welfare, the organizations have diversified their activities. Specific illustrations include advocacy-oriented organizations such as the Tanzania Coalition on Debt and Development (TCDD) which monitors the country's national debt. Others such as the Legal and Human Rights Center (LHRC) focus on human rights, while the Tanganyika Law Society has been vocal on constitutional reviews.

As illustrated above, the Kenyan and Tanzanian governments' yielded to calls for the adoption of multiparty politics. In Uganda, Museveni's government continued to be intolerant of political dissent. The country experienced strong economic growth rates averaging over 6 % and strong donor support (Dicklitch 2002, p. 206). However, it was not until a referendum in 2005 that the country transitioned to political pluralism. This shift was partial because although the opposition was allowed to form political parties; their activities are still restricted and are characterized by intimidations and arrests. Notwithstanding various challenges, CSOs have participated in two notable events in the contemporary context, the Walk to Work campaign (2011) and the Black Monday (2012). The Walk to Work campaign started by the Activists for Change NGO and supported by opposition parties targeted increased food and fuel prices and high costs of essential commodities. Participants in the campaign encountered police and military brutality. Dr. Kizza Bisigye, the renowned opposition leader was arrested. The Black Monday started by CSOs tackles corruption. As recently as 2013, two Black Monday activists, Arthur Larok and Leonard Okello were arrested for a few hours for handing out anticorruption flyers. Such incidents have deterred CSOs from participating in political advocacy. Even human rights groups such as Human Rights Network (HURINET) avoid direct confrontation with the state by focusing on civil education and legal aid for their members (Robinson and Friedman 2007).

The Contemporary Context: State–CSOs Collaborations

CSOs–state collaborations have become increasingly significant in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, albeit to varying degrees. In the previous sections, I described states' influence on the development of CSOs. In this section, I describe current

relations between various states and CSOs. Notably, CSOs in all three countries work with governments on a number of social and economic initiatives. However, interactions between Kenya's CSOs and the state stand out because unlike in Uganda and Tanzania, the organizations have been influential in policy advocacy. This is partly due to the liberalized political space provided for citizens by the state and a strong middle class. Further, positive advancements in media liberalization and the increase in women's representation in the three countries are attributed to CSOs efforts. Nonetheless, as I show now, governments still wield significant power, thereby limiting CSOs' role in influencing official policies. Moreover, NGO's dependence on funding is also presented as an intractable hurdle. Lastly, the internal problems of CSOs are also discussed.

Kenyan CSOs have adopted central positions in the creation of groundbreaking documents, therefore becoming an integral part of the country's history. Specifically, CSOs participated in the creation of Vision 2030, the government's blue print for Kenya's social, political, and economic development (Kisinga 2009). More important, civic organizations were instrumental in the drafting of Kenya's constitution published in 2010. The sector provided civic education geared toward preparing Kenyans for the national referendum that resulted in the approval of the constitution. In addition, the constitutional reform Committee of Experts (COE) that oversaw the process consisted of a number of individuals who had previously worked on human rights issues. A number of CSOs provided specialized input in the constitution-making process. The Land Sector Nonstate Actors (a network of CSOs), for example, was vocal on the advancement of secure and equitable access and control of land during the drafting of the constitution.

Meanwhile, since the postelection conflict in 2007, CSOs have played a visible role in a number of ways. The Kenyans for Peace Truth and Justice (KPTJ), a coalition of over 30 Kenyan and East African legal human rights and governance organizations, has actively monitored the implementation processes of the mediation agreement. The media has also been instrumental in covering issues of justice associated with the International Criminal Court (ICC) by televising live coverage of the hearings taking place at The Hague.

Despite this seeming as opening for civil society, it must be noted that even under the Mwai Kibaki regime (2002–2013), the National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC) (2003) and the coalition government (2007), CSOs have encountered a number of challenges. The initial challenge was presented by the defection of civil society leaders to government in 2003, resulting in the sector's temporary disorientation. Notable figures from Transparency International, the Centre for Law and Research International, the Federation of Women Lawyers, and the National Council of NGOs joined the government. These developments significantly weakened the position of NGOs by vitiating its human capacity and arguably compromising NGOs' ability to engage the government on critical issues. The government has also been accused of widespread corruption, evidenced by the resignation of John Githongo, the corruption Czar who accused the government of massive corruption and lack of political will to deal with graft (Wrong 2009). In 2009, two activists, Oscar Kamau Kingara and Paul Oulo, working with the Oscar Foundation that closely monitored

government on extrajudicial killings and policy impunity were gunned down. These and similar events have strained relations between government and civil society.

Lastly, although the media has experienced dramatic growth in Kenya since the 1990s, the government still seeks to control the sector's activities as seen in two occurrences. In 2006, the *Standard*, newspaper's editorial offices and printing press were vandalized by policemen. The *Standard* is one of Kenya's leading weekly newspapers that has been in existence since 1902. This paper has been critical of the government's corruption, while the government has repeatedly accused the newspapers of fabricating stories. The government's quest for media control is also illustrated by the amendment of the Kenya Communications Act (1998) in 2009 that gave the government power to raid media houses and control broadcast content. CSOs threatened legal action against the law causing Kibaki to instruct the attorney general and the information minister to examine concerns raised by various media groups.

The pattern of state–CSO relations in Uganda is distinct from Kenya and Tanzania because of the Uganda NRM's adoption of the village-based grassroots structure of political organization and participation which affected the growth of CSOs. As Oloka-Onyango and Barya (1997) have noted, while the LCs were operated by the central government, the councils provided ordinary people in Uganda with the first real taste of democratic rights and freedoms (p. 114). Consequently, the councils created some discontent, especially in regards to civil society activists, some of whom were perceived as distant and elitist. Beyond government-initiated popular activities, NGOs have worked with the state on various projects. For example, CSOs joined the government in the formulation and monitoring of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP; Lister and Nyamugasira 2003). CSO representatives included Uganda Debt Network (UDN) and the Development Network of Indigenous and Voluntary Associations (DENIVA). CSOs also participated in the two Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Projects (UPPAP conducted in 1998–2000 and 2001–2002 to assess the effectiveness of PEAP in empowering the poor (Muhumuza 2010)).

At the same time, the women's movement has experienced considerable growth under Museveni's leadership. Many women's organizations were instrumental in lobbying for a constitutional provision for one-third seats for women in the local government in 1995 (Tripp 1998). In the 2001 elections, the Uganda Women's Network was instrumental in challenging the lack of internal democracy in NRM. Women continue to hold key positions in the government. Currently (2013), the ministers of number of crucial sectors such as finance, energy and minerals, trade and industry, and health are women. However, connections between Museveni's support for women's leadership and issues, and their voting power remain an area of contention.

Just as in Kenya and Tanzania, Uganda's media sector has grown significantly in recent years. More than 20 newspapers have sprouted since 1986 (Katusiimeh 2004). The state does not control the broadcast media facilitating discussion of various issues. However, criticism of the government is not tolerated, and journalists are constantly charged with trumped up criminal offences. In 2005, for example, the government closed KFM, one of Uganda's independent radio stations, for a week. Arrests of journalists have been documented (Mwenda 2007). Attempts have also been made to shut down the *Daily Monitor*, one of the country's independent daily

newspapers. In 2013, two FM stations, *Orukurato* and *Ekitangazo* were suspended by the Uganda Communication Commission (UCC). The programs' areas of focus included accountability of public funds and service delivery. A letter sent to the station by the UCC indicated that the shows had been inciting violence against some government officials (*Daily Monitor* 2013). In summary, government's relations with the media in Uganda are restricted to apolitical issues.

CSOs–state relations in Tanzania have revolved around social-economic issues. In 1999, for instance, civic groups participated in the drafting of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. In addition, prominent groups such as the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) and the LHRC address equality and human rights issues. However, CSOs have encountered various setbacks, in their advocacy efforts. For example, the president of the Lawyers' Environmental Action Team, Rugemeleza Nshala, and Tanzania Labour Party leader Augustine Mrema, were arrested and charged with sedition after pressing for an investigation into the forced eviction of artisanal miners from gold mines at Bulyanhulu in 1996 (Kelsall 2002).

The gradual increase in women's participation in parliament is largely attributed to the efforts of women's organizations. Women's representation in parliament, for instance increased from 20 % (48 seats) in 2000 to 30 % (75 seats) in 2005 (Yoon 2008). The increase can be ascribed to the efforts of women politicians, gender equality advocacy NGOs, and to a certain extent political will by the government at enhancing women's political representation. Women's NGOs, particularly the TGNP and the Tanzania Media Women's Association, organized forums to equip female aspirants with various skills. In addition, CSOs have been created to advocate for women's issues in various sectors. Examples include the Tanzania Women Lawyers Association, Tanzania Media Association, and Tanzania Women Miners. Notwithstanding the modicum of progress, the government has continued to interfere with the activities of women's movements. In 1997, the Tanzania's women's council BAWATA was suspended on the grounds of politicking that contravened 1954's Societal Ordinance Act which prohibits NGOs from politicking.

Growth in Tanzania's media is seen in an increase of newspapers, radio and television stations. Radio stations, for instance, grew from 1 to 47 between 1992 and 2006 (Hoffman and Robinson 2009). Similar to the situation in Uganda, legislation deters journalists from criticizing the ruling party or the government. In 2012, *Mwanahalisi*, a weekly newspaper was suspended indefinitely through a government notice. The newspaper was accused of publishing libellous and inciting articles. The newspaper had been previously banned in 2008 for 3 months.

State and Marginalized Groups

Over the years there has been an increase of groups that use violence or unconventional means to raise their grievances. These groups are discussed separately from the above discussions on state and CSOs because unemployment, social inequality, and insecurity have played a crucial role in their formations. As such, the groups also

require more targeted policy approaches; yet, the economic and political grievances that they represent pose enormous challenges to African states. Examples include the intractable rebellion led by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) under Joseph Kony which revolves around their geographic marginalization by government. In Kenya, groups such as the Mungiki, Baghdad Boys, the Maasai Moran, and Kalenjin warriors have been accused of crime and violence. These groups are characterized by ethnicity and patronage. Tanzania's Sungu Sungu, a vigilante group that emerged as a result of insecurity has also been highlighted for violent behavior in the past. The governments' reactions to these groups have been varied. Tanzania's government recognized the part played by Sungu Sungu in community policing and granted the group a quasilegal status in 1997. In Kenya, the government has supported the arrests of Mungiki leaders and several members have been gunned down by police. At the same time, some senior government officials have been linked to the groups. Uganda mainly uses military action against the LRA. In 2012, the government sought support from the African Union Brigade in its efforts to capture Kony. These illustrations reveal how deteriorating relationships between state and society could be a source of insecurity.

Challenges and Constraints

Regulations

In the past, governments in the East African countries under discussion have drawn from constitutional provisions to control freedom of association and expression, hence constraining the effectiveness of civil society groups. Although many regulation efforts in many African countries emerged as reactions to governments' control and interference, regulations are important in stipulating the roles of CSOs (Moyo 2010). As such, legislation could lead to more accountability, transparency, and reductions on project duplications by CSOs (see Chap. 6 by Ronelle Burger and Dineo Seabe in this book).

Kenya's NGO Coordination Act of 1990 stands out as a precedent for CSO legislation in East Africa for a number of reasons. First, unlike Uganda and Tanzania's CSO legislations, the Act was developed through protracted negotiations between CSOs and the government. Specifically, the actors included an interministerial Task Force appointed by president Moi, the Kenya National Council of Social Services (KNCSS), and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), one of the research arms of the University of Nairobi (Ndegwa 1996). Second, NGOs are represented on the NGO Co-ordination Board that among other responsibilities processes applications and oversees various legal requirements, tax waivers, and deregistration. Third, the Act created opportunities for NGOs to play an active role in their regulation through the development of their own code of conduct.

The implementation of the Act has encountered some challenges. Understaffing and underfunding of the NGO council and the NGOs' Co-ordination Board limit their

effectiveness. Donor dependence also affects the NGO council, creating the need to expand the resource base for funding the two entities. In addition, government ministers still wield excessive powers as they are responsible for the appointment of the NGO Co-ordination Board members. In spite of these challenges, the NGO Co-ordination Act marks the commencement of CSOs direct engagement with the state on policy issues.

Contrary to the situation in Kenya, the governments in Uganda and Tanzania have not been responsive to CSOs' inputs on legislation. In Uganda, a government appointed board composed mostly of government officials has used its powers in the past to delay and deny the legal registration of "controversial" NGOs. Examples include the deregistration of the Uganda Human Rights Education and Documentation Center (UHEDOC), and the delayed registration of the National Organization for Civic Education and Election Monitoring (NOCEM) and National NGO Forum (Katusiimeh 2004). Increasingly, CSOs have become more assertive on the legal reforms surrounding their legislation. For example, CSOs participated in the drafting of an alternative NGO Bill (2000) as a response to a government initiated Bill that sought to amend the NGO registration bill of 1998. However, Parliament passed the Bill into an Act in 2006 with few inclusions of CSOs' contributions (Larok 2010). The Bill was criticized for, among other restrictions, limiting its focus to service delivery organizations and promoting a tedious and bureaucratic registration process. (Larok 2010, p. 239). Undeterred, in 2006, CSOs developed a code of conduct for NGOs in the country referred to as the NGO Quality Assurance Certification Mechanism' (QuAM).

In addition, in a surprising turn of events, the creation on the NGO Policy Draft in 2007 was a joint effort between governments and CSOs. The policy recognizes "The contribution of NGOs in the areas of service delivery, advocacy, democracy, and good governance as well as community empowerment" (*Republic of Uganda* 2008, p. 1). The shift from the focus on service delivery could be an indication of a more optimistic future for CSOs in the Uganda.

Prior to 2002, Tanzania lacked well-defined legislations on CSOs, leading to the use of various regulations to restrict CSO activities. The government still holds executive power in regulating the organizations. In 2002, the Parliament passed the NGO Act of 2002. However, the Act has been criticized for limiting NGO activities to social economic activities which prohibits from participating in political activities. The NGO gives the government authority to monitor NGOs by accessing their annual reports. The government also has the power to suspend organizations. The *HakiElimu* (Education for All) broadcast was banned for 18 months for criticizing the government for failing to improve primary education (Hoffman and Robinson 2009). *HakiElimu* utilized popular media to educate the public and to generate debates on various aspects of Tanzania's school system such as teachers' welfare and the quality of education. These claims were disputed by the government that resulted to banning the organization from conducting further studies and publishing information on the education sector. The ban was lifted in 2007.

Inclusivity and Diversity

Many NGOs in East Africa are largely urban-based and elitist, and have been criticized of being out of touch with the masses. In contrast, more established organizations with a mass membership base, such as trade unions and cooperatives, or ethnic associations, are far less visible and have much less influence. In Uganda, the most prominent CSOs working on human rights and governance issues are urban based with a male-dominated leadership drawn mainly from the educated, English-speaking middle-class elites (Robinson and Friedman 2007, p. 665). Similarly, in Tanzania, most of the NGOs are urban based. According to the Tanzania NGOs Coordination Division, the majority of NGOs in the country are located in Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Moshi (United Republic of Tanzania 2013). Kenya's NGOs' registration process has also been criticized for limiting organizations in the rural areas that have scarce financial and human resources. As a result, few rural organizations are actively involved in the NGO Council activities that mainly take place in major cities of the country.

CSOs' Internal Dynamics

CSOs are generally perceived as democratic, efficient, less corrupt, and rooted in the grassroots. However, a few illustrations would indicate some disconnect between these perceptions and reality. Some organizations, for instance, the Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA), National Farmers' Association (NFA), DENIVA, Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC), the National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU), Uganda Manufacturers Association (UMA), and National Association of Women of Uganda (NAWOU) have also been accused of poor communication with their members, lack of internal democracy, underutilized donor funds, lack of internal democracy, and dominance by powerful members (Muhumuza 2010, pp. 9–10). Kenya's NGO Council has been criticized for undemocratic practices in the past, but the most recent controversy is based on its operation under two factions. Both groups have claimed control of the NGO council and have separately enjoyed the government's recognition thereby creating confusion (Kiarie 2012). The first faction led by George Wainaina has a membership of 3,251 organizations. The group lacks representation on the NGO Co-ordination Board. Ken Wafula leads the second group. The faction consists of 400 NGOs. Most of these NGOs have stopped paying their subscriptions. This group, unlike Wainaina's, has members in the NGO Co-ordination Board. According to Wainaina, Wafula's election contravened a court order issued in 2010 that halted all elections of the council pending the determination of a High Court case application (Kiarie 2012).

Dependency

Issues of CSOs dependency in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania focus mainly on unequal partnerships with states and international donors. One area that has been

critically analyzed is donor support for autocratic governments and corrupt governments. Uganda's NRM is a case in point. In 2002, a government report indicated the government is highly dependent on aid with donors contributing around 52 % of expenditure, equivalent to 12 % of GDP (Government of Uganda 2002, cited in Lister and Nyamugasira 2003, p. 97). Uganda's government also employs significant numbers of the working and middle class and the private sector is hugely dependent on government for contracts and subsidized credit (Katusiimeh 2004). Collectively, these factors make it difficult for civil servants and business groups to openly challenge government and to mobilize nonstate actors. The UMA particularly stands out in this context because of its significant policy impact. Although its success can be attributed to an agenda that is acceptable to government, the association bears financial security. Membership subscriptions and income-earning ventures provide the organization with sustainable funding (Robinson and Friedman 2007). Tanzania's CSOs development has also been marked with the establishment of government NGOs or organizations staffed by civil servants or Government supported NGOs (Lange et al. 2000). Such dynamics generate significant autonomy and credibility issues.

Conclusion

CSOs developments have followed different paths in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. The single undisputable commonality is that NGOs have grown in size and that they have been instrumental in social-economic development. Collectively, CSOs have made significant achievements in mobilizing the masses toward political transition, creating civic awareness, and opening up civil spaces for public participation. Kenya's CSOs have achieved considerable successes in penetrating political spheres of influence. This is illustrated by their central role in the creation of NGO statutes and their critical presence in the country's constitutional reforms. This achievement can be largely attributed to CSOs resilience, liberalized political spaces, and political will. Similarly, CSOs in Uganda and Tanzania have undertaken unparalleled efforts to own the CSOs regulation processes but the governments have adopted unilateral decisions on regulations in many cases. Beyond the regulatory environment, Uganda's government continues to conflate criticism with dissent which has weakened, silenced, and fragmented CSOs in the country. Uganda's case reveals how autocratic leadership and the lack of political will stifles political advocacy, the freedoms of speech, and association thereby constricting the public sphere.

A second conspicuous and intractable challenge is donor dependency. As emphasized in this chapter, CSOs in the three countries have been in operation for over 30 decades, yet, sustainability remains a glaring concern. The UMA is notable because of its significant influence in policy as well as a financial model that is based on membership fees. Another important development on the continent is the creation of the African Grant Makers Network that seeks to advance sustainable African philanthropy. These and similar initiatives have the potential to generate homegrown fundraising initiatives.

Internal politics within CSOs is an obstacle to their effectiveness. The lack of diversity, an absence of internal democratic practices, lack of accountability, and transparency are major stumbling blocks for CSOs effectiveness. Lastly, the significant presence of marginalized groups mainly at political and economic levels society requires special focus. In addition to highlighting pertinent issues, such groups have ability to create divisions and to advance social and economic strive. In short, these groups pose a threat to human security.

In summary, CSOs have been central actors in East Africa's development. The organizations have been influential in socioeconomic domains, but have been restricted from influencing policies and engaging in political debates by the state. The comparative analysis of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania shows that CSOs' ability to initiate social transformation can only occur within an environment in which they are allowed to engage with the state.

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Chapter 9
Civil Society and the Politics of Belonging in Southern Africa

Daniel Hammett

The Applicability of Civil Society in Southern Africa

Before considering how civil society has been implicated in struggles over belonging and identity in southern Africa, attention must first be paid to the pertinence of this concept to the region. Dominant conceptions of civil society are rooted in Western political experience and theory. Derived from this experiential and theoretical frame, civil society is understood as the sector of organised social entities and collective voluntary participation between the state, the market and the family, within which social organisations exist based upon horizontal solidarities (Chabal and Daloz 1999; Habib 2005; Lehman 2008; Lewis 2002; Ranchod 2007). It is, for Freidman (2010, p. 118), the main—but not only—realm in which citizens interact and participate in decision-making processes and public debate and "a necessary but by no means sufficient guarantee of democracy" (also Lehman 2008). In this regard, Freidman (2010, p. 119) differentiates civil society from other forms of social organisation and movement as being political and embodying democratic participation; civil society, therefore, is "the realm in which the promise of democratic participation becomes a reality . . . the organisations that citizens form in order to enjoy a say, and to try to ensure that government responds to their needs and is accountable to them".

The rootedness of conceptions of civil society within Western political thought means that particular assumptions are implicit within these understandings, both in relation to the functioning and focus of civil society *and* in relation to the limits of the state and possibility for participation in a non-state-dominated political arena. The applicability of this conceptual construct to African contexts has been treated with scepticism by a range of scholars (e.g., Mamdani 1999) who have queried the applicability of a concept based upon horizontal networks of association to contexts where vertical affiliations and ascriptional identities historically predominate

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(Obadare 2011, p. 185). Some scholars have argued that the assumption of distinctly different spheres and practices of state and civil society is false, suggesting that in African states, there is a "constant interpenetration, or straddling, of one [state or civil society] by the other" (Chabal and Daloz 1999, p. 17). At the same time, the appropriation of civil society within international development approaches as a central means to democratisation and realisation of accountable, sustainable governance has often located civil society as an ally of neo-liberal governance agendas and an alternative to and check upon state power.

Thus, despite general agreement regarding the core defining features of civil society, a number of generic contestations remain in addition to those pertaining to the translatability and applicability of the concept to non-Western contexts. Central to such discussions, and with particular resonance to experiences of and support for civil society in (southern) Africa, are competing perspectives as to whether civil society provides an alternative to the state, acts as a supporter to and allies with the state, or functions as a counterbalance and counter-hegemonic force to the state (Lewis 2002). The predominance of approaches to civil society that emphasise the oppositional nature of civil society, rooted in the historical evolution of the concept within Western contexts, has had a significant bearing upon the deployment of this concept within African contexts (Chabal and Daloz 1999, p. 18). These concerns resonate with those who have treated studies of, and promotion of, civil society in Africa with scepticism due to the lack of contextual specificity and adaptability in these theorisations. As Söderbaum (2007, p. 323) notes, "One of the major reasons why civil society in Africa is widely misunderstood is the fact that Western political thought has dominated the debate on the topic".

As greater attention has been paid to the deployment of this idea in both Western and non-Western contexts, more nuanced engagements have pointed to the heterogeneity of civil society—both between and within specific contexts, such that civil society is an arena comprising multiple organisations and ideologies which both contest and uphold hegemonic power (Lewis 2002). Taking this concern a step further, Habib (2005) observes that dominant approaches frequently envisage civil society as a homogenous entity, arguing that there is a need for more nuanced awareness of the plurality of civil society and the diverse and contradictory agendas, ideologies and practices within this realm as well as the shifting positions, alliances and practices of these organisations over time (also Habib and Opoku-Mensah 2009). The need to understand these complexities is captured in the opening passages of Habib's (2005) discussion of state—civil society relations in South Africa with juxtaposed definitions of civil society provided by a government minister and by a community activist: the government minister outlines civil society as a protector of the public good and supporter of state efforts at service delivery and poverty alleviation, while the activist locates civil society as autonomous of the state and acting to challenge and confront state power. Therefore, despite the continued sense amongst some theorists that civil society is never an appendage to or supporter of government but is always a watchdog and critic (e.g., Friedman 2010), a more nuanced engagement with the shifting and competing roles and positions of southern African civil society groups, one that recognises how these bodies function within a politics of contingency, is needed.

This need for a more complex engagement with the intricacies of civil society movements in southern Africa is heightened by Western academic and policy preoccupation with civil society in Africa as an arena for the promotion of democracy. This focus, Chabal (2009) argues, derives from the role played by civil society during the democratic transitions in Eastern Europe in the 1980s which have informed the growing emphasis within international development policy on individual and collective agency and political mobilisation. The upshot of these developments has been for Western governments and international donors to locate civil society as a key agent in international development and the promotion of democracy, with an emphasis upon neoliberal approaches to governance and the procedural aspects of democracy (Chabal 2009). As a result, "the most common view [in Africa] is that civil society refers to those intermediary associations which are capable both of representing the country's various groups and of countering the state's hegemonic ambitions" (Chabal and Daloz 1999, p. 19). This prevalent view has positioned, in the international political imagination, African civil society as a relatively homogenous sphere coalesced around pro-democracy positions and as a "repository of political resistance to the centralizing and totalitarian tendencies of the African (one-party) state" (Chabal and Daloz 1999, p. 24) driving political reform in juxtaposition to authoritarian and oppressive governments (Obadare 2011; Young 2004).

At this juncture, however, various complexities of the position and role of civil society in southern Africa in relation to the politics of belonging must be developed. The first of these is in civil society's complex role at the heart of democratic consolidation in Africa which simultaneously encompasses a role as the manifestation of democratic freedoms of expression, *and* as providing and facilitating the conditions necessary for multiparty democracy (Clapham and Wiseman 1995). Civil society is therefore critically located as simultaneously requiring and building political pluralism and participation (Ranchod 2007). While this participation can be 'civil' and function to limit both the exercise of state power and competition between different social groups (Clapham and Wiseman 1995, p. 224), civil society organisations can also act in 'uncivil' ways and/or promote narrow, partisan and neopatrimonial agendas which entrench hierarchies of power and promote division and exclusionary politics of belonging (Lynch and Crawford 2011).

These complexities are pertinent given the historic experience of power, governance and politics of belonging in colonial and post-colonial Africa. Civil society has been implicated in actions and ideologies both in support of colonial and authoritarian regimes and exclusionary and oppressive politics of belonging, as well as a site and tool for opposition and resistance to colonial and authoritarian rule (Lewis 2002). Consequently, civil society in southern Africa has played an important, albeit often contradictory, role in struggles over the politics of belonging, mobilising in material ways ideological approaches to the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in regard to citizenship and subjecthood, rights, and public space (Lewis 2002, p. 574). These practices have shifted and evolved over time in relation to changing socio-political structures, changing balances of political power and shifting ideological hegemonies. Recognition of the need for historical sensitivities and contextual contingencies in understanding civil society in southern Africa has been integral to efforts to move

theorisations of civil society away from prescriptive universalism and notions of Western exceptionalism, which are manifest in the heterogeneous and evolving nature of civil society in southern Africa (cf. Chabal and Daloz 1999; Lewis 2002).

During the colonial period, government legislation and authority severely curtailed the scope of civil society, although greater freedom for organised African political representation was tolerated in the post-World War II period (Young 2004). Civil society, proto-civil society and civil society-esque actors emerged as key protagonists in the later stages of the colonial period, contributing to the transition to independence in many states. In Malawi, the emergence of 'Native Associations' amongst educated Malawians in the late colonial period can be viewed as a nascent form of civil society (even though they were marginalised in the political sphere) which were the forerunners to a broader post-independence civil society sector (Eggen 2011). The emergence of organised civil society movements promoting the political, social, human and economic rights of the disenfranchised majority in South Africa during the late colonial and apartheid periods reflects similar developments in South Africa. Friedman (2010) would, however, contest this, arguing that in South Africa, anti-apartheid movements were not civil society mobilisations. Instead, Freidman (2010) locates these groups outside the civil society sector, arguing that they were not asserting a voice in democracy but expressing opposition to racial oligarchy. In contrast, scholars including Habib (2005) and Ranchod (2007) locate anti-apartheid movements as occupying the conceptual political space of civil society and functioning in the pursuit of democracy and a new politics of belonging within a severely curtailed public sphere. In keeping with this rationale, we can see the historical importance of civil society movements as key contributors to independence struggles across southern Africa before beginning to unpack the shifting role and freedoms of civil society in the post-independence period in these states.

In the early years of independence, the realm of civil society was often severely limited as post-colonial states enjoyed "unencumbered dominance over civil society by comprehensive instruments of social control through single party and administrative encadrement, a pervasive security apparatus, and a total monopoly on print and other media gave the would-be integral state the appearance of unchallenged strength" (Young 2004, p. 36). By the 1980s, centralised state power and political ascendency in these countries were on the wane in the face of emergent systemic crises and shortcomings in state policy, accompanied by the emergence of a range of other social and political actors, including civil society (Obadare 2011; Young 2004). In the face of domestic crises, as well as shifting pressures and priorities from international donors and partners—including the imposition of Structural Adjustment Policies—the reconfiguration of civil society was positioned as central to efforts to confront autocratic rulers, challenge failing states and promote democratisation (Young 2004). For international donors, civil society offered a key to unlocking the democratic potential of post-colonial states, while for citizens and activists civil society provided both an ideational banner for opposition groupings—a vehicle for oppositional coherence—and a space for interaction and association beyond state control (Obadare 2011, p. 184). In an ideal sense, civil society in Africa (and elsewhere) is an enabled *and* enabling space of political participation, "a kind of empty

public space, protected by formal state guarantees of individual liberty and social order, and open to multiple uses by free and equal citizens" (Glaser 1997, p. 5, 6). As will be discussed further, this is not always the case, and both organised and unorganised civil society may establish claims to and on contested politics of belonging in overt and covert ways. These practices occur in both invited public spaces such as parliamentary committees, national and local elections and officially sanctioned strikes/protests as well as invented public spaces—including grassroots and organically organised physical and symbolic occupation of public areas, the circulation of political ephemera and satirical materials in print, audio and digital form and the mobilisation of resistance and protest using new information and communication technologies and social media.

Determining the Civil Society Agenda

A key factor in the functioning and focus of civil society in southern Africa in recent years has been the positioning, within international donor rhetoric, of non-governmental development organisations as agents for democratisation (for more on this, see also Chap. 24 by Helene Perold in this book). Such practices and rhetoric are evident in both policy pronouncements and funding provision that are directed away from state bodies and towards specific non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and non-governmental development organisations (NGDOs) who are viewed as more suited and better located to promote and sustain democracy in southern Africa. Such practices are intended to promote democracy *and* capacity building within specific spheres of civil society associated with certain conceptions of democracy. Hickey (2002 p. 842) notes these trends and cautions that "this 'civil society' agenda is primarily used by transnational development actors to transmit narrow neoliberal agendas to developing countries, rather than exploring and supporting alternative forms of social democracy therein" (see also Robinson and Freidman 2007). Critiques of this Western obsession with civil society as *the* locus for progressive politics and the promotion of democracy caution that such engagements reduce civil society to a homogenised sub-set of this arena which overlooks the multiplicity of power relations and flows. Instead, civil society in southern Africa must be recognised as "an arena in which states and other powerful actors intervene to influence the political agendas of organised groups with the intention of defusing opposition" (Hearn 2001, p. 43). Recognition of this complexity allows for understandings of the multiple engagements and ideological pursuits executed by such movements, and the range of politics of belonging pursued and promoted.

Integral to this imperative is the danger that if civil society movements are seen to be de/legitimated by international funding and support in relation to specific democracy promotion agendas, then these practices perpetuate and police a particular politics of belonging. Support from or condemnation by international powers can lead to the de/legitimation of movements and organisations at the national and international levels with implications for the type of politics of belonging that can

be promoted or sought by civil society. As Hickey (2002) warns, the power of such politics can produce a sanitised form of civil society that excludes many of the most directly active and involved counter-hegemonic movements from this sphere. Simultaneously, these practices can entrench a particular view of civil society rooted in Western understandings that is at odds with the local materialisation and reality of civil society movements and privileges the role of NGOs and NGDOs without recognising the role played by a wider range of social movements and actors (Hickey 2002). One of the potential dangers resulting from such practices is that the focus of domestic and international civil society is placed upon neo-liberal approaches to sustainable governance and the procedural aspects of democratisation while ignoring pressing concerns of poverty alleviation, inequality and social justice (Hearn 2001). Such recognition is vital so as to account for and understand the heterogeneity of civil society across southern Africa, both in terms of the varying contexts of poverty, inequality, injustice and rights-claiming within which these organisations develop and network and the objectives and strategies employed by the organisations (Habib and Opoku-Mensah 2009).

Within many southern African states, the role and position of civil society—and the agendas being pursued—are contested. Civil society organisations were often critical in mobilising anti-colonial protests and contributed to the success of the liberation movements that subsequently took office in post-colonial states. Despite this historical pretext, the politics of patronage and exercise of power by political elites has often curtailed the oppositional space and role of civil society, instead seeking to sanitise this realm and deploy civil society in support of and affiliation to the state. In many situations, these dynamics are framed by a zero-sum political context wherein a dominant party retains power and blocks organised (political) opposition, both from external parties (both political and civil society organisations) and the stifling of internal dissent through structures and practices of internal discipline (Dorman 2006). Thus, in post-colonial contexts, the confluence of ideology and party discipline produces a post-liberation politics infused with tensions between rights and democracy, loyalty and critical political participation (Dorman 2006).

In these situations, state–civil society relations are played out in a variety of ways, from government attempts to delegitimize organisations for being undemocratic and non-accountable to encouraging corporatist pacts between the state and civil society rooted in legal and economic concerns (Lehman 2008). These efforts to strategically demobilise civil society encompass, in more or less confrontational ways, the inclusion and incorporation of civil society into coalition with the state as well as endeavours to delegitimize civil society movements that refuse such coalitions (Dorman 2006). Such practices are witnessed in the incorporation of the Zimbabwe African People's Union into the Zimbabwe African National Union in the 1980s to form the Zimbabwe African National Union—Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and more recently, efforts by ZANU-PF to marginalise and delegitimize the oppositional party, the Movement for Democratic Change. The evolution of these relations reflects broader struggles over the politics of belonging in post-colonial Zimbabwe wherein specific discourses of loyalty, patriotism and belonging have been deployed

to perpetuate a particular narration of nationhood and maintain ZANU-PF's political ascendency (Dorman 2006). The rejection of the government's draft constitution in 2000, rooted in widespread antipathy towards excesses of state power and mobilised by civil society, led to government-sponsored efforts to silence critical civil society through the mobilisation of anti-imperial discourses and promotion of 'patriotic' history and journalism and closing down of spaces for democratic dissent (Hammett 2011; Raftopolous 2004). These practices were rooted in and aimed to promote particular, partial views of Zimbabwe—of nationhood, belonging and patriotic citizenship—and a specific politics of belonging where political power re-entrenched and perpetuated. Thus, the space for civil society in Zimbabwe has been drastically curtailed yet civil society remains at the forefront of efforts to critique state power, promote democratisation and address inequalities and poverty alleviation (Raftopolous 2007; Rutherford 2004; see also Chap. 11 by Kirk Helliker in this book).

At other times, these efforts were conceived as a progressive form of politics: in post-apartheid South Africa, the fostering of civil society and of strong partnerships between the state and civil society to realise social justice, service delivery and democratisation was core to the flagship Reconstruction and Development Programme (Bond 2000). However, failures to engage with and support—politically and financially—civil society movements, coupled with shortcomings in service delivery and poverty alleviation resulted in a shift from partnership to opposition. These processes resulted in an apparent stultification of large swathes of civil society in the immediate post-apartheid period, followed by a reinvigoration of the sector in the late 1990s. Several dynamics were important in this period in determining the role and profile of civil society. Central amongst these was the strategic self-positioning of the African National Congress as *the* liberation movement and the only political body legitimately able to speak on behalf of all (black) South Africans (Freidman 2010; Hammett 2008; Maré 2001). Integral to this positioning of the African National Congress (ANC) within the post-apartheid polity has been a strategic claiming of a 'pluralist heritage' by the ANC which forms the dominant narrative of the anti-apartheid struggle and claims that the struggle with the contributions of other civil society organisations subsumed into this (Dorman 2006). This defining and policing of public discourse informed and framed particular discourses of nation-building and citizenship. Consequently, specific civil-society organisations and ideals enjoyed greater influence and profile, notably those associated with the ANC (Freidman 2010).

These strategic engagements with civil society reflect a deliberate set of policy engagements by the ANC to control and demobilise leftist civil society amidst an evolving policy environment that demonstrates a gradual neo-liberal shift (Bond 2000, p. 223). While this has been partially successful, South African leftist civil society has grown increasingly weary of the ANC's practice of 'speak left, act right' and increasing mobilisation, and pressure from below in the form of trade union militancy, service delivery protests and other engagements are challenging state power and demanding a more progressive politics of belonging in which the delivery of basic citizen rights and reduction in socio-economic inequalities are central. In particular, the ways in which community and labour struggles are often tied to particular identity

claims and politics of belonging and privilege mean that civil society provides a crucial space for political participation for the poor and disenfranchised. In pursuance of these agendas, civil society movements utilise both invited and invented spaces of participation through which to "represent the interests of the poor and marginalized, and put pressure on governments to pay greater attention to the welfare of these groups" (Habib and Opoku-Mensah 2009, p. 59). Through such engagements, therefore, civil society in southern Africa is implicated in the promotion of and opposition to hegemonic discourses of belonging and narratives of nationhood, citizenship and in/exclusion.

While these mobilisations are viewed by many as indicators of a resurgent civil society (cf. Bond 2000; Ranchod 2007), Freidman (2010) contends that civil society in South Africa remains shallow, often lacks representativeness of the concerns and circumstances endured by the poor, and that many of the grassroots protests and mobilisations are not located within civil society but are forms of collective organisation. The danger, according to Freidman (2010, p. 115), is that while "South African civil society remains a vigorous source of citizen participation in public life and thus a means of holding governments to account," the locating of oppositional politics and protest movements outside civil society and into collective organisations allows elites to locate these movements as illegitimate while taking away the political agency of the poor who are then cast as passive recipients of state beneficence. Accounting for these concerns, it is clear that the actions of civil society and manifestations of state–civil society relations continually contest and negotiate the in/exclusionary nature of narratives of nationhood and politics of belonging.

Organised Civil Society and Claims to Belonging

Civil society movements have been central to claims to belonging on multiple scales and in relation to myriad interest groups, shifting with changing contexts and discourses of inclusion and exclusion. At times, the politics of belonging promoted by civil society have been (at least partially) co-terminus with the vision of nation-hood advocated by government and hegemonic elites; at others, the claims to belonging have (directly) contested the definition and policing of boundaries of belonging. As Yuval-Davis (2006, p. 200) argues, a sense of belonging is a set of dynamic attachments and locations within multiple communities, constructed in relation to particular expressions of power relations. Civil society movements are implicated in many of these interactions as they are frequently involved in the politics of belonging through the promotion, reproduction or contestation of the boundaries of belonging asserted by political agents (cf. Yuval-Davis 2006: 205). In the context of an explosion of xenophobic violence in South Africa in 2008, the South African state struggled to respond to these developments, hampered, in part, by their own rhetoric around immigration and nationalism. In light of these shortcomings, civil society organisations took on a crucial role both in supporting victims of violence and

mobilising public opinion against both the violence at the time and to address xenophobia more generally (Everatt 2011). While the work of these organisations remains important in seeking to challenge the exclusionary dynamics of a post-apartheid politics of belonging that has unwittingly fostered antipathy towards residents from north of the Limpopo, a lack of concerted cooperation has limited their ability to mobilise effectively (Everatt 2011). These concerns have resonance with a broader trend witnessed elsewhere in Africa—the re-emergence of 'autochthony' as a core pillar of claims to belonging, inclusion and exclusion from the national and local community (cf. Geschiere and Jackson 2006; Marshall-Fratani 2007). States and civil society movements in and beyond Africa have often deployed, and contested the use of, autochthony—of being of the soil/territory—in definitions and narrations of belonging and citizenship. These discursive practices are frequently evocative and used to forge a common sense of belonging and identity juxtaposed against external, often in-migrating, groups (Geschiere and Jackson 2006). The deployment of such exclusionary rhetoric and discourses is often subject to intense contestation, as state agents and civil society confront one another in efforts to promulgate differing politics of belonging. For many, the fear is that discourses of autochthony foster a narrow, exclusionary politics of belonging, leading to critique and opposition from civil society organisations seeking a more inclusive and liberal definition of belonging and citizenship.

These claims are not restricted to civil society movements with overtly articulated political aims or agendas. Rights-based social movements, notably many of those which emerged in the wake of the HIV/AIDS pandemic—and associated political controversy—in southern Africa, are also implicated in contestations of the politics of belonging. Many of these organisations have emerged within a civil society environment that rather than enjoying the legacy of a culture of civic activism from anti-colonial and anti-apartheid movements, has been curtailed by governments and political leaders who have sought to curtail oppositional civil society and maintain unity and power (Batsell 2005; Robins 2004). Zimbabwean-based HIV/AIDS-related civil society movements have had a particularly important role in agitating for the rights of people-with-AIDS (PWA) not only within a context of political oppression and persecution but also within a historical frame of the hollowing-out of the state by Structural Adjustment Policies in the 1980s (Batsell 2005; Chabal and Daloz 1999). The rolling back of the African state under pressure from the Bretton Woods institutions meant that international support and finance was increasingly directed to civil society—and NGOs in particular—in order to promote political reform (Chabal and Daloz 1999, p. 22). These organisations have sought to challenge state denialism and stigmatisation of PWA, contesting the boundaries of belonging fostered by political elites within a constrained public sphere.

In South Africa, the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) has emerged as the most prominent of a wealth of civil society organisations engaged with the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Founded in 1998 within a context of political inertia and inaction on the emergent HIV/AIDS crisis, TAC has pursued a multi-pronged strategy of protest and engagement, encompassing popular, legal and political actions that contested the government's stance upon and (in)action towards the pandemic. In challenging

the government on "[v]irtually every aspect of the pandemic—from AIDS statistics, to theories about the causal link between HIV and AIDS, to studies on AIDS drug therapy" (Robins 2004, p. 656), TAC has invoked a range of issues that contested a dominant narrative around the politics of belonging. In mobilising claims against the state to demand the recognition of PWA as citizens and therefore to force the state to meet its obligation to deliver constitutionally enshrined citizen's rights to health care, TAC contested state denialism and an exclusionary politics of belonging (Robins 2004, p. 655, 2008). At the same time, educational and treatment literacy campaigns contributed to changes in positionalities and subjectivity amongst individuals which promoted ideas and behaviours of responsible citizenship (Robins 2008).

While drawing upon networks of support from across educational, class, racial, ethnic and other divides, TAC's activists are primarily drawn from urban, black communities that has resulted in a "class-based mobilisation [that has] created the political space for the articulation of racial forms of 'health citizenship'" (Robins 2004, p. 663) and contested hegemonic discourses around the politics of belonging of PWA in South Africa. The complex array of engagements and embracing of a politics of contingency, which has seen TAC work in conjunction with the government while continuing to critique it, allowed the organisation to overcome allegations of it being 'unpatriotic' and 'counter-revolutionary' (Robins 2004). While many other civil society and political movements have found that such allegations have curtailed their ability and legitimacy to speak on political matters, including the politics of belonging (cf. Dorman 2006; Hammett 2008, 2010; Maré 2001), TAC has successfully created a space for critical engagement with the state to negotiate and contest policies and practices that define the politics of belonging in post-apartheid South Africa (Robins 2004). The politics of contingency used by TAC demonstrates that civil society can engage cooperatively with the state without being subsumed within it, and that struggles over the politics of belonging can be pursued through a mosaic of positionalities (cf. Chabal and Daloz 1999).

Similar concerns are evident in reflections on the experiences of food banks in South Africa, where the responsibility for provision of basic citizen rights and survival needs devolves from the state to civil society. On the one hand, the need for and emergence of food banks underscores the challenges to belonging and equality embodied in neoliberal governance practices. At the same time, the explicit linking within government policy of state, private sector and civil society actors to form partnerships to address pressing needs could also deepen state penetration into civil society (Warshawsky 2011). In these situations, the de facto devolving of state responsibilities to public–private–civil society partnerships presents a challenge to a politics of belonging in which discourses of deserving and undeserving poor become key. The penetration of the state into civil society is also implicated in tensions between political party branches, often ANC branches, and other local civil society organisations, resulting in competition over areas of influence and resources (Glaser 1997). The deployment of ANC cadre from local branches into other civil society organisations—both directly and indirectly—can then have a profound effect upon the position and practices employed by civil society organisations (Benit-Gbaffou 2012). These practices blur the boundaries of state and civil society, harking back to

Chabal and Daloz's (1999) concerns about the inability to differentiate between state and civil society in Africa, and entrench the promotion of and adherence to particular discourses of belonging and citizenship that are aligned to hegemonic state-based ideals.

Unorganised Civil Society and Claims to Belonging

While the majority of academic and policy attention towards civil society has focused upon organised civil society, recent interventions have also recognised the importance of unorganised (un)civil society in contestations of political power and determinations of the politics of belonging (cf. Obadare 2009). The importance of such consideration is heightened in many southern African contexts where some post-colonial governments maintain authoritarian strategies to curtail the public sphere and marginalise or delegitimize oppositional civil society. In such environments, where the formal, invited spaces for political participation and functioning of civil society are severely curtailed, alternative expressions and actions in invented and often hidden spaces of participation are required. These activities, which may often be seen as 'uncivil' expression, may include direct action and physical protest as well as psychological and 'virtual' acts of resistance or opposition in the politics of everyday life or, as Obadare (2009), drawing on James Scott, refers to it—the infrapolitics. For Obadare (2009), the role of satire and humour is essential in understanding how emergent civil society can subvert and engage with the state—and excesses of state power—in ways that circumvent state efforts at controlling and policing of physical public space and provide for the creation of a 'profane' public sphere (also Hammett 2011). These activities provide a means for de/reconstruction of political meanings, provide a rallying point for marginalised groups and oppositional ideologies and offer a means of political participation even under authoritarian conditions (Obadare 2009).

Humour and satire are established tools of resistance to excesses and abuses of (state) power and freely circulate through inter-personal communication as well as multiple media vectors in both the physical and virtual worlds (Eko 2007). Recognising that these expressions are moments of political engagement and participation is important, expanding and reinvigorating academic, policy and practitioner awareness of the heterogeneity of civil society interests and practices. As Obadare (2009, p. 253) argues, "Bringing jokes (and other forms of 'inert action') into the ambit of civil society discourse can revitalise a discourse that has often resembled, especially in Africa, a sterile referendum on the successes and shenanigans of pro-democracy NGOs". Jokes, satire and cartoons can be seen as ad-hoc, unorganised and often uncivil responses to experiences of power and politics which undermine and demythologise hegemonic power and create certain kinds of truth while also contesting the politics of belonging which underpins such political engagement (Hammett 2011). The possibility for the anonymous and surreptitious production, circulation and consumption of these forms of political engagement provides a vital sphere for civil society to function within when faced by a curtailed public sphere.

Powerful examples of such uncivil and unorganised engagements with political power and hegemonic politics of belonging are evident in Zimbabwe. The public sphere in Zimbabwe is restricted and the environment for many civil society bodies is oppressive, policed formally and informally by both official and unofficial agents of the state. In 2005, the Zimbabwean government implemented Operation Murambatsvina, a policy advertised as restoring order to Harare by removing illegal housing structures and informal markets (Fontein 2009). A very public expression of overt state power, Operation Murambatsvina left 700,000 people homeless and destroyed many informal businesses. While the state sought to project a legal (and moral and public health) legitimacy to the Operation, counter-rumours circulated regarding 'hidden agendas' behind the policy—including allegations that the real driver of the Operation was demands from Chinese traders for greater protection from local informal markets (Fontein 2009). Linked to this, Fontein (2009) discusses how rumours circulated that use of the derogatory phrase *zhingzhong* to refer to low quality, low-cost Chinese goods was an arrestable offence. This issue was part of a broader politics constituted of a national-level 'Look East' policy, of strict dominance and control of the public sphere by the authoritarian ruling ZANU-PF party and the local, everyday struggle for survival of Zimbabwean citizens. Drawing on this and similar rumours regarding reference to Operation Murambatsvina as the *tsunami*, Fontein's (2009) discussion of how rumour and counter-rumour can both reinforce and destabilise state power on the margins resonates with Obadare's (2009) highlighting of the importance of unorganised civil society in Nigeria's infrapolitics. What emerges from these encounters is the importance of everyday interactions and political engagements in constituting a broader polity and public sphere in which multiple forms and expression of civil society contribute to discourse and discord over the narration and experience of particular politics of belonging.

Similarly, the production and circulation of political ephemera by civil society groups and others in Zimbabwe that lampoons and caricatures senior political figures and criticises the authoritarian government demonstrates the importance of the informal and unorganised aspects of civil society. In 2006, two anonymously produced objects circulated within Zimbabwe, a pack of playing cards illustrated with critical caricatures of state officials and living conditions in Zimbabwe, and the *Guide to Dangerous Snakes in Zimbabwe* pamphlet which depicted key political and military leaders as snakes (for more detail see Hammett 2011). Both objects were relatively cheap to produce and easy to exchange and circulate outside of a formal media environment, providing a means for political engagement and expression coalesced by civil society actions but without a formal and public hosting of these. In a context where criticism of government leaders or state institutions was illegal and likely to result in retribution and/or imprisonment, the circulation of such ephemera was vital to resistance to the excesses of state power. Both objects attacked a range of state institutions (including rural chiefs—depicted as pigs feeding at the ZANU-PF trough on the cards (Fig. 9.1) or as 'sucker snakes' beholden to Robert Mugabe's largesse in the Guide (Fig. 9.2), and the Zimbabwe Republic Police—the 'ZPR Constrictor' able to "squeeze the life out of its victims" according to the Guide (Fig. 9.3) or shown as

Fig. 9.1 Satirical depiction from a set of playing cards of the self-interest of rural chiefs in Zimbabwe feeding from ZANU-PF largesse
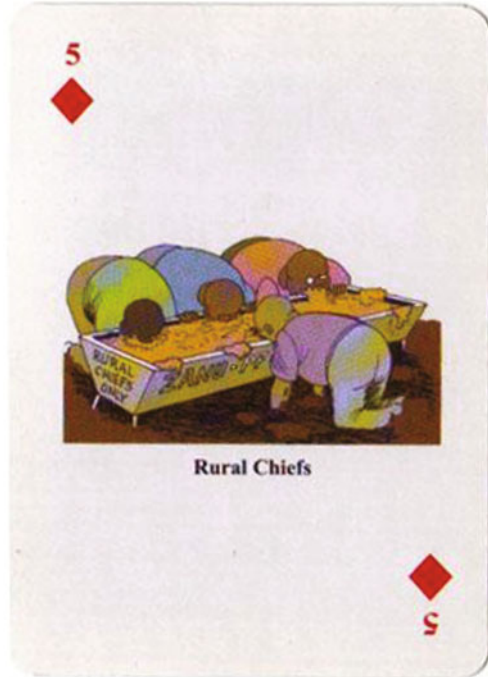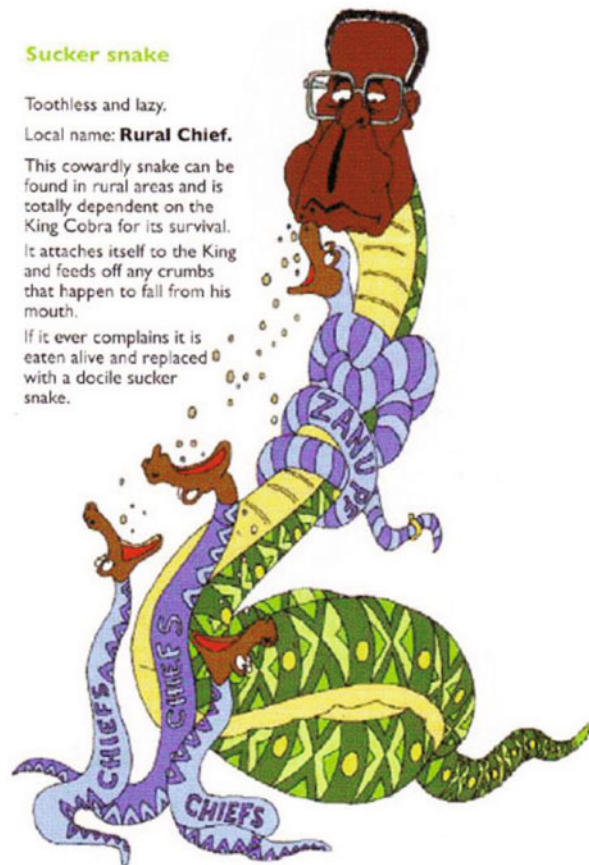
massacring civilians in the pack of cards (Fig. 9.4) and high-profile government officials. However, an implicit reminder to readers of the dangers posed by opposition to state power remained in each object, as well as a reminder of the importance of (un)civil society in this context. Thus, the seven cards' depiction of the Zimbabwean prison service served both to remind the reader of this potential danger facing opponents of state power and of the importance of resistance to ensuring that, as written on the cell wall, "Freedom is coming to Zimbabwe one day" (Fig. 9.5). Not only does this text imply that Zimbabwe is 'unfree' under the rule of Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF but also underscores the importance and power of civil society in promoting freedom and democratisation. In such constrained political environments, these products and practices of civil society are vital to contesting excesses of state power and negotiating the complex relations between rulers and citizens within an invented and hidden terrain both for civil society and of resistance.

Conclusions

Civil society in southern Africa has emerged as a powerful concept and an organising umbrella for a range of organisations and movements. Previous concerns regarding the applicability of Western understandings of civil society have been mitigated by

Fig. 9.2 Depiction from the satirical booklet, a *Guide to the Dangerous Snakes of Zimbabwe*, of rural chiefs in Zimbabwe are beholden to Robert Mugabe and feeding from the crumbs of his power

Sucker snake

Toothless and lazy.

Local name: **Rural Chief.**

This cowardly snake can be found in rural areas and is totally dependent on the King Cobra for its survival.

It attaches itself to the King and feeds off any crumbs that happen to fall from his mouth.

If it ever complains it is eaten alive and replaced with a docile sucker snake.

growing recognition of the heterogeneity and dynamism of civil society. In southern Africa, civil society organisations are recognised as key agents in debates around definitions of citizenship and nationhood, in promoting demands for the delivery of citizen rights, and in contesting hegemonic social and political powers. While such organisations are often located as an oppositional force to the state, care must be taken not to reduce civil society to a purely oppositional role—civil society can and does function in conjunction with and in support of the state over varying timescales. This politics of contingency is an important feature of southern African civil society engagements with claims to belonging.

It is also clear that while organised civil society remains important in negotiations of the politics of belonging, unorganised civil society comprises a powerful and active set of agents—particularly in contexts where the public sphere in which organised civil society functions is curtailed. The circulation of jokes and humorous political ephemera demonstrate how civic engagement and elements of civil society can circumvent and challenge hegemonic power while contesting sanitised understanding

Fig. 9.3 A critical reflection from the *Guide* on the power of the Zimbabwean police force in suppressing dissent and opposition to the ZANU-PF government

ZRP Constrictor

Commonly known as the ZRP snake.

Fully fanged with a number of spare sets.

Local name: **Augustine Chihuri.**

Has the ability to catch, beat and then constrict.

This constrictor is a cruel and vicious snake.

Victims caught by the ZRP snake rarely survive.

Its immense strength gives it the ability to squeeze the life out of its victims.

of the 'civility' of civil society. Thus, civil society—organised and unorganised—makes claims on the politics of belonging in southern Africa in a range of—often creative—ways that are both civil and uncivil, which support and contest dominant political power in relation to a myriad of identifiers and communities of belonging.

Fig. 9.4 A depiction of the
Zimbabwean police force's
excessive use of power—and
therefore expression of an
excess of state
power—against a shackled
population
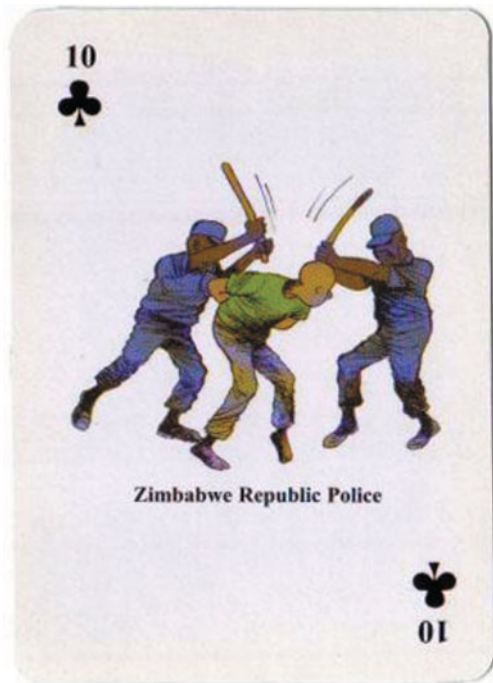
Fig. 9.5 This illustration on a
playing card invites the
viewer to reflect upon core
issues of free speech,
personal freedoms and
political liberation under
ZANU-PF rule in Zimbabwe
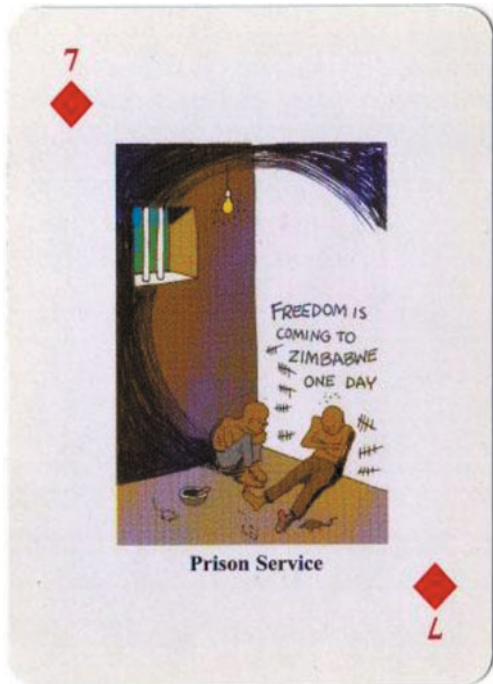
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Chapter 10
Building Civil Society in West Africa: Notes from the Field

Titilope Mamattah

Introduction

This is a discussion of approaches to building civil society in West Africa. Building here is implied not from scratch, but in terms of molding from what exists, i.e., the broad base of nonstate associations/communal groups, a sector that is well positioned to participate actively in people-focused development. By this token, the focus of this chapter is necessarily on indigenous civil society. I evaluate past and continuing efforts (by external and internal actors alike) to strengthen civil society in West Africa, exposing the inherent contradictions in this task and outlining achievements, challenges, and opportunities for further intervention to influence development in the region. Much of what I say here is based on my observations and experience from working with African and international civil society organizations (CSOs) over the past decade. Although I take a critical stance throughout, my intention is not to discredit civil society—far from it. I wish only to raise some of the issues that tend to be swept under the carpet in the hope of generating viable solutions to challenges that are common to the community of researchers and advocates.

Discussions of what does or does not constitute civil society are beyond the scope of this chapter. However, it is necessary to declare from the outset that the idea of civil society that informs much, if not all of the efforts to build the sector revolves narrowly around nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), loosely defined as formal, structured civil society organizations, or CSOs. As Lewis (2010 and Banks and Hulme (2012)) rightly argue, the term means different things in different contexts depending on the peculiar "cultures and histories" in which NGO discourse has evolved. In a generic sense, NGO is self-explanatory. But in West Africa and wider development circles, it has assumed the meaning of a specific type of nonstate organization distinguishable from others by its structure, purpose, functioning, and relations with donor organizations. Compared to its more humble predecessor(s),

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today's NGO is an elitist middle class urban construct that is oriented to attract a certain kind of client and because of this, falls easily out of pace with its less polished rural kinfolk. The claim in 2011 by global civil society alliance, CIVICUS, that NGOs risk losing relevance is of little wonder as citizens increasingly find new, informal ways to associate (CIVICUS 2011). I return to this theme momentarily.

The reasons why NGOs dominate the development discourse and space are not farfetched. For one, they are becoming increasingly highly professionalized and specialized, making them more visible and, at least in theory, more effective and competent at what they do. The fact that they are headed by eloquent, well-educated, and connected personalities only enhances their already high profiles. Those who aim to build capacity—especially those who fund it—feel safer dealing with organizations that are structured in ways that are familiar to them. Being legal entities, NGOs are recognized by governments and can be held liable for their actions. They may have higher levels of accountability and may seem more sustainable than the more loosely structured CSOs. But this approach throws up some contradictions, the most profound of which is its sweeping neglect of a significant body of informal civil society actors doing important, if undervalued, work within communities across West Africa.

Arguably, the second biggest contradiction with this approach is its erroneous assumption that civil society is a homogenous entity agitating in a unified way for the same kind of social change. From this angle, some civil society bodies are considered more suitable than others to belong to the sector and to receive support for their work. What this does is create and/or deepen existing cleavages among civil society actors with divergent interests, thereby dividing the very sector that various partners are trying to build. So how did all this start? The answer to this question is the focus of the next section on the evolution of civil society in West Africa.

Towards a History of Civil Society in West Africa

Civil association has always been an important part of communal life all over Africa. For centuries, nonstate groups (for example, age grade, secret societies, religious groups) have employed diverse means, in collaboration with traditional governing authorities, to promote various primarily sociocultural interests. This role has evolved as political contexts have changed to include active participation in matters of political and economic interest.

Civil groups played a critical role in the struggle for independence from colonial rule in the 1950s and 1960s (some transformed near the end of colonialism from puppet voluntary groups initially set up by missionaries; Manji 2002). However, they were especially active as opposition movements in late 1970s to early 1980s West Africa in the context of autocratic rule and economic stagnation (Obadare 2011). These circumstances and the aggressive, at times militant, nature of its struggle portrayed the sector as an enemy of the state, creating a relationship filled with suspicion and mistrust that persists in and informs the civil society regulatory frameworks in

some West African countries up till today (Moyo 2009). However, these roles also helped set the stage for massive international support for CSOs, particularly NGOs, from the late 1980s/early 1990s as part of efforts to promote better governance globally (Lewis 2010). The idea behind this was that the civil sector could serve as an antidote to excessive state power if it had the right support to enable it to do this more effectively.

Around the late 1990s, analysts began to observe a measure of disappointment in, and disenchantment with, the same NGOs that were once considered the panacea for Africa's development challenges. For a whole lot of reasons, it appeared they had not quite met the huge expectations that heralded their arrival on the development scene (Obadare 2011; Lewis 2002). In that regard, the following issues were especially pertinent:

- Low ownership of change agendas and processes: Interventions were driven by external perceptions of what change was needed even when this did not match the reality on the ground, which amounted to putting a local face on foreign interests.
- Assumed agency and accountability : It was assumed that local NGOs represented the interests of vast communities and that, by virtue, partly of this and partly of the nature of those interests, NGOs would operate with inclusion and transparency. Unfortunately, they became an industry—a quick way to capitalize on donor money for personal gain, often at the expense of impoverished communities. Even today, many still consider civil society work as a temporary means to a more lucrative end in government, the private sector, or international organizations.
- Overestimated capacity of CSOs to influence policy and change versus efforts to civilize civil society after the raging conflicts and contestations of the 1990s only served to weaken the sector's impact.
- Civil society operated in narrow spaces due to state suspicion and mistrust based on the origin of the former's latest incarnation (i.e., opposition, revolution, etc.). Sudden influx of foreign support worsened this tension, creating a rift that remains visible and still affects state–civil society relations across West Africa today.

Later on, I explore some of the ways in which these issues were addressed.

Discourse on the sector has advanced considerably, including in several high-level meetings on civil society in Africa—notably the series of high-level consultations on aid and development effectiveness held across Africa in the 2000s, and the civil society indices conducted by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and CIVICUS, to mention two of the most visible. Interest in the sector is also evidenced by the increasing numbers of research centers and think tanks dedicated to studying civil society in order to make it more effective (Sogge 2004). A prime example is the Ghana-based West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) which was established in 2007 to "strengthen the institutional and operational capacities of CSOs and serve as a resource hub for the sector in the areas of training, research, and documentation and policy advocacy facilitation." Civil society and its enthusiasts are increasingly showing marked interest in ensuring that its (civil society's) interventions are informed and targeted in contrast with the random agitations of past years.

On the whole, CSOs seem to be operating with more freedom even though state regulation of the sector is more intrusive in some states than in others (Moyo 2009). The paradigm still prevails in international development that an independent, vibrant, representative, and truly "civil" civil society is as critical a development partner in Africa as elsewhere. Yet, it is difficult to assess how well the sector is regarded by states without supporting evidence which is not readily available because overall policy impact evaluations have not been popular among CSOs in the region. Relations between states and their (civil) societies are just one aspect of the ensuing discussion of the different approaches used in building civil society in West Africa.

Approaches to Building Civil Society in West Africa

In this section, I attempt to answer the following questions: Why build civil society? Can this happen without deliberate prompting? Is there a danger with the latter approach of distorting the development of civil society in ways that dilute its essence and make it barely relevant to the circumstances that gave birth to it? Can it be safely assumed that with the right props, civil society, particularly NGOs, will contribute to the entrenchment of democracy in Africa by pluralizing and strengthening the sector (Fowler 1991)?

Capacity Building

Efforts under this rubric tend to aim to promote greater effectiveness and account-ability among CSOs, typically through structured training programs or workshops set in an adult learning environment. Common/popular subjects include human and financial management, proposal and report writing, and other matters related to the daily operations of target groups. Increasingly, however, such courses are aiming to enhance civil society's grasp of, and policy involvement in, emerging thematic issue areas such as oil and gas/extractives, climate change, social media, and more.

The courses are usually delivered by certified expert trainers and facilitators with some experience of the training theme and terrain. Though an excellent way to transfer knowledge, build relationships, and promote networking while engaging directly with CSOs, this approach throws up certain challenges, some of which are peculiar to the (West) African context.

The Applicability of Standard Capacity Building Tools and Approaches to the African Context

In my view, the classroom setting is alien to the African culture of learning by sus-tained one-on-one observation and apprenticeship—what is known today as coaching

and mentoring. By its very nature, there are constraints related to time and cost that limit the volume and type of knowledge that can be transferred during a one or two-day training course or workshop. In some cases, trainees receive certificates of completion which, given the brevity and intensity of trainings, may not reflect accurately the capacities conveyed. By contrast, in African culture, an apprentice is not qualified to work alone without his or her mentor's approval. He or she is deemed to have acquired enough knowledge to practice his or her chosen trade without constant supervision in an elaborate passing-out ceremony that signals to society that the attachment has ended and the former apprentice is now certified.

The tools used in capacity building courses, usually training toolkits, are often only available in nonindigenous African languages, mostly French and English and occasionally, Portuguese. Further, in view of the low literacy levels in the region, there are surprisingly high amounts of written training material that are accessible by a privileged few, thereby creating, albeit unwittingly, a sort of trainee elite. Low Internet penetration rates mean that e-learning portals can only reinforce the *status quo*. The challenge posed here is, in part, one of access: how can capacity building programs reach CSOs in remote areas without access to the Internet and to mainstream languages?

Furthermore, the ad hoc/one-off nature of many such courses makes it difficult to evaluate their impact on the ways in which CSOs work. Impact has tended to be measured quantitatively, i.e., the numbers of courses run and the numbers of people who participated, which are poor indicators of what change the trainings have contributed to. Training organizations tend to use post-activity questionnaires to collect feedback on usefulness. Though these provide some useful feedback, what is needed is clearly a more holistic strategy and long-term relationships in which capacity is built up over a period of time beyond and outside the realm of formal classroom-type learning.

The Internal Politics of Capacity Building

By this, I mean the politics of who gets to attend capacity development programs. In some CSOs, including some surprisingly high-profile ones, access is limited to staff who are favored by those in charge. Sometimes, even relations and girlfriends go instead of staff although they clearly have no business being there. What this does is to dilute the quality of trainings and deny access to those who really need it while discrediting organizations that might otherwise be doing important work. In other words, the same structures of patronage that civil society often decries in the state also exist within it, thus weakening any claim that the former may make to moral superiority over the latter. In some states, the line demarcating state and civil society is so thin that it is difficult to determine where one ends and the other begins. This is because the state has either co-opted civil society or coerced it into submission. Again, capacity building is sometimes about the money. Though some CSOs suffer genuine funding shortfalls, others will attend trainings in the aim of collecting daily allowances/per diems (Smith 2003), indicating an appetite for free things. Numbers

declined significantly for some capacity-building organizations when they asked trainees to cover a specified percentage of the training costs.

How Do We Measure Expertise?

I mentioned earlier that many civil society capacity-building courses are run by experts. However, unlike in certain professions (banking, accounting, law), there are few bodies that endorse trainers in confirmation of their expertise and capacity to train on it. Training organizations often select their trainers through trial and error, sometimes making costly mistakes in the process. Even if a training runs successfully on the surface, without certification, it is difficult to assess whether its content and delivery meet key industry standards.

The Funding Challenge

West African CSOs, NGOs in particular, are heavily dependent on donor support for their daily operational costs and capacity building. This once abundant support has dwindled sharply in recent years and appears set to decline even further. This is attributable partly to the financial crisis of the mid to late 2000s, and partly due to growing donor fatigue and skepticism about the usefulness of such programs for improving civil society effectiveness. As donors pull back, they are also demanding more value-for-money for what they will give, compelling CSOs to measure and report progress in quantitative rather than qualitative terms. In some countries, donors have pooled their funds and increasingly seem to prefer to channel them through governments in a bid to boost state–civil society cooperation. However, as I discovered during a field trip to Sierra Leone in mid-2012, such funds are not magic bullets and do not always reach the intended beneficiaries.

Ironically, donors are more likely to fund organizations that can demonstrate sustainability whereas it is those that cannot that are in most dire need of support. This is having a twofold effect on civil society. First, it is causing agitation about how CSOs can survive without donor funding when there are no immediate alternatives. In order to survive, some organizations facing this dilemma may have to downsize, refocus their core mandates, or shut down. Whichever options they choose will inevitably compromise their effectiveness. Reduced donor funding also means more competition among CSOs, which in turn means less room for collaboration as funding is more likely to go to better known and more vocal organizations or to those who can implement projects at the lowest rates.

Many have called for (West) African CSOs to reduce their dependence on donor funding, yet few have had hard talks about how to do this effectively or whether this is even realistic. The private sector is an oft cited but estranged alternative source of funding. Nigeria's Aliko Dangote is one of several wealthy West African entrepreneurs that have featured on Forbes lists of Africa's richest and whose foundation

spends substantial amounts on corporate social responsibility. However, organizations like these have a marked preference for quick impact projects like building schools and donating money and relief materials to flood victims. CSOs want to approach them but do not seem to know how to couch their requests in the language of profit that commercial entities speak. There is ample room for cooperation here but this must be preceded by frank conversation about how civil society and the private sector can work together in ways that benefit them both.

Regulating Civil Society

This is a sensitive area for CSOs and governments alike. It is difficult to set boundaries for civil society activity within or beyond constitutional guarantees of the freedom of expression and association that exist in many countries without drawing the sector's ire. Yet, some form of oversight, whether internal or external, is necessary to ensure competence and credibility. Effective regulation is especially important in the current context of rising violent extremism in parts of West Africa to identify and suppress movements whose agendas and *modus operandi* make them a threat to the safety and security of others. This section examines different forms of civil society regulation in West Africa, discussing their impact on the sector and its contributions to development in the region.

State regulation

NGOs are usually required to register with a designated authority—often the body responsible for business registration—in which case they must be eligible to register as NGOs and also comply with the laws regulating this body. Wrapped up in this are the different ways in which governments seek to control civil society, but first, a word about state regulatory authorities.

As I just mentioned, many of them were created primarily for business registration and have a limited appreciation of what CSOs are and how they work. The volume of business-related regulation is often so high compared to that of CSOs that the latter receives less priority, especially as registration fees for commercial entities tend to attract more public revenue and registered CSOs are entitled to tax waivers. Again, the registration process can be cumbersome and unclear, causing avoidable delays and untold stress to potential CSOs. In Ghana, for example, the responsibility to register CSOs is shared somewhat ambiguously between the Registrar-General and the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare in a way that has them shuttling frustratingly between the two to obtain articles of incorporation. The NGO Desk in Parliament has the primary responsibility to register international NGOs, a process which can take up to 2 years due to bureaucratic red tape. Nigerian law stipulates that foreign and national CSOs must be registered under the Companies and Allied Matters Act, though, confusingly, foreign CSOs that are unable to do so may still obtain

legal status if they register with the National Planning Commission (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law 2013a).

The inefficiency of state regulatory mechanisms contributes to low levels of registration and reregistration and is a major reason why it is difficult to assess accurately how many CSOs are operating in any given country and what they are doing. One other problem affecting CSO registration and management is corruption in the public service. It is an open secret that commercial and nonprofit organizations pay varying amounts of bribes over and above official fees (these range from US $ 50 to US $ 150 and NGOs/CSOs are not entitled to any waivers) to facilitate their registration processes even when they do not satisfy all the necessary requirements. This has an adverse effect on the competence and credibility of some CSOs and is a direct indictment of the staffing and management of some state regulatory organs.

Although governments are now generally more flexible about the types of CSOs allowed to register and operate, there are some barriers to operation. In Nigeria, for instance, the president has the power to prevent an NGO from registering if its activities are considered to be "dangerous to the nation" (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law 2013a). I have personal experience of being unable to register two separate organizations, one of them a well-known and reputable international entity, because the Nigerian CSO regulatory body, the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), rejected the words *security* and *crisis* in their titles. The National Democratic Institute was unable to register in Nigeria for similar reasons; the CAC rejected its entire title but accepted to register its sister organization, the International Republican Institute (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law 2013b). Governments can also seek to curtail CSO activity by restricting via legislation the thematic and geographic areas where they may work as well as by imposing exorbitant registration fees and other difficult requirements (Elone 2010). This can be an indirect way to weed out those organizations that states consider not to be politically expedient.

Community-based organizations that do not desire legal status may remain unregistered in some countries—Sierra Leone, for example (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law 2013b)—as long as their activities are not considered illegal or injurious to the state's interests—a clause that can be interpreted arbitrarily in hostile contexts such as The Gambia. Many CSOs however remain unregistered for different reasons; some to avoid intrusive state control, others because they cannot afford registration fees or do not meet the requirements, and still others because they do not fit the definition of CSO, usually conceived as NGO, as stipulated in prevailing laws. The title of Ghana's *Draft National Policy for Strategic Partnership with NGOs* (2004) as well as its definition in section 2.4.4.1 (p. 9) is a clear example. The policy has since evolved into a *Trust-NGO Draft Bill* (Government of Ghana 2006), which seeks to shift the responsibility to register and manage what it calls not-for-profit organizations from the Registrar-General to a Trusts Commission (p. 2). Some of the content marks a shift from the narrow definition contained in its previous version but the title still signals a conflation between NGOs and CSOs.

This brings me to the subject of NGO/CSO laws. A good number of CSOs were already in existence before formal regulation was considered legally mandatory. Prior to this, civil society regulated itself, albeit not uniformly. The communal

groups I mentioned earlier operated unwritten codes of conduct whose violation attracted certain penalties. Thus, regulation is not a new thing. What is new is the state's involvement and the ways in which this has evolved as civil society itself has metamorphosed over the years. The state regulation debate arose as CSOs began to increase and became more involved and thus visible in the public space. Regulation, in my view, was one way to curb the CSOs' apparent competition with governments for popular recognition and legitimacy, especially concerning the delivery of services that governments either could not or would not provide to their people. This regulation came in the form of laws—some dating back to colonial times—and military decrees created by military regimes in that dark period of West Africa's history.

Among Ghanaian civil society's main objections to the 2006 *Trust-NGO Draft Bill* (Government of Ghana 2006) are that it does not reflect the outcomes of consultations on an earlier draft and is based on obsolete British trusteeship laws that have little bearing on the local context (Interview with Frank Boayke-Dankwa 17 April 2013; Ghana Research and Advocacy Programme n. d.; Atuguba 2007). According to Atuguba (2007), the draft bill "misconceives the character of NGOs" due to its "over reliance on the UK system of regulating charities" and its "conflation [of NGOs] with trusts" (p. 6). The situation is not helped by allegations that the government has deliberately stalled the passage of any NGO/CSO law in order to shield pseudo-CSOs allegedly established by politicians that are usurping government and donor funds meant for genuine CSOs. Decree 81 which regulates NGO activity in The Gambia was created in 1996, two years after President Yahya Jammeh came to power through a coup in 1994. Curiously, the related NGO Affairs Agency is located under the presidency (Nget 2012). This is an unusual arrangement with profound implications for state–civil society relations in the country.

Apart from direct NGO/CSO laws, there is another group of laws that are not focused on the sector but have implications for the ways in which they operate. One such example is Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) legislation initiated in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks by the USA which subsequently used a Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) blacklist to compel other countries to adopt similar laws. At a recent meeting in Ghana on the country's Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorism laws (2008), CSOs heard—many for the first time—that they were required to (1) report all financial transactions above a reviewable threshold of 20,000 Cedis (approximately US $ 10,000) and (2) that the government can immediately freeze their funds and impose other penalties if they fall foul of any of the provisions in either of the two laws, especially receiving funding from individuals and organizations designated as terrorist or associated with terrorists (Essel 2013; Moyo 2013). Terrorism is not the focus of this discussion but the point must be made that, as is clearly the case in this instance in Ghana, a state can sometimes make laws that implicate NGOs/CSOs without consulting or informing them. In the Ghanaian example, the attempt to create awareness came almost 5 years after the laws were first created but it is possible that such laws exist silently in other countries to be brought out when needed by governments to keep civil society within acceptable bounds.

Self-Regulation

Clearly, there are limits to what state regulation can achieve. As illustrated earlier, inefficient and ineffective state regulation can worsen, rather than ameliorate, the practice of civil society in a given country. Furthermore, CSOs may be more compliant with goals that they commit to, voluntarily, and more amenable to criticism from their colleagues who understand the context better because they have the benefit of experiential knowledge. That said, self-regulation does have potential pitfalls, chief of which is the reluctance of many a CSO or network to expose another's impropriety in order to avoid betraying common interests. Also, self-regulation initiatives tend to rely on voluntary participation and compliance with minimal legal obligations and enforcement measures. For this and other reasons explored further, it behooves upon us to discuss the ways in which civil society in West Africa can and does try to regulate itself and how these can be improved without compromising on the sector's independence. This is not to privilege one form of regulation over another; on the contrary, I think that the best approach is a mixture of regulation by self and by the state (for more on CSO regulation, also see Chap. 6 by Ronelle Burger and Dineo Seabe in this book).

In their 2009 article *Civil Society Self-Regulation*: *The Global Picture*, the One World Trust's Shana Warren and Robert Lloyd attempt an appraisal of global civil society self-regulation initiatives. Despite the sparseness of reliable information on the subject, the study detects three main forms of self-regulation, namely, common norms and standards, peer review, and partial delegation of regulatory responsibility to CSOs by governments. I add a fourth one which is not mentioned in the study—regulation by donors—and base my next comments on this outline.

Common Norms and Standards and Peer Review

As I mentioned earlier, civil society is not one body fighting for a single common purpose. Some CSOs have noble interests spanning a range of activities designed to improve the world; others use civil society as a tool for self-enrichment or attaining political power. The term "briefcase NGO" is often used to describe organizations with no clear mandate, office, or staff that can vanish overnight almost as quickly as they first appeared, leaving no trace that they ever existed. Also, governments sometimes form so-called governmental NGOs disguising as genuine CSOs in a bid to promote particular policies. All this has made West African CSOs keenly conscious of the need to build greater accountability and legitimacy through the adoption of common voluntary guiding principles. The challenge has been to identify a leader or coordinator organization to steer the effort. Individuals and organizations that try to drive such programs inevitably encounter opposition from those who perceive them as trying to dominate their peers.

Civil society's diversity has not kept it from coalescing temporarily or permanently around key issues of common interest, be they social, political, or economic, at

community, national, and regional levels. Impulses for this conjoining include self-defense/protection from harassment and the need to create a bigger voice in order to be better heard or make greater impact. The *Occupy Nigeria* movement against the removal of petroleum subsidies in January 2012 was very successful because of the ways in which CSOs across the country united firmly against government policy. Similarly, Senegal's *Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme* and *Y'en a marre* were instrumental respectively in negotiating and demanding a peaceful transition in 2012 between opposing political camps and civil society movements aligned with either of the country's two main political parties.

West African CSOs have also formed more permanent networks and alliances such as national associations of NGOs/CSOs. Examples include the Nigeria Network of NGOs (NNNGO), the Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations in Development (GAPVOD), Forum Civil in Senegal, Maison de la Société Civile in Benin, etc. Some of these organizations, mostly those in stable, Anglophone countries (Warren and Lloyd 2009, p. 14) have codes of conduct or ethics that members are required to abide by. NNNGO's code of conduct (Nigerian Network of NGOs 2012), for example, demands that would-be members fulfill 33 different criteria categorized under headings such as tolerance, independence, sustainability, transparency and accountability, and civic courage and care. Unlike GAPVOD, whose members must be legally registered, NNNGO embraces CSOs that are not registered but have defined structures of operation, thereby creating a broader base for participation. One essential ingredient to an effective code of conduct appears to be a strong coordinating organization that is dynamic, practices inclusion and integrity, and is committed to the cause of its members.

CSOs in the region also organize around geographic and thematic bodies like the African Security Sector Network and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, which have regional offices across Africa. Such organizations tend to focus more on collaborative work in their core interest areas than on regulation. Members may be expelled for grievous violations of terms of membership but few networks will scrutinize the internal affairs of their members, possibly because they do not want their own dealings to be subject to public scrutiny. This is ironic, considering that civil society is so often designated the role of watchdog over other entities. Its resistance to regulation belies its own crusade for transparency and accountability and suggests that civil society is and should be beyond reproach by virtue of its more noble goals, no matter what means it uses to achieve them. Some individual CSOs have tried to promote accountability internally, especially through the adoption and statement of organizational values, but the success of such efforts without objective external/third party oversight is questionable.

At a regional level, all the aforementioned organizations ultimately fall under the auspices of the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF), an umbrella body of CSOs from the 15 members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that serves as the main platform for CSO engagement with ECOWAS on all matters. With focal points in each country, WACSOF seeks to complement ECOWAS' development efforts through constructive engagements with states and

political parties (West Africa Civil Society Institute 2009). It also has a *Code of Conduct and Ethics of CSOs in West Africa and in the West African Diaspora* which is not accessible online. This makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of how WACSOF regulates its membership, but some of its challenges can be gleaned from a 2009 Needs Assessment of the forum published by the WACSI. Though regulation did not feature among the core challenges listed, it would clearly be affected by factors like the incapacitation of its national platforms and a need for some internal restructuring.

West African civil society also indirectly regulates itself through the periodic state of civil society assessments conducted by CIVICUS, USAID, and the like by providing useful indicators of its areas of strength and weakness and offering solutions for improvement.

Delegated Government Responsibility

There is not much to say about this except that I am not aware of any West African countries where governments formally share oversight of civil society with representatives of the sector. The relationship between both parties is improving but is not yet at a stage where a conversation like this could take place. Such an arrangement would be difficult under current political circumstances without drawing charges/accusations of being pro- or antigovernment for being for or against CSOs sharing this responsibility with states.

There is a strong need for an entity to provide some form of certification for CSOs as a means of assessing their capacities to undertake certain tasks/types of projects in a manner akin to that employed by professional organizations such as the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants or National Bar Associations. It would not only entail frank, in-depth discussion among key stakeholders about how this could work in practice but would also be useful, particularly, to cement the multiple capacity development initiatives currently running across West Africa. A group of national and international NGOs attempted to do this in Ghana in 2004 with the Standards of Excellence project. Prompted by rising public mistrust of NGOs/CSOs at the time and inspired by a global spectrum of codes of conduct and ethics, their goal was to enhance civil society professionalism as a complement to state regulatory laws. The project eventually evolved into the *Draft National Policy for Strategic Partnership with NGOs* which has stalled for almost a decade over disagreements between the Ghana government and civil society on its contents.

Donor Regulation

Donors present yet another form of regulation by virtue of the standards and principles that CSOs are required to comply with before they can access certain types of funds. Such requirements range from structural to procedural and normative and were a major conduit of the norm of gender mainstreaming in West Africa. Grant-seeking

CSOs were tasked to involve women in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of their projects as well as in demonstrating the impacts of their activities on the lives of women in their contexts. Although regulation may not be the end goal of donors, their conditionalities induce, at worst, temporary conformity that may evolve into norms over time.

Civil Society and Development: Achievements, Challenges, and Opportunities

In an earlier section, I posed the question: "Why build civil society?" A common answer is "to enable it contribute better to development," though there is not necessarily an agreed definition/understanding of what development is. It is equally important to strengthen civil society to enable it to continue to stand in the gap between states and the societies that they govern. However, it is not implausible that efforts to build civil society have focused so narrowly on the former that they have skewed civil society's development so deeply as to render it impotent for the latter task.

A cursory examination of civil society activity in any country will likely reveal high and rising numbers of CSOs and their extensive engagement with development processes. However, neither variable is a reliable measure of the sector's contributions to development. Civil society plays important roles in diverse fields as watchdogs, advocates/pressure groups, peace builders/mediators, service providers, and facilitators of civic consciousness. Its success in each of these capacities is predicated upon the availability of enabling space and civil society's own adherence to accepted standards, some of which I mentioned earlier. Broadly, civil society has helped provide a voice for the voiceless in West Africa and offered alternatives to sometimes counterproductive government policies. Along the way, the sector has encountered several challenges but the foremost obstacle to civil society contributing effectively to development is undoubtedly its at best frosty relations with governments.

As stated earlier, the relationship between states and civil societies in West Africa has been historically adversarial. Things have improved as governments have become more "democratic" and civil society has proven itself a competent and viable partner. However, especially in hostile and unstable or postconflict contexts, there are residual kinks in the knots that bind both the parties that must be addressed to make it easier for them to work together.

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Chapter 11
Imagining Civil Society in Zimbabwe and 'Most of the World'

Kirk Helliker

Introduction

Until the so-called 'Arab Spring,' the one African country with arguably the most international visibility was Zimbabwe. This was mainly due to its radical land redistribution programme—'fast track'—which began in the year 2000. Post-fast track Zimbabwe continues to be marked by polarising social conflicts and, over the past decade, Zimbabwean studies have been characterised by acrimonious debates about agrarian transformation and political change. This has brought to the fore important questions about the significance (and indeed very existence) of civil society as a social phenomenon in contemporary Zimbabwe, as well as raising key concerns about the conceptual framing of civil society under its specific socio-historical conditions.

This chapter re-visits the notion of civil society in what Partha Chatterjee (2004) calls 'most of the world' (beyond the capitalist metropoles) and, in doing so, uses Zimbabwe (and Africa more broadly) as an entry point into the literature on civil society. The chapter consists of four main sections. First, I discuss literature on civil society in Africa which, in the main, dichotomises civil society and the state empirically without any sustained theoretical reflections. Second, I provide an overview of Zimbabwean society and politics over the past decade and the ensuing debate, which in many ways produces a Manichean dualism whereby civil society is equated with progression and the state with regression. Third, I locate this conceptualisation of civil society within the broader international literature on civil society. These three sections, as a whole, highlight slippages in defining and understanding civil society: between civil society as a set of empirically identifiable organisational formations and civil society as a social space marked by civil liberties and voluntary arrangements in bourgeois society. Finally, I re-imagine civil society in relation to 'most of the world'.

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Civil Society in Africa

Many discussions of civil society and the state in contemporary Africa are rooted historically in the notion of a wave of democratization sweeping across large swathes of the continent (at least sub-Saharan Africa) from the late 1980s, notably with the rise of multi-party states in the face of seemingly intransigent authoritarian developmental states (AACC and MWENGO 1993). The literature is replete with references to the role of civil society (typically understood in an organisational sense and concomitantly reduced to non-membership intermediary non-governmental organisations (NGOs)) as an instrument in the process of social and political democratization. Hence, there is talk about a 'revitalised' civil society 'flexing its muscles' (Zack-Williams 2001, pp. 217, 218) or the 'rebirth of civil society' (Monga 1996, p. 10), and about a 'rich network of civil society structures' in southern Africa growing 'in strength and experience' (Molutsi 1999, p. 188). As a predominant trend then, and particularly in the early literature on Africa, civil society is described in very glowing if not glorifying terms such as the claim that it is 'now taken for granted that NGOs are probably the leading agents in the democratization process' (Nyang'oro 1999, p. 3). In this sense, civil society organisations are seen to represent the general or universal interest, whilst the state pursues its own partial and particularistic interests.

At times, though, the civil society literature had a critical edge to it. Therefore, some writers were less likely to identify any fixed causal linkages between civil society and democracy, including Ndegwa (1996) and his argument about 'the two faces of civil society' (one progressive, one regressive) as captured in Kenyan case studies. In this respect, 'civil society may be a significant reservoir of authoritarianism and anti-democratic values' (Okuku 2002, p. 83). A more telling critique, particularly given the conflation between civil society and NGOs, and the assertion that NGOs are built for (and ideal for) empowering local communities, is offered by the secretary of the NGO Coalition for Eastern Africa: '[T]he space for small community-based initiatives to promote voluntary action for local change is drowned out by the cacophony of large, policy-oriented, advocacy-pushing, service provision NGOs' (Jaffer 1997, p. 66). Hence, NGOs undercut democratic possibilities.

This Janus-faced conception of civil society was never articulated through theoretical reasoning of any significance. As a result, any specific instances of regression were not seen as inherent to the very existence and constitution of civil society, but rather simply as (historically contingent) empirical exceptions which ultimately proved the rule of civil society's democratising thrust in opposition to the state. The 'rebirth' of civil society accompanied the re-assertion of market forces (under conditions of neo-liberal restructuring) and, similar to explanations of market failure by modern-day neo-classical economists, civil society failure (in promoting democracy) arose in the main from corrupting intrusions emanating from outside civil society (often in the form of global donors, as discussed in the following paragraphs). Cases of failure did not necessarily entail a critique of civil society *per se* as a site involving both social domination and conflict.

The literature focuses primarily on relations between civil society and the state such that the term 'civil society' is deployed instrumentally in a state-centric fashion as a (potential and real) force in democratising the authoritarian and often neo-patrimonial African state (Chabal and Daloz 1999). Despite (if not because of) their often heavy-handed interventions against civil society, African states are depicted as 'vulnerable' (van de Walle 2002, p. 76), 'weak and dependent' (Mandaza 1994, p. 269), and marked by 'institutional incapacity, bureaucratic inertia … and the inability … to initiate or implement policies' (Puplampu and Tettey 2000, p. 251). MWENGO (2000, p. 47), a regional NGO body for southern and east Africa, argues that NGOs themselves perceive the state 'as inefficient, ineffective and unable to make any meaningful contribution to … development initiatives'. The role of civil society in the context of state-driven and state-sanctioned authoritarianism therefore is to build a modernising democratic state, with the case of Zambia and the struggles against Kenneth Kaunda's regime considered to be a prime example of this in practice.

In any later period of democratic consolidation, there are said to be potential synergies between state and civil society, with the latter seeking to engage the state in a constructive manner and, in doing so, contributing to the building of national democratic institutions and of organisational capacity for development (Whaites 1998). As Robinson (1994) puts it, 'if state capacity is weakened' for any reason, then 'there is a distinct possibility that NGO efforts to exert more influence over public policy and the allocation of public resources will be undermined'. Hence, the need exists 'to preserve the capacity of the state to determine the policy agenda and to formulate policy whilst being flexible and involving NGOs and interest groups in policy implementation and policy dialogue' (Robinson 1994, pp. 42–43). Civil society, as consisting of organisational formations, is considered crucial for preventing a return to authoritarian rule once the process of democratic consolidation is underway. Such claims, when examined closely, tend to be normative and prescriptive rather than descriptive and analytical. In this respect, civil society is 'eulogised as the ultimate medicinal compound, capable of curing [all] ills' (Stewart 1997, p. 16).

A similar instrumentalist argument about civil society also exists in relation to global donors and the worldwide development industry. Jenkins (2001, p. 252), in recognising this, waxes eloquently about these foreign interventions: 'Foreign-aid programmes of advanced capitalist "northern" countries have identified civil society as the key ingredient in promoting "democratic development" in the economically less-developed states of the "south". … [A]id to the 'democracy and governance sector", as it has increasingly come to be known within the profession, must be earmarked to support … individual associations' within civil society. More critical observations note that upward accountability to funders is the main source of any regressive practices of NGOs, with alternative forms of funding seemingly purifying NGOs of any bad habits. Accountability of civil society to international donors therefore may 'corrupt the authenticity of civic action' and 'erodes its potential to be a motor for change, since—as the prisoners of someone else's agenda—civic groups are less likely to take risks, innovate, and challenge' (Edwards 1998, pp. 7, 11; see also Hearn 2001). Downward accountability of NGOs in particular, to grassroots bodies and social movements, becomes severely compromised.

In discussions of civil society in Africa, the concept is not only contrasted to the state, but it is also compared, in typical modernist and modernization speak, to communitarian forms of social organization ('the community') which predominated in pre-colonial Africa and which continue to structure (in particular) rural social realities in re-invented forms structured around ethnicity, culture, chieftainships, and kinship. In this sense, rural Africa is said to be mired in traditional practices resulting in local democratic deficits. Thus, tradition-based loyalties, labelled in another social context as 'identitarian solidarities of a sub-national character' (Khilnani 2001, p. 28) are portrayed as retrogressive particulars (or as imposed and totalising solidarities) which work against the formation of civil society or autonomous and contractual modern sociability. They thus undermine the unequivocally progressive and universalising content of civil society and its democratic endeavours vis-à-vis the nation-state.

Mamdani's influential work (1996) on 'citizens' and 'subjects' in Africa suggests that, under colonialism, civil society was spatially restricted to the urban centres, existing amongst both white colonisers and indigenous petty-bourgeois elements. For post-colonial Africa, because of de-racialisation and the emergence of broader civil liberties, the space for indigenous urban civil society has opened up further; however, the rural population has remained relegated to 'the fringes of civil society' (Sachikonye 1995, p. 6) because of ongoing despotic forms of rule and as democratization has been a largely urban phenomenon. In making these claims about civil society and customary power, writers normally slip into an understanding of civil society based not on organisational make-up, but on civil society as a social space marked by the liberal bourgeois rule of law.

The state in Africa is seen as an instigator or at least an accomplice in reproducing communitarian identities in agrarian areas through reinvented forms of tradition. This means that civil society is up against not only modern authoritarianism, but also pre-modern communalism, both of which entail totalising compulsions and commitments contrary to contractual civility.

Civil Society in Zimbabwe

The literature on civil society in Zimbabwe in certain ways mimics the African literature, though there are differences in emphases. In the context of an increasingly repressive post-colonial state, the former body of literature speaks about the rapid rise of urban civil society in the 1990s. This is based on a NGO-ish organisational understanding of civil society, and one seen as confined to urban centres. Perhaps, even more so than the broader African literature, Zimbabwean studies have been marked by a particularly purified notion of civil society mainly devoid of any democratic weaknesses. A Manichean-style struggle between civil society (as good) and the state (as evil) apparently prevails and, in terms of understanding the lack of democratic consolidation, global donors as funders of these NGOs (and imperialism broadly) are left off the hook. The ruling party and state, with their sustained support

from rural subjects under the thumb of chieftainship systems, are labelled as solely responsible for the sad state of affairs that marks contemporary Zimbabwe. A minority position in the literature on Zimbabwe, whilst not disputing the urban-based organisational definition of civil society, comes to a different conclusion. These points are examined in the following overview.

Initially, in the early years of Zimbabwean independence, the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party inhibited the growth of autonomous trade unions and social movements, and effectively took them under its organisational wing. In doing so, the state effectively undercut or at least flooded civil society. Independent trade unions and urban civic groups emerged in the 1990s (leading to the formation in 1999 of the opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)), but they were increasingly met with a degree of repression by the ruling party through the organs of the state (Nhema 2002). In the year 2000, nation-wide land occupations led to massive redistribution of white commercial farms (known as 'fast track' land reform). The exact relationship between ZANU-PF and the land movement remains controversial. Supporters of civil society, who are likewise critics of fast track (Hammar et al. 2003), claim that the land movement was simply an electoral ploy of ZANU-PF and that it was initiated and stage-managed by the ruling party. Others (Moyo and Yeros 2005), and this is the minority position, argue that the land movement cannot be reduced neatly to the party and that the movement had (at least originally) a degree of autonomy from the party-state.

A good entry point into the debate is the claim made by Moyo and Yeros that the land occupations and fast track land reform had a 'fundamentally progressive nature' (Moyo and Yeros 2005, p. 188). The Zimbabwean state, in large part because of its anti-imperialist stance and anti-colonial restructuring, is labelled as a 'radicalised state' (Moyo and Yeros 2007). Other scholars, such as Raftopoulos and Phimister (2004) and Marongwe (2008), make substantially different arguments in highlighting the regressive state-driven nature of political change in Zimbabwe over the past decade. These critics claim that statements by Moyo and Yeros about fast track entail—almost perverse—value judgments made by what Bond and Manyanya (2003, p. 78) call 'left-nationalists'. These left-nationalists fail to conceptualise analytically or even highlight empirically the repressive character of state-led nationalism in contemporary Zimbabwe, designated as an 'authoritarian populist anti-imperialism' (Moore 2003, p. 8). For their part, Moyo and Yeros claim that their critics (who they call neo-liberal apologists for imperialism or 'civic/post-nationalists') demote the significance of national self-determination and the agrarian question in Zimbabwe as expressed in the land movement.

The debate tends to reproduce discursively the main political schisms existing in Zimbabwean society, and therefore articulates party-political conflicts in theoretical clothing. A romanticised notion of civil society (laid out by the 'civic nationalists') dominates the literature, and it is clearly exemplified in the writings of Brian Kagoro (2003, 2005) as chairperson of the urban NGO-dominated Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (CZC). This notion brings to the fore the institutional make-up or 'organisations of civil society' (Laakso 1996, p. 218) in the form of urban civics or NGOs, as well as their progressive character (Magure 2009); the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA), as a critical force for change in the late 1990s, features

prominently in these discussions. Civil society, defined as a bounded socio-political space constituted in and through civil liberties (rather than as a discrete set of organisations), is rarely acknowledged. Simultaneously, development NGOs in Zimbabwe working in customary areas dominated by chieftainship systems, notably international NGOs such as World Vision, are effectively seen as seeking to modernise lives and livelihoods in these areas. Likewise, many foreign-funded local NGOs (such as Kunzwana Women's Association) doing 'development' work amongst farm labourers on commercial farms (and in a self-declared civilising mission) seek to build civil associations on these farms.

The civic-nationalist position, with its organisational definition, ends up with a cleansed, exclusionary, and hollowed out notion of civil society, and it fails to recognise that antagonisms over the past decade have not occurred in a neat and tidy dichotomous—civil society/state—fashion. It downplays tensions which rightfully could be said to occur within civil society and focuses on antagonisms between 'progressive' civil society and the 'regressive' state (or, more aptly, the argument at times displaces the former tensions onto the latter). Fortunately, some 'civic-nationalist' scholars seek to rectify this dualism. For instance, Cornelius Ncube (2010) highlights the tensions within Zimbabwean civil society; in particular, he speaks of a hegemonic civil society linked to ZANU-PF and a counter-hegemonic civil society aligned to MDC, and of the struggles between them. In the case of fast track, and the wider political struggles that emerged around it, considerable conflict took place within civil society—including between urban-based donor-funded NGOs (such as the NCA) and the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) linked to the state. But, as McCandless (2011) documents, such conflicts also occurred between (and within) urban civics, notably between the NCA and CZC.

At the same time, civil groups are regularly and 'sadly undemocratic' (Makumbe 1998, p. 311). An ethnography of urban-based civic NGOs in Zimbabwe (notably human rights organisations) from the late 1990s shows that their internal processes are often characterised by un-constitutional (and un-civil) procedures (Rich-Dorman 2001). More recently, the conflict within the NCA and the subsequent formation of the CZC led to serious self-reflection even within urban civil society. For instance, Mhlanga (2008, p. 2), a human rights activist, wrote in 2008 that Zimbabwean 'civil society is showing double standards' and that it 'has internalised the image of the ruling party, its tactics and general guidelines, and is therefore fearful of freedom of any meaningful change' (see also Tendi 2008). Even those Zimbabwean academics who have long idealised urban civics as the site for transformation recently acknowledged the factionalised nature of the civic movement (Saunders 2010).

Overall, the aim of Zimbabwean civil society is seen as democratising the state because, in the end, the state is the guarantor of democracy. The NCA and aligned urban groups have therefore sought to defend and advance political and civil liberties (i.e., to build civil society, as a rule-of-law social space, though—as indicated—the term is rarely if ever used in this sense) as well as to achieve power through the MDC in the contest for state hegemony. Civil society, as a set of distinct organisations, is treated instrumentally and the state is perceived as the ultimate emancipator of society. The opposing side in the Zimbabwean debate, which I now discuss, also

posits the state as the critical site for social transformation. Intriguingly, the 'radical nationalists' do not dispute the institutional delimitation of civil society but rather challenge urban civil society's supposed progressive status. Similar to the civic-nationalists, they tend to consider the land movement as uncivil and therefore existing outside the boundaries of civil society—though, unlike the civic-nationalists, uncivil is not used in a pejorative sense. They label it as 'uncivil' to distinguish it from imperialist-supported urban civil society and, in doing so, their definition of civil society slides into a rule-of-law based one.

Moyo and Yeros (2005, 2007), and Ibbo Mandaza in a series of commentaries in *The Zimbabwe Mirror*, stress the prospects of genuine agrarian transformation by means of the Zimbabwean state. At the same time, they recognise the significance of autonomous rural action (the uncivil land occupations) in resolving the country's lingering land questions. They also agree that the state co-opted and subdued what was initially an autonomous movement, but that in the process, it defended the movement against reactionary societal forces (including white agricultural capital and urban civics). Any fixation with the state and transformation arises mainly because of their pre-conceived and fixed understanding of political change, mostly notably in terms of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR).

Moyo and Yeros go on to assert that the process of agrarian change 'did not go far enough within the ruling party and the state to safeguard the peasant-worker character of the movement or to prepare the semi-proletariat organizationally against the reassertion of the black bourgeoisie' (Moyo and Yeros 2005, p. 193). The civic-nationalists would argue, to the contrary, that the agrarian change strategy went too far within the state and was thereby captured by what Raftopoulos (2006) calls the state commandism of ZANU-PF. Despite the significance they often give to movement autonomy, the arguments by Moyo and Yeros seem to be part of a more general state-centred theory of change, such that movement un-civility 'obtained radical land reform through the state and against imperialism' (Moyo and Yeros 2005, p. 179). It may be argued that, unlike the other position in the debate that puts civil society on a pedestal, Moyo and Yeros are mesmerised by the state—which they prefer to label as a radicalised state and not as an authoritarian state—as a source for breaking with the civility of capital and for apparently post-imperialist transformation.

What the critics of Moyo and Yeros roundly denounce is the latter's underestimation (or underplaying) of violence in social change. Thus, Moyo (2001, pp. 325–330) argues that the short-term pain of uncivil and violent practices during the occupations must be weighed against the longer term benefits for democratization in advancing the NDR. Mandaza likewise argues that it is a 'politically reactionary position . . . to deny the principle of land redistribution simply because the methods being employed are said to be bad' (*The Zimbabwe Mirror*, 27 October to 2 November 2000). In other words, the 'Revolution' is to be defended at all costs, particularly given the penetration of the enemy within, in the form of civil society (and its imperialist funders). For Raftopoulos and Phimister (2004, p. 376), this implies a crude stage-ist notion of change in which 'democratic questions will be dealt with at a later stage, once the economic kingdom has been conquered' (see also Moore 2003).

Both positions accept the same civil/un-civil distinction—with, at this particular juncture in Zimbabwean history, civil society being located in urban spaces and un-civil society in rural spaces. The difference is primarily in the moral judgments passed on the civil and un-civil. This commonality though fails to do justice to the varied kinds and textures of sociability in rural fast track Zimbabwe. When civilities and civil society (as a space for voluntary contractual relations) amongst black agricultural petty commodity producers are acknowledged, it is normally in relation to their involvement in market-oriented forms of farmer production, distribution, and consumption. Rutherford (2004) though, in his study of white commercial farms in Zimbabwe, speaks of the existence of more indigenous forms of rural civility.

The land movement is labelled as 'uncivil' because it undermined private property regimes and the prevailing market-based land transactions. However, some ethnographic accounts of mobilisation strategies during the occupations, and forms of organisation on occupied farms even at the height of the land movement in the years 2000 and 2001, show that they often took on an easily recognisable civil form and content, as did the links between the farm structures and the district and provincial war veteran associations (Sadomba 2011). Research on older resettlement areas in Zimbabwe (from the 1980s) indicates that the redistribution of large-scale farms may in fact lead to the development of 'civil social activities' (Barr 2004)—at least in comparison to the customary areas—as resettled farmers seek to forge social relationships in the absence of traditional authorities. However, the seeming imposition of chieftainship systems in the newly resettled (fast track) farms may counter the diverse forms of civil associations which have painstakingly emerged over the past 10 years (Murisa 2011) .

Theorising Civil Society: A Set of Organisations or a Social Space?

Historically, and with the rise of capitalism in Europe, civil society was generally equated with liberal bourgeois society (as a social space). However, the contemporary view has shifted to an understanding of civil society as an empirically identifiable set of organisations which may, to some extent at least, exist outside the conditions of liberal bourgeois society (for example, under authoritarianism in Africa). The literature on Africa generally and Zimbabwe specifically, in the context of neo-liberal restructuring, draws on this latter conception. It claims at times the only incipient existence of civil society (particularly in urban spaces), but it does not question—in any strong analytical sense—the usefulness of this notion of civil society to 'most of the world'. And, more fundamentally, it does not offer an alternative theoretical conceptualisation of 'most of the world'. This is pursued more directly in the next section.

In classical European political philosophy and theory, civil society is sometimes contrasted to a state of nature (for example, Thomas Hobbes), more often to communitarian relations (for example, Ferdinand Tonnies) and, most often, to

the nation-state (for example, John Locke, Georg Hegel and Karl Marx). Hegel argued that the egotisms and inequalities of an unbridled civil society under modern (individualistic) competitive capitalist conditions were productively managed by the universal nation-state ruling over and pacifying 'uncivil' society, thereby making it more 'civil' (i.e., the state was the solution to civil society egotisms). In Marx's view, any such notion of universality was a mere pretence (or a 'false universal')—Ehrenberg (1998, p. 2)—and the state served the specific interests of the bourgeoisie with its economic dominance firmly rooted within civil society. In Marx's words, 'this slavery of civil society is the natural foundation on which the modern state rests' (quoted in Femia 2001, p. 136). Therefore, the institutional separation between state and civil society under capitalism mystified class domination, with the state being a particular organisational expression of relations of domination existing first and foremost within civil society. 'Bourgeois' civil society, with its particularistic class-based bickering, could only be overcome by the universalising and emancipating role of the proletariat.

Today's dominant understanding of civil society understands it organisationally as a progressive social force and as antagonistic to both the state and communitarian relations because of the latter's regressive authoritarian or pre-modern inclinations. This is a romanticised conceptualisation which turns both Hegel and Marx on their heads (Baker 2002). Whereas Hegel saw the state as moderating and reconciling the particulars of civil society, this current dominant 'domesticated' notion (domesticated vis-à-vis both state and capital) perceives civil society as the incarnation of reason, the universalising mode of social organization and defender of democracy (much like neo-liberal 'free' marketers posit the capitalist market). This approach demonises the modern state (at least its authoritarian traits) but obscures its bourgeois form.

Hence, the capitalist form of the liberal bourgeois state—and indeed the capitalist market—is treated as a necessary historical given, and is regarded as the very foundation of a strong and vibrant civil society. Capitalist society is compartmentalised, fragmented, and partitioned along the tripartite realms of economy, state, and civil society, and thus its totalising logic is undetected and left un-analyzed. This entails a de-economised version of civil society devoid of class relations. Civil society, as Marx understood it, is thereby sanitised and cleansed—civil society comes to represent an unadulterated realm of un-coerced freedom where the oppressed defend themselves against the ravages of the state. Civil society is not a problem; rather, it is the solution to the woes of state-regulated capitalism. This view therefore fails to recognise that civil society itself is in various ways a site of domination, inequality, and conflict : the moment of social domination inscribed within civil society is ignored.

This prevailing understanding of, and indeed fixation with civil society (including in Africa and Zimbabwe—particularly the 'civic-nationalist' position), arose in the context of an anti-statist moment globally and is undoubtedly linked to new forms of imperialism. Anti-statism entailed successful struggles against centralised actually existing communist states in central-eastern Europe, neo-liberal downsizing and restructuring of the Keynesian welfare state in advanced capitalist nations, and sustained opposition to authoritarian and military states throughout 'most of the world'.

In this regard, civil society was designed to recover for society a range of powers and activities that states had usurped in previous decades. Ironically, despite the revival of civil society under anti-statist conditions, the dominant interpretation of the concept is statist or at least state-centric.

This interpretation entails an instrumentalist view of civil society as a formidable weapon for democratising the state and defending liberal democracy, rather than viewing civil society as a site of struggle for hegemony, or as an end-in-itself, i.e. a pre-figurative form of politics for a new society. Democracy is conceived as effectively external to civil society and is lodged rather (in statist fashion) in liberal democratic state bodies. Civil society organizations have no legitimate existence independent of their role in interacting with the state, and the strengths and weaknesses of these organizations are identified in terms of their regulatory state-centric functions in building and defending liberal state democracy (for example, many civil society groups promote the realisation of human rights, and the state is implicitly—but problematically—recognised as the legitimate guarantor of these rights (Baker 2003)).

On one level, then, civil society is defined in opposition to (or against) the state. On another level, though, the boundaries of civil society overlap with the boundaries of liberal politics as defined by the state; in other words, civil society, though 'defined in opposition to the state, also ends at the boundaries of liberal politics' (Sader 2002, p. 93). Any antagonism between state and civil society occurs within a broad state-civil society consensual paradigm (the 'consensual state domain of politics'—Neocosmos 2004, p. 11) in terms of which the state delimits and structures what is acceptable oppositional (i.e., civil society) politics. Ultimately, civil society (as conceptualised in this perspective) is supportive specifically of the liberal bourgeois state form, leading to state-civil society collaborative and partnership arrangements which facilitate overall social domination. Politics beyond this consensual domain are viewed by both state and civil society as unauthentic: at best as illegitimate politics and at worst as criminal behaviour.

Insofar as civil society is considered as a social space (namely, liberal bourgeois society marked by civil liberties and contractual relations), then, its validity as a concept for understanding societies, where the core characteristics of liberal bourgeois democracy are absent, becomes questionable. Further, as Fernandes (2007) notes in relation to Venezuela, the organisational definition of civil society is an exclusionary understanding that is regularly used as a basis for marginalising organisations which are seen as challenging liberal bourgeois society or as acting contrary to bourgeois liberties (hence, the discursive attacks on the land movement by urban civics in contemporary Zimbabwe).

Re-Positioning Civil Society

Some social historians and anthropologists claim that a kind of civility equivalent to liberal bourgeois society existed in pre-colonial societies (in, for example, India and China; Hann and Dunn 1996). Whether this argument entails mapping the

prevailing notion of civil society onto these other societies, or involves an alternative and extended rendering of civil society (which may or may not push the term's meaning beyond all recognition) is not always clear. Nevertheless, Goody (2001, p. 153) notes that 'there is a kind of moral evaluation attached to the very concepts of civility [and civil society], rationality, and enlightenment, qualities that are seen as contributing to the so-called European miracle and that are necessarily unique to the West'. In other words, positing the existence of civil society and civility under specific historical-social conditions only (and thereby excluding its presence elsewhere) may be an act of discursive warfare which reveals more about the (ethnocentric) designator than the (supposedly uncivil) designated. Therefore, it may be that the concept of civil society is open to spatial placement within alternative forms of existing modernity; in this sense, as intimated in my discussion of Zimbabwe, some writers argue for the existence of 'indigenous traditions of "civility" if not "civil society"' (Kaviraj 2001, p. 322).

However, considerable debate continues to exist, and rightly so, about the applicability of the concept of civil society to 'most of the world' and about the pervasiveness and strength of civil society in these regions. This is particularly the case when civil society is understood as referring specifically and only to bourgeois society based on 'un-coerced human action' (Edwards 1998, p. 3) and on liberal notions of equality, contract, and autonomy. In this regard, indigenous civil society during colonialism probably was the 'domain of the elite' in urban centres (Chatterjee 2001, p. 174) in that the elite sought to replicate Western modernity in its own lives. In addition, with respect to 'most of the world' (such as Africa), it is likely the case that agrarian civil society (both under colonialism and post-colonialism) does occur in an incipient or stunted character particularly where chieftainships, kinships systems, and customary law and tenure were pervasive and continue to be so. In this regard, as suggested earlier, the so-called wave of democratisation in post-colonial Africa may have only opened further civil-type spaces in urban centres.

However it seems that, under post-colonial conditions, the presence of civil society even in urban areas has been hugely problematic—more specifically, post-colonial states have at times undercut the urban spaces of civil society and undermined their liberal bourgeois foundations. In this sense, the distinction between citizens and subjects which Mamdani (1996) posits as an urban–rural distinction in Africa is currently being reproduced, in a certain sense, within urban centres—with urban 'subjects' (as Frantz Fanon's—1967—'wretched' or 'damned' of the earth) having a different set of relations to the post-colonial state as compared with urban citizens.

This possibility—namely, the exclusionary character of post-colonial restructuring—has roots in colonialism, with respect to both the colonial state and the anti-colonial movements themselves. Quite often the overdeveloped colonial state has simply been taken over and reproduced by the ex-liberation movement (Heller 2009, p. 142) and used for an array of social engineering projects not unlike colonial projects. This emanates from a fixation with the state as the site for transformation, such that the 'capture of state power' becomes 'uncritically equated with acquiring the means to transform society' (i.e., 'planned emancipation') (Heller 2001, pp. 134, 151, 157). This resulted, during early post-colonialism, in developmental states with

authoritarian leanings. These developmental states, with their universalising clarion call for nation-building, regularly demobilised people's organisations, and undercut liberal bourgeois space, as part of a centripetal process of social reconstruction and state-building. This type of manoeuvring by state elites was recognised in the early years of African independence by Fanon (1967).

However, this authoritarian streak was also ingrained in many liberation movements during their quest for state power, which made them all the more a-tuned to deploying state power in intrusive and undemocratic ways. For instance, Friedman (1992) highlights the antagonistic relation between civil liberties and anti-colonialism in his analysis of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa in the 1980s, as the movement (notably the African National Congress or ANC) sought to inhibit the flourishing of emancipatory initiatives outside its control, all in the name of 'the struggle' (as defined by the ANC). Kaviraj (2001, p. 314) makes the more general point, which I quote at length: '[T]he secret of the immense power of the [post-colonial] nation-states was not the inheritance from colonialism but from their national mobilization. Through the national movements, these elites laid claim to a right to mobilise all sections of society, and extended the state's influence over all spheres of social life. This is one significant paradox of post-colonial "civil society" or rather its absence'. The dominant political party (such as ZANU-PF or the ANC) claimed to constitute and embody the nation and the struggle for historical redress, and thus an alternative form of universality (embodied in civil liberties for all) seemingly became redundant for purposes of social transformation as defined by the party. Hence, civil space has been closed down or severely de-limited.

Civil society, as liberal bourgeois society, does indeed exist to some extent in 'most of the world'. Its existence involves 'well-structured, principled, and constitutionally sanctioned relations' with the state (Chatterjee 2001, p. 178). Also civil society, as understood organisationally, is perceived in many ways correctly as trying to pry open further space for civil and political liberties (in other words, to expand the space for genuine liberal democratic relations between state and citizen). Ultimately, the aim of these civil associations (or civil societies) is—as discussed in previous sections—to consolidate bourgeois liberal democracy and to join hands with a reforming state in doing so. But, any relations which do exist between state and citizen do not in themselves encompass (even in cities and towns) the full range of relations which exist between state and society.

In this respect, Chatterjee's (2004) argument about 'political society' with specific reference to India does have some resonance for 'most of the world'. Political society refers to the fringes of civil society or—more correctly—spaces beyond it, incorporating urban (and rural) subjects whose livelihoods regularly border on the margins of civility and legality. The state recognises and regulates these populations differently to citizens living within and according to the dictates of civil society. They have entitlements but not rights: 'Rights belong to those who have proper legal title to the lands or buildings . . . they are, we might say, proper citizens . . . Those who do not have such rights [subjects] may nevertheless have entitlements' (Chatterjee 2004, p. 69). Because of this, the state may feel obliged to provide, as a welfare-like function, basic services for example to shack-dwellers (such as water), despite the

ongoing illegality of the shacks. But, state apparatuses may also display their repressive might in seeking to quell any disturbances arising from the bowels of political society. Recent events in post-apartheid South Africa, including state responses to so-called service delivery protests, are a case in point.

In this regard, both urban and rural residents in 'most of the world' may engage in actions ranging from 'political mendicancy to spontaneous violence' (Kaviraj 2001, p. 317), and these may not only lie outside the niceties of associational civility, but may also undermine and resist it. As Edwards (1998, p. 6) neatly puts it, '[i]t is difficult to be civil if you are starving'. Further, Chatterjee (2002, p. 70) notes in relation to India that the 'squalor, ugliness and violence of popular life' cannot be imprisoned 'within the sanitised fortress of civil society' as this fortress has been imagined, constructed, and defended by the post-colonial state. Hence, there would be serious doubts about the prospects of 'civil solutions to neo-colonialism' (or to neo-apartheid in South Africa) such that the 'civil domain, by definition, cannot be broadened by civil society' (Yeros 2002, p. 61).

Theorising seriously about progressive social change, in a manner critical of the supposed democratic potentials of both civil society and state-centred politics, ultimately leads to radical or socialist libertarian thinking. Libertarian theory of this kind is not simply about (understanding) the state-civil society consensus which glues capitalist societies together; rather, first and foremost, it is a theory against this consensus and seeks to reason on and identify types of politics beyond this consensus in bourgeois societies. This libertarianism is, in different ways, found in the works of Autonomist Marxism (Holloway 2010), classical Anarchism (Schmidt and van der Walt 2009), post-Anarchism (Day 2005), and a range of ex-Marxist communists such as the French philosopher Alain Badiou (2010).

Central to key strands of libertarianism is an attempt to think politics outside state subjectivities (Neocosmos 2011) and the politics of representation—whether lodged organisationally in parliamentary politics, NGOs, or even left-wing and Marxist vanguard movements. This entails prioritising an autonomist-type of politics at a distance from the state and from non-state organisations that think similar to the state. And it involves a recognition that the fundamental sources of emancipatory change are outside civil society and within uncivil (political) society. Uncivil political practices, though engaging tactically with the state at times, will by necessity go against the grain of civil society understood—in particular—as a set of identifiable organisations. But, they may also directly confront civil society defined as a social space, as radical change challenges, in some way, key bourgeois rights centred on property and market relations. In this way, it seems that 'the onus lies on progressive uncivil politics' (Yeros 2002, p. 249) to re-define the state-civil society consensus and, in doing so, to wedge open and broaden radical spaces and potentialities for genuine social and human emancipation.

Conclusion

Amidst the clamour and debates about civil society in 'most of the world' (not excluding Zimbabwe), there is a deathly silence about whether civil society in fact even exists. It may be argued that, historically, the notion of civil society is linked specifically and exclusively to liberal democratic bourgeois societies and that societies marked by compulsive forms of rule (authoritarianism and traditionalism) are devoid of civil societies. Hence, colonial settler societies in Africa, in which chieftainships dominated agrarian spaces and colonised subjects in urban spaces were racially oppressed, were characterised only by 'white' civil society. Post-colonial Zimbabwe, for example, where rural chiefdoms remain and repressive modes of state rule prevail throughout the country, may likewise be largely devoid of a rule-of-law civil society (despite the marked prevalence of NGOs).

In this light, debates about the pros and cons of (an existing) civil society in contemporary Zimbabwe (and other post-colonial societies) may be displaced or of less significance than initially thought. What may be of greater significance is 'political society', not only in terms of its very existence and the various forms it takes in both urban and rural spaces, but also with respect to theorising about the prospects for genuine social transformation in 'most of the world'. Of course, this is not to romanticise political society any more than civil society, as argued in this chapter, should be romanticised. But, if the case of the land movement under fast track reform in Zimbabwe is anything to go by, then it seems that un-civil practices— or those emanating from within political society—may offer certain prospects for significant social change.

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Chapter 12
Viral Messaging, Satire, and Spaces of Resistance in Nigeria

Carole Enahoro

Introduction

There has been an expectedly meteoric demand for mobile phones in Nigeria, which has now become the continent's largest market. It is the premier means of communication within urban centers, outstripping sales of all other information and communication technology (ICT) devices combined (Moronfolu 2012). As a result, information is distributed rapidly and on the move, with each "rebroadcast" allowing greater agency of narrative, and at times initially bypassing the more centralized systems typical in richer countries (Enahoro 2012).

This creates a unique choreography of enactment the oral, textual, and pictorial. The rapid spread of a small package of information—a performative moment, a satiric attack, a rumor—can combust in localized spaces and then, fired through dense clusters of connective threads and moving through personalized circuits, is able to trigger feedback in areas remote to the point of origin. Similarly, an incident can garner attention at a remove of time and context, which not only changes the nature of the originating event but may also alter responses to it (Enahoro 2012).

In this chapter, a major focus will be on satire, its relationship to ICT, and its subsequent conferring of transitory symbolic power. Since satire is typically a "sticky" phenomenon that travels in quick and erratic patterns, comedic content is often a factor that determines whether or not an event goes viral (Enahoro 2012). My interest is in humor's shifts and warps, as originating events are reinterpreted as ironic, maintain their original serious intent against all odds, or are reinterpreted as offensive as they swing through localized and internationalized circuits.

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Mobile Phones and Decentralized Information

Without doubt, the predominant communication technology in Nigeria is the mobile phone: it has gained ascendancy over other forms of ICT as a result of, among other factors, erratic electricity supply, variable literacy rates, lack of landlines, low bandwidth, erratic connections, and inadequate urban infrastructure (Bagchi et al. 2006). There are over 105 million phone subscribers in Nigeria (King 2012) and people who can afford it have between two and four mobile phones each from different operators, as service provision can be poor (Odunfa 2012). These figures relate principally to urban users, although there is a government scheme—generally derided—to provide farmers with 10 million free mobile phones (Moronfolu 2012), despite the lack of electricity in rural areas.

While there is access to the internet and social media through android phones, penetration rates are not high, since networks are still too insubstantial to carry large amounts of data (Obadare 2007, Enahoro 2012). However, the spread pattern of data is unique in that, instead of searching for and pulling information off a network, it is typically sent to recipients, which mimics the spread of rumor or gossip.

Given its purpose in this context, mobile phones will carry hundreds of mobile numbers: key informants have stated that some have over 5,000, with SIM cards separating business and personal contact details. Those who cannot read, list numbers rather than names (Enahoro 2012), which will randomize information spread to a greater degree. Mobile phones for those with low or no literacy skills have been designed, but in the main they have proved unsuccessful in urban areas, as these devices conflict with aspirational lifestyles and stigmatize users.

Decentralized circuits offer greater individual agency to create narrative and to interpret information, which becomes more mutable and diversified. Moreover, the speed at which information travels through a mobile network differs from data originating from television, newspapers, and radio: sudden spikes in public attention are typically associated with centralized media with their dense, rich zones of connection (Kadushin, C 2012), illustrated in (Fig. 12.1).

Viral communication thrives particularly on incongruity—i.e., that in which an unforeseen logical sequence or paradox is introduced (Billig 2005)—regardless of the type of emotional impact it arouses. In other words, images that evoke horror, pity, or curiosity can travel as quickly via communication circuits as those that elicit laughter.

"Hot" vectors—concentrated webs of close relationships splay out through hub and spoke configurations to other recipients (Kadushin 2012) as illustrated in Fig. 12.2, and through long connectors to distant networks, such as local villages and religious centres. The speed of spread from these vectors is exemplified later in the chapter by the eruption of interest in a newspaper article that contained a quip about the prophet Mohammed.

The mathematics of news circulation through mobile phone use differs significantly, because of its reliance on sending rather than seeking information. For each "broadcast," a retransmission rate of 1:1 maintains information at the same level,

Fig. 12.1 A sudden spike in communication typifies viral spread

Effectiveness

Tipping point

# of connections
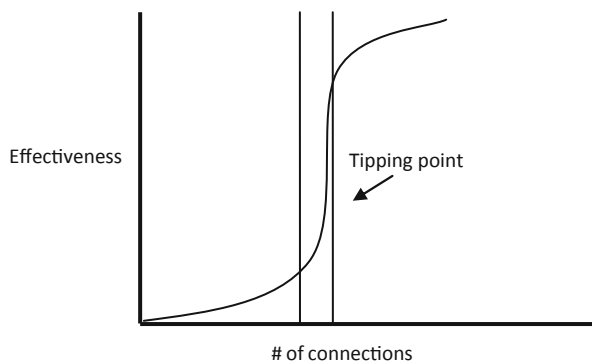
Fig. 12.2 A central field of dense relationships with long threads to outlying sectors. (Source: Darwin Peacock, screenshot of Guess software)
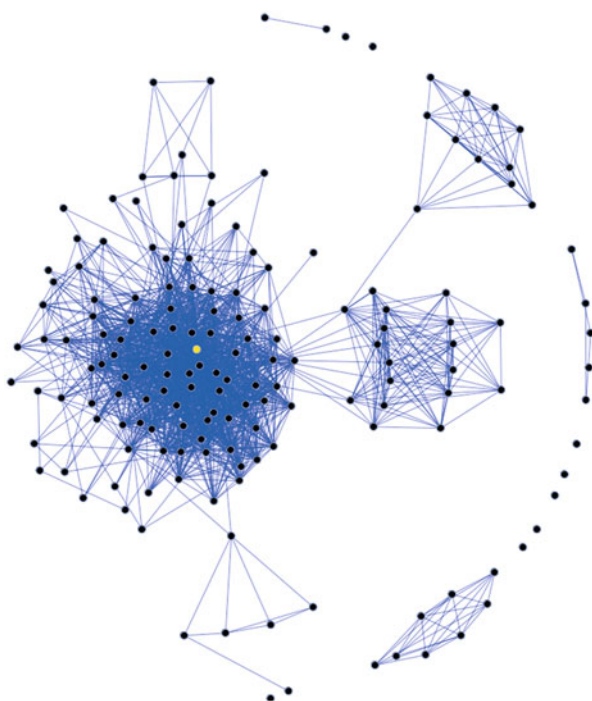
a lower rate will inhibit spread whereas a higher rate leads to escalation (Enahoro 2012).

In this environment, the importance of connection—whether long threads (links to heterogeneous communities) or weak ties (distant acquaintances)—cannot be underestimated (Knoke & Yang 2008). This famous social graph by Facebook intern Paul Butler (Fig. 12.3), generated in 2010, presents the electronic trails of 10 million Facebook users. Although there is no map on which affiliations have been superimposed, it can be inferred by the contours designed by human relationships. Here is

Fig. 12.3 A map of relationships: hot vectors define Facebook's contours of a media-rich world. (Photo credit: Paul Butler)

visual evidence of the economic and social importance of hot vectors (seen particularly in the USA and Europe), as well as the importance of long or weak ties—the latter connections being of heightened consequence given the style of mobile phone usage in Nigeria.

Information through mobile phones is decentralized and thus has much more potential to travel from periphery to core—especially in a nation where oral culture still flourishes—where it is then dispersed to the diaspora through the internet. It then veers back again into the country, often with fresh and varied interpretations of the original utterance, act, or data, which in turn can propagate further mutations under this new influence (Enahoro 2012). It has also changed the language of blogs within the diaspora, which at times take their inspiration from the condensed form of texting as well as the playfulness of Pidgin ("pipu" = "people"; "hapinuye" = "Happy New Year") (Enahoro 2012). The spatial dimension of such information flow is perhaps most threatening to the state as it is often undetected from the margins, and has the potential to form critical masses of discontent. The movement of satire through such technologies is ungoverned, sprawling, and travels below the radar of official consent. Like any object, a mobile phone is deeply contextualized in the system in which it is rooted and, in turn, is shaped by the social world (Latour 2005).

Smart phones spread rapidly on entry to the market in Nigeria, especially after the advent of cheaper Chinese replicas. They substitute for other forms of ICT and host an assembly of networking software (email, Facebook, Twitter), so rather than being separated onto different technologies, they are treated with greater intimacy, centrality, and consequence. Because a mobile phone is chargeable, it is able to offer the continuity that eludes an erratic electricity supply, and therefore heightens its role as an item of technology. It is often used as participant in surrounding conversations, adding new layers of sociability, rather than subtracting from the face-to-face

encounter (Enahoro 2012). Rhythms of progressing through urban space; lack of signposting or street signs; heat; patterns of religious, working and social life; lack of literacy; and a crumbling educational system, the preference for the oral in a country of over 500 ethnolinguistic groups, to name a few factors, also lead to the speed at and routes through which packets of information move from person to person (Enahoro 2012). Finally, there is the capacity of the phone itself: its memory, networks, size, functionality, usability, aesthetics, and so on, which determine habits of use, and—as is increasingly the case—its separation into multiple devices for personal or business applications.

On an economic level, it is also associated with the production of the mobile phone in the West, the policies of international financial institutions, trade relations, and the expansion of Chinese technical and economic activity in Africa. Historically, such technologies emerged as a result of the Agricultural, Industrial, and Information revolutions in the West, as well as colonization in Africa. Politically, it is related to the conflict in Eastern Congo over minerals used within the phones, while socially, it is used in 419 scams and in assisting with migration, among a host of other connections—and each nexus fans out into a further abundance of networks, institutions, materialities, and actants (Latour 2005). This engenders an impression of motility and transience, as well as a concurrent sense of absolute permanence.

Okada

The complexity of validating sequence, interpretation, and the clustering of events—particularly of electronic data circulated through ICT—is illustrated by conflicting accounts of the provenance and signification of the image further below (Fig. 12.4): a snapshot of a protest against a new helmet regulation by motorbike taxi operators, known in the south as "okada." An ironic term, the word "okada" derives from the name of the now defunct Okada Air, a domestic airline named after the home village of its owner, Chief Gabriel Igbinedion (Omoregie 2013). It operated under the most unfavorable conditions and thus was allegedly applied as comic comparison with the airline's fame for speed and reliability (Omoregie 2013).

Okada riders cluster within the large conurbations of Nigeria, areas of inadequate transportation, poor road infrastructure, and heavy congestion. Motorbike taxis are one of the chief modes of transport in Nigeria, a country with an estimated population of 170 million people (United Nations 2012), with over 10–20 million in Lagos alone, depending on sources cited. They are by far the most common form of informal transport system, easily affordable, readily available, and able to navigate through narrow passages. Riders facilitate movement from the periphery to the center and serve even remote villages. Rural workers, trained for agriculture, flock to the cities for work in this field (for example 26 % according to Arosanyin et al. 2011), and they are joined by other sectors such as unemployed graduates, with estimates over 12 % (Ogunrinola 2011). Data statistics cited within this section is highly variable as results depend on a range of disconnected study areas and conditions.

    Although used by all levels of society, motorbike taxis are predominantly a form
of transport for those on low income. Not all city-dwellers welcome okada, which
began to proliferate in the 1980s after severe economic recession, and riders are often
considered in derogatory terms:

> . . . the same govt shirked in their responsibilities and allowed any tom, dick and cockroach
> pick a bike to ride (Nancy 2012).

Many riders are illiterate and unlicensed: some do not know the rules of the road,
nor can they read street signs and are frequently involved in accidents which cause
serious injuries to passengers and pedestrians (Arosanyin et al. 2013). The United
Nations cites over 4,000 fatalities and 17,000 injuries annually on Nigerian roads
(World Health Organization 2009), with okada involved in at least 26 % of these
(Arosanyin et al. 2013). Collisions with other vehicles can lead to mob violence
against car drivers by other riders who flock to attack them. They are also be-
lieved to be associated with criminal activity, such as vote rigging, kidnapping,
violent crime, and murder (cf. Edukugho 2012). Consequently, in 2009, major
cities implemented regulations compelling riders and passengers to wear helmets
(BBC 2009).
    While this could be construed as concern about health, safety, and the reduction
of crime, on a number of blogs and tweets it was also interpreted as an attack on
the poor. Prohibiting rights of passage and access to the city in effect keep people
living on the peripheries, away from city centers, especially since in many cases no
supplementary transport was provided:

> Rather than provide alternatives to the transport problem for poor people, with the Okada
> restrictions the government seem to have only entrenched a growing attitude—that it does
> not care about public opinion (Egbunike 2012).

And further comments on the same blog:

> @bhadoosky: If over 1 million Okada Riders are restricted/banned . . . what will dey do for
> living?

The okada community exploded in protest against the new helmet laws, which effectively constrained their earnings. As an expression of contempt, okada riders wore steel colanders, buckets, or calabashes (BBC 2009) and the image of a rider wearing a paint-can printed in newspapers such as ThisDay, quickly circulated on the Internet through to the Nigerian diaspora (Fig. 12.4).

Although some bloggers reacted with indignation, many expressed admiration or amusement:

> i don laugh die (Omo Ibo 2009).

It is worth noting that the photo was taken in a context where taxis are sometimes painted in a slapdash manner to look as if they are licensed and danfo (minibus) drivers in the southwest use belts and ropes disguised as seatbelts (Enahoro 2012). In this environment, using calabashes, paint-cans, or buckets as helmets may contain the element of survival rather than irony. It is therefore highly unlikely that this was a satiric protest in intent, even though it was subsequently interpreted as such as it moved through cyberspace.

There is no existing data as to provenance, with contradictory versions of its original circulation. The picture is of high resolution, well framed, in a context where consent is expected before a photograph of a person is taken—see in comparison to Fig. 12.5. Therefore, the photograph may have been staged—the helmet strapped to the front of the bike serving as evidence of this—in response to stories about okada riders circumventing helmet regulations. In this instance, the image would first have entered the dense networks of centralized media, and then been picked up by bloggers and mobile users.

Another interpretation emerges through scrutiny of the faces of the rider and passenger—who are obviously in motion, unsmiling, dusty from work and unaware of the camera. It is not unusual to find a helmet strapped to the front of the bike, as a spare for those with no head protection. The image is informal, under this analysis, taken with a smart phone in real time, rather than staged after the event.

Fig. 12.5 Comedy without apparent mockery: okada rider with coffin. (Source: http://www.braincampaign.org)

Nevertheless, because of its perceived irony, it spread to the national media and then became a matter for public discussion. In this construal, the image was "broadcast" through handheld digital devices to the internet, as there is little evidence to suggest that newspaper coverage predates discussion on blogs (Fig. 12.5).

Fig. 12.4 is worth comparing to Fig. 12.5, which has also been widely distributed, and similarly demonstrates a lack of deference to state ordinances on helmet use and load allowance. Yet it has not been framed on blogs as ironic or satirical nor proposed as an engagement in political discourse, since it cannot be contextualized in response to new regulations, for example, regarding passenger age limits. Rather, the focus is on the physical humor and exaggerated burden of the situation, which has elicted affection for the act rather than empathy for the rider.

While it appears as if performance alone is agentic, there are many actors within the cluster of events and transferences that amplify or reduce its agency. In redistributing the image of the rider with the paint-can, the mobile user not only delivers a "message" that involves interpretation and judgment, but in doing so constantly reinforces and recalibrates his or her shifting identity within the network. Recipients, in deciding whether or not to forward the image, affect its level of exposure to others and can alter its signification by adding text to transform the narrative. Similarly, though immaterial in its digital form, the image itself also has agency, in that it differs substantially from an unrecorded performance, and is able to be iterated electronically and repeatedly, provoking reaction (laughter, anger). Humor, specifically, depends on fugitive elements such as the expression of the riders, or the fact that the vehicle is in movement rather than stationary, and therefore the timing of the shot, as well as of its distribution, are also key factors. It is therefore an assemblage of events, moods, interpretations, and actants that converge over time and space to produce perceptions of ironic intent.

Despite its complexity, this is an example of how satire destabilizes hegemonic discourse, since it mocks the incongruous nature of new statutes through exaggeration, accepting the framework of absurdist governance but insisting on further clarification ("define 'helmet'!"). While the act deprecates the authority of the legislative regime, it not only opens up a site of provocation or resistance, it is agentic of its own accord. In other words, new regulations are neither adopted on a performative (symbolic) nor real (material) basis. Indeed, shops creating calabash helmets have prospered—an example of the disdain for officialdom in Nigeria.

The Bureaucratic Absurd

As objects of humor and affection, pictures of okada bikes proliferate throughout the internet. Yet the newsworthiness of the fate of okadas, which impacts millions of people in the most populous country in Africa, created the "hook" that pushed the image into the public domain with such energy, as did its perceived ironic intent. A host of other factors, some of which still elude analysis, allowed it to combust in cyberspace as a viral image within Nigeria and the Nigerian diaspora. Part of

its popularity would derive from its implied contempt for the way the government articulates its authority and an inferred support for civil society's disdain for such control.

Excuses for deficiency or failure in Nigerian civic life are attributed to "The Naija Factor." The deep frustration and embarrassment caused by many of the country's seemingly intractable problems is mitigated by the laughter elicited in conversations about those who outwit "the system." The quote below on Nigerian scamming, known nationally as the 419, exposes the conflicting reactions to what is, by and large, considered a national disgrace:

> . . . my friends at the tennis club exclaimed variously, "Nigeria na war-o," "We are in trouble," and "These guys are too much," expressing a combination of resignation, unease, and lament about corruption as well as a sort of admiration for the audacity and ingenuity of the 419 men (Smith 2007, p. 4).

Jurisdictions that predate colonial rule still exert a great deal of influence over many citizens, while newer centers of religious influence have also arisen to challenge federal supremacy. In this environment, a dysfunctional government still expects submission but finds such obedience elusive, given that its administrative arms have become weak since a predatory state elite has largely focused on amassing wealth for itself and its cohorts (cf. MacGaffey 1988). With little funding, public servants employed to enforce policies must operate within an ageing, incompatible institutional framework (Wallis 1989).

Qualified middle and upper level managers in Nigeria, therefore, have largely fled into the private sector (Goldsmith 1999; Aluko and Adesopo 2004; Okafor 2005), leaving little buffer between the remote upper echelons of state bureaucracy and the implementation of edicts articulated in "surreal" terms (Obadare 2009) that reflect the idealistic world view of state actors.

The insistence on helmet use, for example—though an important safety concern—detracts from more entrenched underlying issues of road safety. It provides distraction from compliance with traffic law, rider licensing, rider literacy, training, and prosecution for road offences (Arosanyin et al. 2013). It similarly diverts attention from the larger problems of rural–urban migration, high unemployment, lack of urban infrastructure, and insufficient public transport.

On a more local level, safety regulators seem so removed from the practicalities of daily life that new prohibitions make no allowance for the specific environmental conditions and customs in which such legislation is to be implemented: these include, on the one hand, intense heat and the spread of lice and other vermin and, on the other hand, dress codes and even fear of the supernatural within the helmet, which can be a particular concern in the south of the country.

> The introduction of the safety helmets may be endangering more lives than hitherto was the case. With one hand holding the helmet and another supporting the toilet roll, or polybag shield, most okada passengers no longer hold on to the machine in any way (Abati 2009; Fig. 12.6).

Fig. 12.6 Helmet and head wrap: safety regulations clashing with cultural context. (Source: http://www. nairaland.com/813867/ crackdown-okada-riders-over-200/1)

The image of the paint-can helmet encapsulates the farcical quality of the fracture between administrative directives and the ability of ground-level officials to implement them. With upper management issuing unreasonable and specious demands, bureaucrats lower down the administrative chain orbit independently of systems of accountability. They often function in an autocratic, anarchic realm, in which arbitrary regulations are improvised and reformulated at whim (Okafor 2005), resorting to capricious directives and verbal exchanges that are absurd in nature. These conventions impact all levels of society and have led to performative or linguistic exchanges that build on the essential inconsistencies that inhere in the surreal and the absurd.

Satire

In effect, satire defines the absurd, if absurdity can be considered in terms of incongruous interactions, and satire regarded as incongruity within the retelling of the originating event(s). Stories of eccentric exchanges will necessarily contain elements of irony, the ludicrous, and inconsistency that typified the original encounter. The absurd operates, like satire, through the mechanism of incongruity but there is no obvious universe that both participants inhabit, no link between the demand and supply of information, and no consistency in paradigmatic shifts. As a result, civil society is alerted to, rather than ignorant of, officialdom's essential illegitimacy.

Unlike the absurd, however, satiric invective cannot forsake the contemporary social world entirely because it operates in constant reference to it, in critique of institutions and individuals within it (Griffin 1995; Douglas 1999; Critchley 2002; Morreall 2009). This explains why a paint-can helmet is so effective as a form of critique, while an object or exploit that does not obviously allude to helmet regulations would make no sense and have no ironic impact.

Considered a form of humor or mockery with ethical or moral intent (Hokenson 2006), satire prevails as a form of cultural expression in Nigeria (Olukotun 2002; Obadare 2009), with such humor typically deployed to challenge the credibility of governing authorities and communicate frustration. Civil society can engage with a daily reality rooted in unpredictability, disorder, and the ludicrous, countering them through similar mechanisms. A satirical act is achieved by describing the encounter using narrative or performative skills that offer amusement while initially distracting the listener(s) or viewer(s) from the underlying message. The act of articulation of knowledge or experience helps people cope with and reconceptualize their reality, particularly if structured through the medium of ironic attack. Obadare considers this phenomenon in proximate and specific relation to the Nigerian experience of absurdity:

> [H]umour and ridicule have emerged as a means through which people attempt to deconstruct and construct meaning out of a reality that is decidedly surreal (Obadare 2009, p. 241).

Satire simultaneously contests, resists, and interrogates, reinforcing a fleeting sense of superiority that is, I argue, is a preexisting state of affairs. It is not, in an of itself, an act of superiority, such as teasing or bullying which require little empathy, nor as Mbembe (1992) states do they rely on affinity. Such derision opens up spaces of provocation, intimidation, and inquest (Griffin 1995): it is through the information thus acquired that other more substantive changes can be generated.

At the same time, while it is my intent to probe the potency of humor, these efforts are almost worthless if no account is taken of its "lightness"—its frivolity, transience, and giddiness—that simultaneously provides a coping mechanism, de-escalating tension, and weakening the motivation to act. To further qualify the hypothesis of satire's agency in the Nigerian context, it may well be that the illogicality of officialdom is so chaotic and individualized that it does not allow a conventional world view to exist, and thus no integrated discourse, no authority to subvert. Nevertheless, in the final determination, there is little doubt that it has a corrosive effect on respect for authority.

Mechanism

Although humor, comedy, joking, even satire and laughter, are often used interchangeably, they have specific attributes. In general terms, humor involves a cognitive shift in response to a stimulus, while laughter entails a physiological transformation—neither necessarily mutually contingent. Comedy can be defined as humor with an underlying social or artistic structure, while a joke tends to be defined as a short witticism (Morreall 2009). Joking differs from jokes in that the former is an activity, whereas jokes are the product of that activity.

The mechanism of absurdity or satire relies on deviation from the expected, in the visual, performative, oral, or written registers. It describes the structure of humor with elements such as arbitrariness, the absurdness, irrelevance, exaggeration, and

the inappropriateness. While this has been termed the "incongruous," Sharpe and Hynes—in their exploration of the phenomenon of laughter—caution against the uncritical adoption of such terminology, as it implies a disjuncture between the normative and the eccentric, or the apparent polarities of control and chaos. This focus on correlation, indeed correspondence, is particularly pertinent in a context of absurdity.

> There is a sense . . . in which the incongruity thesis, by drawing a causal line between laughter and the irregular, leaves too intact a view of the world—and our relationship to it—as normally rational and orderly (Sharpe and Hynes 2012, p. 26).

The incongruous, here, is considered principally in terms of cheated expectations: in other words, with a focus on its effects rather than how it is manifested. Not everything incongruous is amusing; rather humor is incongruity plus amusement or, more specifically, "taking pleasure in a cognitive shift" (Morreall 2009). The notion of pleasure is essential to understanding joking relationships. The contagious nature of laughter and smiling are essential components in understanding how joking spreads, just as extralinguistic expressions stimulate or alter the mood and behavior of listeners. As experiments on emotional contagion have shown, it is possible to create conditions—for example, through facial changes or acoustic outputs—that make either the subject or others more receptive to joking behavior (Soussignan 2002; Bourgeois and Hess 2008; Bachorowski and Owren 2001 among others). However, this is not an area of exploration of this chapter as, if anything, texting and electronic communication inhibits the contagious effects of laughter, despite the use of symbols and shorthands within the text.

Mockery, derision, and ridicule are terms often used interchangeably with satire, and indeed will occasionally be employed within this chapter as synonyms where appropriate; nevertheless they are not necessarily engendered by a need for the production of pleasure nor inevitably associated with a response of amusement.

Satire's force does not merely inhere in what it attacks, but by what it recalls. Superiority alludes to inferiority, scatology points to the clean, release suggests control, incongruity to the expected norm, and the cognitive to the emotive. In these continuums, satire refers, even inadvertently, to the vulnerability of the attacker and power of the attack. In reference to the image of the okada rider, for example, the use of the paint-can suggests both adherence to authority, and rejection of it; the safety offered by anarchy and the greater dangers posed by officialdom within chaotic contexts. This is why ridicule has a range of coincident effects that compromise its efficacy, operating as a social sedative that offers no challenge to the status quo, as a corrective and/or as an instrument of defiance, provocation or, at the very least, enquiry.

Enunciation/articulation of its own accord—regardless of humorous content—is a potent weapon of the disenfranchised as it has the ability to expose something which is hidden (Bourdieu 1992; Riessman 2008). There is license tendered by the act of enunciation through the contrast between the language of "the authorizing and authorized" (Bourdieu 1992). This departure presents a new order; hence the closure that some theorists suggest eludes satire.

> Heretical discourse must not only help to sever the adherence to the world of common sense by publicly proclaiming a break with the ordinary order, it must also produce a new common sense and integrate within it the previously tacit or repressed practices and experiences of an entire group, investing them with the legitimacy conferred by public expression and collective recognition (Bourdieu 1992, p. 129).

This constant modification of power relations through linguistic and extralinguistic expression is constitutive of volatile and constantly developing dynamics of power, social practice, and social structure (Sarangi and Slembrouck 1996; Fairclough 2001). As such discourse generates these new algorithms, it is also produced by them in a dialectical and constantly evolving relationship.

However, satire is far more complex than simple enunciation or dramatization because it involves actions or utterances that directly contradict the satirist's thoughts, feelings, or judgments, and therefore engages with the powerful province of silence. It is assumed by many bloggers that the paint-can, functioning as helmet, is a satirical or, at the very least, ironic statement. Recipients of this covert message understand the original context (the ban on using okada without helmets), and then (mis?)interpreted its unstated meanings (a refusal to abide by the ban) and evaluative content (contempt for state control). To produce a comedic effect, the receiver must agree in general terms with the statement and evaluation: if these two key elements are not in place, then it might morph into "unlaughter" (disapproval). In this, it differs from irony, where assent may not be necessary.

Unexpected outrage at joking behavior—or "unlaughter"—is illustrated by the violent backlash to a light-hearted remark regarding the controversial Miss World Pageant, which was expected to be held in Abuja in November 2002 (Obadare 2004). As a reporter for ThisDay newspaper, Isioma Daniel inadvertently inflamed Islamic reactions by the following quip failed witticism:

> In all honesty, [the prophet Mohammed] would probably have chosen a wife from one of them (Daniel 2002).

This apparently innocuous remark sparked 3 days of violence, over 200 deaths, and a fatwa on the journalist's life (Ngwainmbi 2011). The immediate reaction, swift congregation of protest, and prompt uniting of discursive communities has the momentum typical of information pulled from centralized hubs of mass media.

Yet again, there is an aggregation of factors that contribute to whether a joke is accepted according to original intent. Miss World organizers—predominantly Western, from Christian cultures—had endorsed Nigeria as a site for the pageant to increase the profile of Amina Lawal, a woman sentenced to death by stoning under Islamic Sharia law in March 2002 (Ngwainmbi 2011). Meanwhile, conservative Muslims were outraged that the pageant, considered immoral, was to be hosted in Nigeria. The controversy had already provoked such rancor that any attempt at wit would likely be considered an act of hostility. To add to this, the journalist was a woman, from the south, and a Christian. In other words, it symbolized the fracture at the heart of Nigerian social life: the discord between the predominantly Muslim north and Christian south.

This instability of translation, as well as satire's potency, emerges from three fundamental components—the anxiety to which it can give rise; its operation through the unstated, silence, and indirection; and its exploitation of the language of ruling elites (Hutcheon 1995).

To explore this further, it is worth first noting that satire is necessarily a mode of critique, even though this can range from playful teasing to overt hostility, and thus can provoke a range of emotional responses, including anger and shame. In summarizing Dan Sperber's approach, Fernandez and Taylor Huber describe irony as an "undercutting instrument" that "invites its use to criticize failure rather than to praise success" (Fernandez and Taylor Huber 2001, p. 3).

In order to achieve this, it functions through covert messages to others who, by watching or listening, appear to have given tacit agreement to the injury, thereby shifting such "play" to the domain of exclusion. "[L]anguage giving the lie to itself yet still relishing its power" (Hartman 1981, p. 146) engenders anxiety or hostility by suggesting an opposite meaning. It vacillates between the said and the unsaid, without securing a position between the two, but rather opening out into a third space that includes and amplifies both, fostering greater relationality and mobility. It is this fertile area that the okada image proposes: one of silence, enunciation, and more than or beyond expression. In effect, it becomes a space of resistance.

> Kierkegaard depicts his existential ironist as one who has rejected everyday life as illusory and expresses this rejection by following convention without any real engagement in it. By only playing at practice, he (or she?) gains sufficient distance from the immediacy of the ordinary for an "awakening of subjectivity"; that is, the awakening of the conception of oneself as a subject, something separate from, and undetermined by, a certain immediately given historical entity (Fernandez and Huber 2001, p. 4).

By appropriating the language of the dominant culture, satire is able to feign an attitude of acceptance or even ignorance. This exploitation of hegemonic discourse "using their very language as its unsaid" (Hutcheon 1995, p. 30) creates unease, with its knowingness, its ability to bring chaos to the formal, and its inclination to play with that which is considered by dominant culture to be serious. Such an oppositional mechanism—in which satire clashes with authority—can trigger a belief system in which both satirist and target consider each other as duplicitous.

This demonstrates the distortions and recalibrations that result from a division between judgment and reaction. One situation in particular revealed the degree to which tensions can arise when there is conflict between satire and its interpretation. As noted previously, although a newspaper article about a beauty pageant was considered by some as a tactic to defuse tensions by deploying wit, others judged it differently: as denigrating Islam, as offensive, and as a hostile act that would incite violence. Here, there are competing ethical considerations: whether as a general rule it is the responsibility of the interpreter to evaluate satirical intent or whether this obligation lies with the satirist.

In examining the image of the okada rider, the disdain for regulations is immediately recognizable. However, the impossibility of pinpointing the moment when the image is interpreted as ironic protest is evidence of the role of joking within a "rhizomatic" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004) process, in which there are no articulated points of entry or exit, but rather multiple connections and sites of origin and departure. Joking is neither an act nor an event in totality, although it can be considered

nodal and networked. Instead, as part of communicative practice, it involves multiple vortices of information, inspiration and exchange, as well as fluctuating attunements (moods) that contribute to transference, interpretation and onward movement. Similarly, progression is not linear but chaotic, enacted through human and nonhuman, material and immaterial assemblages. The bundled, layered nature of the exchange allows it to shift towards ironic interpretation or not, producing, anger, laughter, and other physical and emotional responses. I believe this is why so much confusion has arisen in humor theory regarding the joke, joker, and audience, as well as overlapping distinctions between comedy, humor, laughter, wit, joking, and satire.

The "Stickiness" of Humor

In analysing why humor is so "sticky"—and why it adheres to memory and flows through the worldwide web with such ease—it is fruitful to explore identity and welcoming "the Other" as essential components of motivations behind the use of new communication technologies. While messages state "this is who I am"—constantly negotiating a necessarily dynamic and fluctuating identity—they also function as an invitation or greeting. As communication technology is now integral to urban life in Nigeria, being-in-the-world is intricately entangled with being-in-the-network and indeed possession-of-technology, through the constant processes of identity negotiation, social positioning, and electronic salutation. The nature of the network demands the performance of multiple identities according to platform.

Lévinas's work ushered in a period of interest in the advent of ethical phenomenology, in which being-in-the-world is an other-directed, rather than egocentric, state and process. While Heidegger's Dasein defers to the wishes or objectives of an amorphous notion of an unspecified, vague other ("Das Man"), or a daily concern of being-with-others ("Mitsein"—being with; Heidegger 1962), Lévinas sees obligation to others as the underlying structure from which the social and the self emerges. Self-hood is founded on relationship with others, involves "subjection to the other" (Lévinas 1991, p. 96), and subjectivity is given purposeful orientation through responsibility and duty to the Other.

The self's earliest encounter with the world is inherently connected to being with others, initially in the form of reliance, and thus is a primordial architect, rather than a product, of subjectivity. Any form of interaction with the Other entails restraint and limitations. Indeed, Lévinas considered self/other relationships to be asymmetrical, with weight and precedence given to the Other rather than the self.

In *Totality and Infinity*, Lévinas presented subjectivity as salutation and beckoning to the Other, as

> ...welcoming the Other, as hospitality; in it the idea of infinity is consummated (Lévinas 1991, p. 27).

As the Other repels any advance or capture by a totalizing knowledge, which Lévinas links to violation and a possessive violence, the subject is instead impelled forward—into a disposition of receptivity. These links between people account for linguistic

expression, not as a form of communication outward, but rather as a means of response to the Other. Moreover, it is incongruity rather than similarity that creates the incentive for communication:

> Speech proceeds from absolute difference (Lévinas 1991, p. 194).

Typically in most Nigerian communities until recently, there has been no philosophical history of a Cartesian mind/body split, nor a pronounced separation between the individualized self and community, self and spirit world, or indeed any strong separation between self and ancestor. Lévinas's entanglement of the self with the Other, and embrace of relationality, alterity, and the ethical, easily attaches to the reality of everyday African life. Therefore, if it is accepted that such philosophical underpinning is a core component of the need to communicate, humor goes viral as it synchronically pulls and pushes: drawing others toward the sender, while propelling existence into the world, gathering information and thrusting it toward others. The one factor often cited as mitigation against the importance of satire—its "lightness" and frivolity—allows for its endless repetition, as it lifts the spirits of those with similar interpretation and evaluation of message.

The movement of wit has the potential to unite discursive communities, diverse social groups, and separate networks into insider or outsider alliances. Satire spreads and its potential resides in the fact that it affects a fugitive web of relationships. It travels in erratic patterns, and can thus create new networks of social relations, solidifying and perhaps reconfiguring relationships. The vast promise of such a system—for forging new relationships and random networks in a sociopolitical environment of great instability—greatly increases the need for information that can be easily pushed through electronic networks, i.e., via the smart phones, and received as individualized information, rather than retrieved from a more centralized, impersonal source. The motivation for such communication is the constant reintroduction to and summoning of the Other.

According to Lévinas, it is the relationship between one human and another that assumes primacy, privileging the Other as a fundamental construct of his philosophy. However, in the absence of the embodied self and other, it becomes necessary to assert identity/ies in order to welcome the Other.

The work of Bruno Latour has demonstrated that communication technologies—as well as other materialities and biological phenomena—are embedded in identities and networks of human and nonhuman assemblages, as part of actor-networks in which humans, the material and the immaterial have agency (Latour 2005). These propagate new, iterating, and elastic entities of nature/culture, and facilitate relations between the human and nonhuman, as well as transference from one node to the next in ever-expanding networks. Latour's focus is therefore not on the individual but on the vast series of networks in which the human is embedded. He stresses a fully relational concept of the intersection between time, space, the human, the nonhuman, the social, and technology. While some may consider this as detracting from the theories of Lévinas, it actually reinforces his conceptualization of an involuntary moving toward as a result of dependence, of inextricable links, embeddedness, and the motivation to connect .

Spaces of Resistance

Through Lefebvre's detailed analysis of the production and consumption of space—a phenomenon in which the material and the intangible coalesce—he observes that the abstract spaces of domination represented by capital manifest the power it also seeks to subsume in the pursuit of further domination:

> Abstract space, which is a tool of domination, asphyxiates whatever is conceived within it and then strives to emerge (Lefebvre 1992).

"Differential space" can confront the "abstract spaces" of capital which seeks to subjugate, violate, and eliminate difference (Lefebvre 1992), in my contention in part through the indiscipline represented by the realm of satire. It is against this "lethal" space of capital that the heterogeneous elements from the often highly visible margins resist orally, visibly, and performatively.

Urban theorists have considered how the inhabitants of these differential spaces resist spaces of capital in a manner that is not necessarily intentional (Benjamin 2002; Lefebvre 2004; De Certeau 2002), while others describe a more oppositional form of dissidence from the margins. These "microspaces of power" (Amin and Thrift 2002), "pockets of indiscipline" (Mbembe 1992), or interstices are considered by theorists as areas of combat and strength (Minh-Ha 1989; Hooks 1990; Lefebvre 1992; Soja 1996; Bhabha 2004).

Satire is unsettling for governing groups as it can challenge or disrupt dominant discourse (Mbembe 1992; Critchley 2002; Obadare 2009) and consequently delegitimize authority. Freud hypothesized that while people think they laugh at a joke's form, they are actually reacting to its content, and the most taboo items elicit the greatest laughter (Freud 2002). People are driven to avoid a conscious knowledge of this form/content paradox, so that an impression of affinity between a listener and a target may cover a subconscious sense of superiority. Teasing, according to Freud, becomes a useful means of social control: it helps to minimize bullying by labeling it "joking," and simultaneously protects the tormentor from condemnation or self-criticism.

Having stated this, it is obvious that there is a qualitative difference between bullying and joking or satirical attack, the latter of which integrates objectification as well as empathy, ascendancy and inadequacy. These convergences are distinctly absent in bullying. Rather than considering superiority and inferiority in contradistinction, it is perhaps more helpful to regard them as dynamically linked, sweeping through a spectrum of states of being. I would propose that it is this unstable status that allows laughter—and pleasure—to occur. And it is this sense of enjoyment and evasion that offers relative protection to the satirist, given that direct reprisal is neither typically considered appropriate (as a reaction to joking), nor effective (as a result of its indirection).

It has consequently been deployed as a social corrective against political leadership, institutions, and dominant groups, while empowering communities bonded by similar interests and those marginalized by the power of the state or capital (Olukotun 2002; Olukoju 2004; Obadare 2009). The attitude of contestation, invective, and

reprimand through gameplay is embedded in some of the different nation groups in Nigeria. As Ayo Olukotun demonstrates, humor and comic invective have always been part of the social environment among the Yoruba, used as a form of conflict management and contestation against abuses of power (Olukotun 2002). When satirists could be imprisoned or executed, people expressed dissent through these less conspicuous conduits. Music, theater, and the arts have always provided a forum for opposition, with abundant examples of such defiance (Obadare 2009), such as the celebrated musician, Fela Kuti.

> When the regular channels of expression are closed or suppressed, civil society falls back on indigenous modes of communication to express dissent and to censure the authorities (Olukotun 2002, p. 193).

Olukotun believes that this leads to long-term erosion of confidence in the leadership and a "climate of skepticism" rather than short-term revolution. Nevertheless, he also cites one example in which potential invective ridicule led to the suicide of the king, in order to retain the dignity of his office (Olukotun 2002), while Apter cites an example of the eventual deposition of a king through intricate wordplay and derision (Apter 1998).

This possibly explains why one incident—which might have been considered ripe for ridicule, especially as it reached the networks in the West—remained largely free from satirical attack. In April 2009, women in Ekiti, a state in southwestern Nigeria, demonstrated against election rigging and the delayed release of gubernatorial results by protesting half naked—a "traditional" expression of anger, contempt, and means of shaming men. This action exploited indigenous forms of protest through a peaceful nonviolent rally, while elders issued curses and prayed (Suleiman 2009).

I would assert that the reason they remained under a penumbra of safety is that, as elders, these women are presumed to possess supernatural power—a form of social capital often overlooked in contemporary accounts of power. This afforded them respect and protection from ridicule, even when images spread through the Internet. More significantly, the act of stripping did not entail self-denigration but rather self-affirmation.

Joking relationships require empathy, an intricate notion of societal norms and rules through which bonds are formed, strengthened, or broken (Radcliffe-Brown 1940; Douglas 1999); and it is my strong contention that self-denigration provides a gateway for the interpreter to feel empathetic to the satirist, and experience a similar frustration. Satire is often as sympathetic to its targets as it is critical—since understanding the mind of the victim is key to recognizing his or her flaws (Griffin 1995). Like the urge to network, understanding satire entails not only self-definition but reaching out to the 'Other' in order to understand the multiple meanings of ironic wit. This position lies in opposition to much theoretical history of humor.

In 1640, Thomas Hobbes first began to formulate what is now known as Superiority Theory which suggested that laughter results from the degradation of others.

> [Suddaine] Glory arising from suddaine Conception of some Eminency in our selves, by Comparison with the Infirmityes of others, or with our owne formerly (Hobbes 2008, p. 54).

Contrary to this view, this chapter has explored the assertion that superiority is a preexisting state of affairs that precedes the joke moment, both for narrator and audience, thus what is commonly considered superiority is actually a space of pleasure (Hokenson 2006, p. 206) or a repository of symbolic power. Satire is often predicated on a sense of empathy, created by indicating one's own inferiority and typically, those who lack empathy also lack a sense of humor (cf. Baron-Cohen 1997). Were this not the case, the outcome of the comic act would make no difference. It is only within self-recognition and a sense of insecurity that humor can arise because its key component is "mutual humiliation" (Solomon 2003, p. 609). The satirist's status is in constant motion between disempowered victim and empowered combatant; it produces a simultaneity of detachment and emotional charge which can incite laughter as well as compassion.

Achille Mbembe argues that power cannot affect social conditions: it can produce information but no act-based outcome. He explores what he terms the "mutual zombification" (Mbembe 1992, p. 50) of political humor, which results from the collusion within an exchange based on references to the familiar and intimate. Initially, the ruling regime seeks to connote the order of the world, yet the extravagant nature of its display provokes laughter, and this disrupts its endeavors.

Laughter summons up the delusion of contentment, while offering estrangement—a widening of the symbolic space between protagonist and target—and through this mechanism it endorses the status quo. Such disruption typically does not "do violence to the *commandement*'s material base," it merely "creates pockets of indiscipline" (Mbembe 1992, p. 15) but Mbembe concedes that over the long term it can indeed erode legitimacy.

> By laughing, [the subject] drains the official universe of meaning and sometimes obliges it to function in emptiness, or powerlessness [*impouvoir*] (Mbembe 1992, p. 23).

Mbembe refers mainly to Bakhtian scatological humor—focused on the body—in Togo and Cameroon. Through perhaps unwittingly fusing these colliding factors—of typology, context, and time—Ebenezer Obadare advances Mbembe's argument to consider satiric humor, which carries greater potency. Most significantly, he proposes that humor is inherently ambivalent—that it is simultaneously contestive and passive. It has the faculty to disrupt the discourse of the status quo while mobilizing the margins.

> In Nigeria jokes serve a double function as a tool for subordinate classes to deride the state (including its agents) and themselves. Jokes are therefore a means through which an emergent civil society, "behaving badly," subverts, deconstructs, and engages with the state (Obadare 2009, p. 241).

These seemingly divergent approaches are not necessarily at odds with each other. A convention that operates from a foundation of absurdity must inflict on all participants within that discursive community a form of mutual zombification. Logic would have no operational potential or value in such a system: it would produce no outcomes nor lead to individual or institutional security. At the same time, as previously stated, increasing mockery leads to the corrosion of authority, instability in the organizations of government, and disruption to the long-term survival of state

control. Therefore, while Obadare argues that jokes—in this case not wit or light punning, but derision—allow the citizenry a subversive space of opposition, such ridicule simultaneously retracts some of this agency through the palliative effects of laughter. However, it is densely embedded in networks of affect, information, communication and transference, and ongoing joking relations. Through this thick web, satire can unleash its full potential, both immediately through revelation or negation, as well as through the potential for long-term material change.

This is particularly pertinent since it has been argued that satire rarely offers solutions to the concerns it raises:

> By robbing us of an image of a pristine order, satirists leave us with exposure (Griffin 1995, p. 64).

The parables and proverbs used in villages as a form of conflict resolution open out of lines of enquiry, rather than closing off discussion through offering solutions. This affords an opportunity for creativity, rather than an apprehension of "exposure" or vulnerability, and perhaps it is this reason that humor—with similar mechanisms—is so prevalent in Nigeria. In "acts of everyday anamnesis" (Critchley 2002, p. 86), jokes remind people of what they already know but from a position of defamiliarization. By pulling away from the social realm in order to offer novel perspectives, satire not only provides a momentary sense of detachment that allows a subversive space of enquiry or opposition, it also exposes the arbitrary character of social conventions in a way that is detrimental to the maintenance of authority (Griffin 1995; Critchley 2002; Morreall 2009). In laughing, people endorse the moral value advocated by the satirist and momentarily legitimate his or her power.

Power is a pervasive, prevalent orthodoxy, which can be embodied or enacted in multiple ways including coercively through institutional control or physical violence, and consensually through unwitting subordination effected by enticement, distraction, or mystification (Foucault 1991). While Bourdieu (1992), in his analysis of symbolic power, emphasized its ability to invoke fundamental beliefs, values, and self-evident truths of the world, he emphasized the influence of enduring, structural formulations such as religion, custom, art, and language. I suggest that symbolic power can be momentary, as the vivid bursts of revelatory exuberance through the performance of humor demonstrate.

Satire can occupy spaces of unconcealed or covert contravention, spawning "pockets of indiscipline" (Mbembe 1992) in arenas where political alienation is felt most strongly. These are spaces of "resistive practices" (Obadare 2009) where subversive information can be transmitted. The appeal of the image of the paint-can helmet derives from the pursuit of humor at the expense of authority, and a disregard for the institutions of state control. In most cases, a subordinated group's capital is performative/linguistic and these weapons will be deployed through the oral and auditory registers, making victims feel that they are being constantly ridiculed, even when this may not be the case. Those reacting with amusement to the image are not just laughing at the situation but empathizing with the rider, seeing in him a reflection of their own subordinated position and admiring the audacity of his moment of disrespect, disdain, and symbolic power.

Conclusion

For those with little social, economic, or cultural capital, one of the means of contesting the illogicality of bureaucratic and administrative regulation is through satire, in particular through performative or oral acts that elude state control and surveillance Subsequent narration or performance of the originating event allows for metamorphosis of the absurd into satire. This offers symbolic power, even if fleeting or compromised, and forges joking relationships that can over time lead to the corrosion of authority.

This has a number of effects resulting in authority being stripped from bureaucracy. Satire results in an irruption of knowledge that is revelatory, resistant, or—contrary to the supposition of many theorists—at times agentic. The enjoyment and entertainment it affords, as well as new insights, information, and perspectives, allow it to impact networks and move in unpredictable patterns. This chaotic movement is inherently unsettling for ruling elites as it allows information to travel from periphery to center, producing the dual effects of pleasure (amusement, communitas) and dissatisfaction (anger, frustration, resentment), both of which are bonding mechanisms. It is the emotional impact of the originating "absurd" negotiation and the process of transformation into satire through narration or performance, as well as reception by an audience, which permits such agency. Ridicule serves both as a form of resistance and as a coping mechanism, through the expelling of frustration and sharing of amusement.

Yet ironic wit cannot be considered in separation from nodal network of communication that allows it to spread through time and space, nor can it be separated from underlying (or overlaid) mutable affective or emotive states and moods, inspirations and welcoming, that push it into further vortices of information. The specificity of context proposes distinctive, iterative consummations of the oral, visual, and performative that are always relational, situated between, and nonhierarchical. These are embedded within decentralized circuits via individual digital devices, allowing greater agency to human (sender, recipient, commentator, audience) and nonhuman (device, image, prop) entities to shape narratives.

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Chapter 13
Civil Society and Conflict in West Africa

Niklas Hultin

Introduction

There is a near axiomatic understanding in the international policy and development community that robust civil societies help prevent conflict through the encouragement of democracy and human rights and build durable peace in postconflict or conflict-prone environments. This chapter aims to provide a critical evaluation of this understanding through an examination of how West African civil society organizations (CSOs) have been active in conflict situations. Of course, the relationship between civil society and conflict depends on how broadly the former is defined and how broad a purview one takes of conflict. As has been discussed elsewhere in this volume, the first matter is one of considerable discussion in the literature on Africa, and this chapter will discuss this issue only briefly and solely as it pertains to how one would view the range of actors to be labeled as CSOs in a particular situation (can, for example, armed parties to a conflict be considered CSOs?). In regards to the second question, the approach taken herein is that the intersections between civil society and conflict in West Africa are best illuminated by taking a broad approach to conflict that includes a consideration of the instigation of conflict and the immediate postconflict environment and that ranges from situations of civic violence and disturbances to large scale wars.

This examination will proceed as follows: the first section observes the difficulties of defining civil society, noting in particular the call of Mamdani (1996) and others to focus on African forms of civil society that do not fit the Western mold, as well as the distinction—made by Callaghy (1994) and others—between civil society as an organizational form and civil society as an ethos or set of norms. This discussion, it will be argued, has significant implications for what kind of organizations are included under the civil society rubric. This section thus examines the possibility of

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violent organizations being considered part of civil society or, to put it differently, CSOs as potential instigators of conflict and CSOs as active participants in conflict situations. The second section turns this issue on its head and considers the role CSOs have played in peace-building and the mobilization of humanitarian sentiment, which is arguably the most frequently discussed role of civil society in the literature. The third section examines CSOs and their role in transitional justice, disarmament, and similar programs seen in postconflict environments. The chapter ends with a few remarks drawing out intersecting themes, most notably the prominent role of international CSOs, donor-driven agendas and the potential tension between these, on one hand, and locally salient contexts and understandings of conflicts and postconflict reconciliation and justice, on the other.

Civil Society, Violence, and the Instigation of Conflict

There has been a considerable literature on civil society in Africa since the late 1980s onward. For present purposes, it is sufficient to note that while there have been disagreements over the potential effectiveness of CSOs to promote democracy, equality, and development (compare, for example, Barkan et al. 1991; Gyimah-Boadi 1996; to the dissenting opinion of Callaghy 1994), the literature largely coalesces around the idea that it is unwise to accept uncritically the applicability of a conception of civil society derived from the experience of the West to the sub-Saharan African context. Anthropologists, political scientists, and others have thus emphasized the need to examine what Mamdani refers to as "actually existing civil society" (1996, p. 19). This approach would take social phenomena such as kinship ties, traditional leaders, and ethnic associations into account (e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Guyer 1994; Monga 1996; Orvis 2001; Owusu 1997; Woods 1992). These phenomena may not easily fit a classic definition of civil society that emphasizes institutions like religious charities, labor unions, professional associations, and the private press but they are in fact the latter's analog and exist side by side. The point is thus not simply to replace a conception of civil society with another, ostensibly African, one, but to broaden our understanding of civil society to include the institutions and phenomena that Africans deploy to effect societal goals and that would be obscured by a single-minded focus on formal associations (Monga 1996; Obadare 2011).

This approach does not necessarily mean that any organization or group should be considered part of civil society; most definitions assume an organizational, collective aspect as well as a normative or ethical aspect. Orvis (2001, p. 21), for example, builds on Mamdani in defining civil society as "a public sphere of formal or informal, collective activity autonomous from but recognizing the legitimate existence of the state." This definition collapses two elements of civil society that other scholars prefer to distinguish. For example, Callaghy argues, on the one hand, that civil society can be understood as "societal groups that interact with the state but delimit and constrain its actions" and, on the other hand, civil society can be seen in "the emergence of norms about the limits of state power, including its role in the public sphere and the

political rules that govern its functioning" (Callaghy 1994, pp. 234, 235; see also Bratton 1994, who adds "networks of public communication" as a component of civil society). While Callaghy is skeptical of the former view, he argues for a restrictive interpretation of the latter, understanding a "civil sphere" (not civil society) not as "a set of groups but a space or realm defined by newly constituted norms about what the state should and should not do and by the rules of politics in that space, including politics by nonstate actors" (1994, p. 235). Other scholars have developed further this normative element of civil society, suggesting that a commitment to human rights, democracy, and tolerance is something of a sine qua non of civil society (e.g., Kasfir 1998) or that civil society is characterized by self-awareness of itself as civil society (e.g., Bayart 1986). In all of these cases, civil society is not understood to be the same as political society in that it does not include political parties and other groups whose main purpose is to gain state power through electoral contestation (Bratton 1994).

The importance of this definitional matter lies in whether groups that are violently antagonistic to a particular government can be considered part of civil society (Keane 1998). Put differently, if one dispenses of the requirement of a normative element, one is left with a definition of civil society that has as its single criterion a group outside the state with an ability and desire to interact with or constrain the state. That definition would exclude only such groups that are actively hostile to the idea of a particular state in the first place and seek its removal (the distinction between a state and a government is often muddled in the civil society literature). These groups are probably quite few in number and could include groups such as the separatists in Senegal's Casamance region (e.g., Foucher 2007), the Islamist movement controlling northern Mali and surrounding areas (e.g., Larémont 2011), or Nigeria's *Boko Haram* (Onuoha 2010). What they have in common is a desire to radically alter their respective "target" state, to secede from it or replace it with an international Islamic caliphate. To include such organizations under the rubric of civil society would be to render it analytically useless since they largely preclude any interaction with the state (not government), other than inasmuch as enactments of violence is a form of interaction, and do not seem to view it as legitimate.

More troubling—and analytically interesting—for a neat demarcation between CSOs and non-CSOs is the presence of a number of West African groups that may have had civil society origins but have nonetheless been active participants in conflicts and violence. Such groups have often been recruited by states to supplement police and military forces. During the civil war in Sierra Leone, the government came to rely on the *kamajors*—a civil defense force originating in hunting societies—for support against the rebels. Described by Zack Williams (1997, p. 375) as "an adjunct of civil society," they were accused of human rights abuse by international groups at the same time as they drew upon the international language of human rights to justify their stance during the civil war (Ferme and Hoffman 2004). As in other parts of West Africa—see, for example, the discussion of hunters in Côte d'Ivoire in Hellweg (2011)—these groups also drew upon the traditional status of hunters as protectors of the local community.

Indeed, the revival of hunting societies as a form of incipient civil society has been noted across West Africa, in contexts of peace as well as violence (e.g., Leach 2004). A somewhat similar example is Nigeria's Bakassi Boys, who originated as an association of shoe procedures mobilizing in the interest of civil justice and public accountability before being turned into essentially a violent gang by political opportunists in and out of government (Meagher 2007). The challenge posed by groups such as the *Kamajors* and the Bakassi Boys for any discussion of civil society is thus twofold: first, on a normative level, their actions are not always consistent with what is often assumed to be the goals of a CSO. Second, being separate from the state is not always a permanent status and organizations can drift in and out the orbit of state power. Thus, on an organizational or institutional level, it is not always an easy determination to make whether a particular group is autonomous from the state.

Even if one draws the definition of civil society tightly enough to exclude groups engaging in violent behaviors—if one, in essence, insists that civil society denotes a notable and constant level of commitment to democracy, human rights, nonviolence, and similar ideals—one must still contend with the fact that civil society is inherently "wreckable" (Keane 1998) and has "despotic tendencies" (Fatton 1995, p. 93). In the case of Nigeria, for example, CSOs have been prone to manipulation to further the goals of the political elite and to forestall genuine democratization (Abutudu 1995). Even if CSOs are not subverted or co-opted by the state, there is still the potential of different CSOs having competing agendas and thereby nullifying each other or contributing to social tension, as Ndegwa (1996) shows in the case of Kenya.

Other scholars have suggested that there is little that distinguishes civil society and political society from each other; the political elite and the leaders of civil society are often part of the same social sphere and what separates them tends to be incidental to their location on the political society or civil society divide (Bayart 1993). Furthermore, civil society can also be undermined by the prevalence of ethnically based associations, as they might lead to what Berman (1998), Marchetti and Tocci (2009), and Keane (1998) refer to as "uncivil nationalism" and "uncivil societies." If CSOs draw upon a single ethnic group or cluster of ethnic groups, they might in fact exacerbate ethnic tensions and the potential for conflict, as has been the case in Nigeria (Ikelegbe 2008), Côte d'Ivoire (Bah 2010), and elsewhere. Adekson's (2003) extensive survey of civil society in southern Nigeria, for example, notes the radicalization and over time increasingly violent actions of several different ethnically based CSOs such as the Oodua People's Congress.

It is also important to note that such organizations can draw upon international ideologies, norms, and identities in a way that makes violence seem more legitimate or makes it take on a less parochial significance. While a group like *Boko Haram* might not be considered part of civil society, it has grown out of a Northern Nigerian political context in which there is a considerable history of Islamic groups muddying the line between violent groups and various forms of community and religiously based associations, and in which the extent to which the region is part of a greater Islamic community has been a sore point (Lubeck 1985; Casey 2008). Similarly, in a few cases in West Africa—such as the Gambia in the early 1980s (Hughes 1991)—left-wing CSOs have adopted the idiom of Marxist revolution and instigated

or participated in violence such as urban riots and botched coup attempts. This is not to say that international ideologies inevitably radicalize groups and make them prone to violence, only that these groups do not necessarily exist in a vacuum and their relationship to their respective state is a function of local, national, and international politics.

While it is tempting to exclude ipso facto any group that engages in any kind of violent behavior from CSOs, such exclusion would neglect the fact that the activities and viewpoints of CSOs change over time in response to the wider sociopolitical context. As previously noted, Southeastern Nigeria serves as a case in point where, during the 1990s, the extremely heavy-handed response by the Federal Government—which included acts of violence against the local population and a repressive legal apparatus—served to radicalize CSOs and made violence seem like a reasonable response. This radicalization occurred in parallel with a process whereby other CSOs have actively reframed the struggle as one of environmental and indigenous peoples' rights (Ebiede 2011; Ebeky 2002). Except for a few cases where the interaction between the state and an organization is exclusively one of violence and the latter failing to consider the former as legitimate (as is arguably the case with *Boko Haram*), it might not be the most fruitful undertaking to consider whether the organization is part of civil society or not. A more worthwhile line of inquiry would be to consider the wider political and legal context that makes conflict seem like an appropriate course of action for an organization, and what the relationship between the organization and its nonviolent counterparts might be.

Civil Society, NGOs, and Humanitarianism

While there is a great need to be alert to the potential of civil society actors to contribute to conflict or violence, most contemporary discussions of civil society and conflict focus on the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in shining a light on conflict situations, mobilizing public opinion, and bringing conflict parties to the negotiating table or creating the conditions for international intervention (see, for example, contributors in Wilson and Brown 2008). This section accordingly examines two issues: first, it addresses the role of predominantly international NGOs in bringing attention to conflict situations and pressing for peacemaking efforts. Second, it examines the peacemaking role played by national CSOs in specific conflict situations.

Although the term CSO encompasses a broader range of actors (such as the private press and neighborhood or community associations, for example), NGOs have emerged as the main focal point of discussions of civil society and democratization in Africa since the late 1980s, and in the literature the two terms are often used interchangeably (Mercer 2002). By virtue of their superior organization, oftentimes better funding, and international networks, NGOs are viewed as having a greater potential to affect social change than other, more amorphous, civil society actors. This perceived potential is exemplified by Brewer (2010, p. 31), who argues that they can

"harness the enthusiasm there is at the grassroots for peace and deploy for the benefit of peace the skills, resources, and international networks that abound in civil society." Similarly, a 2006 World Bank report on civil society and peacebuilding lauds CSOs for their "unique potential to "make unique and distinctive contributions to peacebuilding" and highlights NGOs' key role in crystallizing this potential through their technical expertise and international networks (World Bank 2006, p. V).

Scholars have greeted this reliance on NGOs with some caution, with some suggesting that NGOs—as well as CSOs more broadly—might be little more than vehicles for personal enrichment, offering a way for individuals to acquire the necessary social and financial capital for a political career (Hibou and Banégas 2000; Bayart 1993). Despite the mantra of participation and inclusiveness that scholars have seen—and lauded—in NGOs (Bratton 1989)—the latter have greater access to the halls of power, and move more easily into positions of power, than other members of society (Kpessa 2011). Most important for present purposes, NGOs have been accused of operating with a patronizing discourse of helping or "saving" Africans at the same time as the emphasis on neoliberal policies ultimately undermine the capabilities of states (Hudock 1999; Mohan 2002). While most discussions of this patronizing stance of international NGOs have focused on conflicts outside West Africa (e.g., Mamdani 2009, on the war in Darfur; or Waldorf 2012, on the Kony 2012 campaign), international NGOs' representation of various human rights issues in northern Nigeria (Clarke 2009) and the Mano River region conflicts have come under scrutiny. The latter case, in particular, tends to focus on various popular iterations of the "New War" thesis that postulates, among other things, that post-Cold War African conflicts are more savage than others (see, generally, Kaldor 2005; Newman 2004). At issue here is the extent to which simplified understandings of a conflict not only reinforce ideas of non-Westerners as less civilized, more conflict-prone, and more brutal, but also lead to an impoverished understanding of a conflict's root causes which can hinder a successful intervention or postconflict reconstruction (Duffield 1996, see also following section).

That said, there are areas where NGOs and CSOs have played a significant role in shaping the public discourse surrounding West African conflicts. For one thing, the publicity campaigns of NGOs have helped set the stage for humanitarian intervention (Chandler 2001) and drive specific policy initiatives intended to ameliorate or prevent conflict. For example, NGOs were heavily involved in the campaign against the "blood diamonds" (on which much of the blame for the Sierra Leonean conflict were crudely put) and instrumental in the development of the Kimberley Process (Bieri 2010). NGOs have also been instrumental in recent developments in international humanitarian law relevant to West African conflicts, including pushing through the global land mine ban and the effort to develop an arms trade treaty to prevent the proliferation of small arms (Garcia 2006; Price 1998).

Of particular note here is the work of NGOs to "securitize" particular issues, that is to reframe matters such as, for example, socioeconomic vulnerability and women's and children's rights as matters of security and in doing so mobilize state, regional, and international actors (Avant 2007; Jaye 2008; more generally, see Newman 2009). It is also important to note that human rights are not the only transnational discourse

or ideology impacting the activities of CSOs. Islamic aid organizations, both from the Middle East and Western countries, are increasingly active in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere (Petersen 2011). For these and their recipients, development and humanitarian aid is a way to connect to the global community of Muslims while providing a boost to the presence of Islam in civil life (see, e.g., Kaag 2011, on Chad; Sounaye 2011, on Niger).

While the above discussion largely focuses on international NGOs, West African CSOs also have a role to play in peacemaking and in the development of humanitarian agendas. Although conflict situations would seem to have a detrimental effect on CSOs' ability to operate effectively, there are nonetheless examples of CSOs having active political and economic roles even in the midst of extensive violence. During Sierra Leone's civil war, for example, CSOs played a significant role. While Valentine Strasser was in power (1992–1996), CSOs successfully lobbied, with the support of the country's Interim National Electoral Commission, for elections prior to peace, viewing political rights as something of a prerequisite for sustainable peace (Hirsch 2001, p. 41). The Sierra Leone Women's Movement for Peace similarly worked hard to bring the various parties to the conflict to the negotiating table (Brewer 2010, p. 87). At the height of the conflict, there were approximately 70 CSOs working toward peacebuilding as well as issues such as poverty eradication and the erection of low income-housing to promote community and replace some of the dwellings lost during the conflict (Zack-Williams 1999).

Despite the positive role played by some CSOs during the conflict, they are generally excluded from formal peace negotiations (Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008). The cases of Sierra Leone and Liberia, however, offer counter-examples to this general tendency. The participation of civil society groups in the Accra negotiations (after CSOs had been largely excluded from the previous Lomé and Abuja peace processes) is credited with lending greater legitimacy in the eyes of Liberians to the final outcome (Levitt 2012, p. 230). Other groups, such as the aforementioned Sierra Leone Women's Movement for Peace, were largely excluded however (Brewer 2010, p. 87). Nonetheless, compared to international NGOs, the ability of local CSOs to have an impact beyond the immediate conflict environment and to shape the framing of humanitarian and security agendas at the regional or international levels is limited. The obstacles they face include logistical and political ones. While CSOs regularly lobby ECOWAS, for example, CSOs ability to impact law and policy is curtailed by ECOWAS's focus on "preserving the existing neopatrimonial regime" and member governments' general reluctance to cede any amount of power (Haacke and Williams 2008, p. 214).

With respect to the role of CSOs during conflicts, one can thus draw a couple of general conclusions from the above discussion. One is that it is important to recognize the role of international NGOs in shaping how particular conflict situations are understood. This role is especially critical when the international community is discussing military intervention in the name of peace and humanitarianism, as, for example, was the case in Sierra Leone and Liberia in the 1990s, Côte D'Ivoire in the 2000s, and Mali in 2012. International NGOs are in effect contributing to the marketing of a conflict situation as egregious or important enough to justify such

an intervention. This is not to say that the accompanying framing of the conflict is inevitably incorrect, but it raises questions as to whether a particular framing is in the best interest of long-term peace and if it is considered legitimate by the intended beneficiaries of that intervention (cf. Lister 2003). At the same time, local CSOs can and do play an active role in ameliorating some of the effects of conflicts and draw warring parties into a peace process. Even in situations where there is no large-scale conflict—and no peace process—local CSOs are more adept at using local institutions to address tense situations that an international NGO might overlook. The aforementioned situation in Northern Nigeria offers an illustrative case where the case of Amina Lawal—a northern Nigerian woman sentenced to death by stoning for adultery—prompted the Spanish branch of Amnesty International to launch an international campaign that actually undermined (though in the end not fatally so) the work of a Nigerian NGO to use the courts to get the conviction overturned (Tripp 2006).

Civil Society and the Postconflict Environment

Questions of how societies can move beyond violent conflict have fostered a major body of scholarship over the last several decades. CSOs loom large in these discussions. Whereas, as noted, CSOs have for the most part played a secondary role in peace negotiations, the building of civil society and including its actors in a postconflict settlement has developed into a major part of internationally sponsored initiatives (Levitt 2001, p. 47; Okumu 2009). Such initiatives have risen in tandem with a perceived informalization of conflict since the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the aforementioned "New War" thesis (Van Leeuwen 2009, pp. 30, 31). Part of the argument behind this thesis is that nonstate actors play a significantly increased role in conflict and that the line between combatants and noncombatants is blurred. In such a situation, it is believed that robust civil societies are the best bulwark against various forces of disintegration. The "crisis of governance" behind the wars in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and elsewhere must thus be addressed through inclusion of CSOs (Adejumobi 2004). These initiatives are subject to the same criticisms levied against peace-time efforts to build civil society: that they assume a linear, teleological process of social change whereas in reality any process of social change is disordered and happens in fits and starts (Carothers 2002).

The intersection between CSOs and postconflict processes are of two kinds. One kind is the CSO as actor in the postconflict program, wherein CSOs devise, implement, and support programs. The other intersection is the CSO as the target of postconflict reconstruction. The latter, typically known as capacity building, has itself become a major goal of internationally supported postconflict activities (Harvey 1998; Van Leeuwen 2009), operating with the same underlying logic that only a robust civil society can prevent the reemergence of conflict. In practice, these two intersections overlap to a significant degree and are subject to the same qualifiers and constraints.

One such qualifier is the sheer number of NGOs in a given postconflict environment. In Sierra Leone alone, for example, Kanyako (2011) estimates that one government ministry receives 100 applications for registration a year. This dramatic growth of CSOs may not have an unequivocally positive effect. Karbo et al. (2001) suggest that that since many groups have the same goals, they are effectively competing for the same resources and may lead to waste (in terms of resources, effort, and time). Furthermore, if an external actor, such as a bilateral development agency, funds a CSO the latter's continued viability will be hampered if those funds are cut (which is something the CSO would have little or no control over). In addition, external funding tends to come with particular auditing and reporting requirements. These requirements can lead to inflexible organizations preoccupied with the formal bureaucratic aspect of auditing and recordkeeping over its substantive goals (Fanthorpe 2003; Kanyako 2011). At the same time, the influx of money brings forth questions of fairness and justice. The distribution of resources and benefits are not simply an economic matter but a matter of, as Fanthorpe (2003) puts it, "moral economy" as well.

This moral aspect of the distribution of resources brings to the foreground the normative dimension of the work carried out by CSOs in a postconflict environment—i.e., what its assumptions are about the nature of the conflict, who is to blame, who is the victim, how the presumed root causes are to be addressed, and so on. These norms reverberate through postconflict programs such as transitional justice, gender-based violence, and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) initiatives, and they have engendered a voluminous scholarly literature, focusing primarily on Liberia and Sierra Leone, on the mismatch between local understandings of the conflict and the assumptions of CSOs. One key element in this literature is the question of who is counted as a combatant and who is counted as a victim. Shepler (2005; see also Stovel 2008) argues that the framing of child soldiers as "victims" by NGOs and others during Sierra Leone's transition program seemed out of place to noncombatants who perceived child soldiers as aggressors and did not consider it just that ex-child soldiers would be given stipends or education opportunities not more widely available to the people of Sierra Leone. Similarly, MacKenzie (2009) suggests that even though women played an active role in the conflict as guards and soldiers, the preconceived notions of masculinity and femininity brought to the postconflict environment by international actors effectively "desecuritized" women through terms such as "camp follower" and "associate." The net result, she concludes, is that other than as victims, women are rendered largely invisible in postconflict policy making. CSOs' compartmentalized view of gender has also been examined by Abramowitz and Moran (2012, p. 135), who neatly sum up the divergent understandings of NGOs and local communities in Liberia thus: "Where NGOs see violent acts, Liberians see ambiguous and undetermined gender roles and structural uncertainty; where NGOs see 'tradition,' Liberians see the absence of the force of both tradition and governance in their lives."

These divergent understandings are compounded by the fact that the goals of various postconflict initiatives are not always complementary. DDR programs and transitional justice initiatives have different aims in that the former seeks to integrate

combatants politically whereas the latter seeks to punish violators of international humanitarian law or domestic law. The former goal may be helped by targeted amnesties and forgiveness programs, which would run counter to the latter's emphasis on accountability and lack of impunity. At the same time, all transitional legal processes make decisions for what to include and what to exclude (Leebaw 2008; Sriram and Herman 2009). The exclusion of rape from the Sierra Leone Special Court, for example, had the effect of marginalizing the wartime experiences of individuals who had experienced that specific form of violence (Kelsall and Stepakoff 2007). This situation is compounded by culturally different understandings of the appropriate ways of dealing with conflict. Shaw (2005), for example, suggests that the Sierra Leonean Truth and Reconciliation Commission's emphasis on truth-telling as a way of "getting past" the civil war—an emphasis inspired by the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as examples further afield and supported by international CSOs—clashed with Mende cultural norms.

Furthermore, the work of CSOs in postconflict environments does not take place in a political vacuum. While CSOs can effectively legitimize new forms of identifications and associations that are seen as helpful to the peace process—forms that are then deployed tactically by the beneficiaries (Fanthorpe and Maconachie 2010)— they are also reliant on existing power brokers and political elites. As a consequence of this reliance, the causes of the conflict may not be adequately addressed, as Hanlon (2005) has argued in the case of Sierra Leone. Certain sectors of political society might also be beyond the reach of CSOs, or the latter might not have sufficient technical capability to address these sectors. Security sector reform, for example, is widely considered an important part of any postconflict process but one that CSOs tend to have limited capacity to affect (see, e.g., Loden 2007, on security sector reform in Liberia).

It should be clear from the foregoing that CSOs have much to contribute to any postconflict environment but, as seen in the work of humanitarian NGOs, this contribution does not come without potential pitfalls. This potential is not to be interpreted as a claim that CSOs are not important and has no role to play, only that they should be subject to the same critical scrutiny as other social actors.

Conclusion

My analysis of the intersection between civil society and conflict in West Africa suggests that the relationship between conflict and civil society is an ambivalent and ambiguous one. This ambiguity stems in no small degree from the amorphousness of the two terms; both civil society and conflict can refer to a great range of varied, dynamic phenomena. Nonetheless, one can identify three crosscutting themes that any analysis of civil society and conflict would do well to keep in mind.

The first theme is the importance of the local context and the need to look beyond normative assumptions, based on the Euro-American experience, of what civil society is and is not. This point is widely recognized in the Africanist literature on

civil society and is of profound importance. Institutions and organizations that do not neatly fit a Western mold of civil society may play a somewhat analogous role (e.g., hunters in Côte d'Ivoire). Also important is how the activities of CSOs are understood in a particular local context, which itself is a function of a second crosscutting theme: that of norms. In the discussion of postconflict programs, for example, Western understandings of gender, childhood, and abstract notions of "forgiveness" might not completely match local understandings and norms. This is not to say that either understanding is correct while the other is incorrect, but that given such mismatch, any program, no matter how well intentioned, is liable to be marred by distrust and dissatisfaction.

Third and finally, civil society has the potential to be disruptive: a robust civil society is intended to avert violence and create the conditions for a durable peace. The flip side of this, of course, is that CSOs themselves can be disruptive. Despite the valorization of CSOs as harbingers of peace and democracy, it is also the case that CSOs can engage in behaviors that undermine those very goals. Such behaviors include relatively obvious ones such as ethnic agitation as well as those behaviors stemming from a failure to address the root causes of a conflict in a meaningful way.

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Part III
Civil Society in the Shadow of Neoliberalism

Chapter 14
Neoliberalism and the Forms of Civil Society in Kenya and South Africa

Jacob Mwathi Mati

Introduction

A rebellious spirit has been a permanent feature of African politics over the past two decades. The year 2011, for instance, started on a revolutionary note that saw two longstanding regimes in Tunisia and Egypt fall in quick succession as a result of the power of mass demonstrations and revolts that left political regimes in Middle East thoroughly shaken. In the same year, in Sub-Saharan Africa, "food riots" as well as protests against poor service delivery or rising costs of living pockmarked the calendar in countries like Uganda, Malawi, Kenya, Cameroon, and South Africa, to mention but a few. In South Africa, in particular, 2012 would go down as a year of widespread (and frequently fatal) labor protests (see Chap. 15). But popular protests against real or perceived social, political, and economic injustices and marginalization are not new. For the most part, such protests are traceable to increasing precariousness of social life.

This precariousness is ostensibly a product of a showdown between hegemonic neoliberal economic forces intent on ordering society along the logic of self-regulating free market; and counter-hegemonic forces whose resurgence in the last few decades is hailed as a heroic response to the accelerated penetration of individual lives by market forces. The state, because of its complicity as an agent of the "free market," is often caught in the middle of these contestations. A third force—a service delivery oriented civil society, has traditionally served as a stabilizing and pacifying agent on society, and thereby perpetuating and consolidating the status and conditions for the hegemony of free market. This third force, has arguably not elicited as much critical scrutiny on the specific role it plays in the production of social order, especially how hegemony is secured and reproduced, negotiated, resisted, or challenged in Africa. This oversight is partly because, as Murunga and Nasong'o (2007) suggest, many

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local intellectuals, activists, and politicians simply lack the right critical sensitivity to engage with this issue.

This chapter attempts to fill this gap by analyzing the interactions between political and economic forces that characterize the contemporary African political economy, and how these forces have shaped the nature and forms of civil society and its functions. Broadly informed by Antonio Gramsci's work on hegemony (1971), the chapter's main argument is that, as market forces encroach on society, citizens mobilize and organize in response to the socioeconomic and political realities that they face. Specifically, Gramsci's thoughts on the dynamics of hegemony help explain the preponderance of at least two types of civil society formations in Kenya and South Africa, i.e., a hegemonic free-market abetting civil society and an antimarket fundamentalism civil society. This indicates that civil society is a site of struggle for hegemony. Moreover, hegemony is, as Katz (2006, p. 335) puts it, "dialectically where the existing hegemonic social order is maintained but also the realm of social creativity, where a new social order can emerge."

Historically, in the West, civil society is produced by the mutual interaction of politics and the economy. The type or nature of a state, as Salamon and Anheier's (1998) social origins theory show, is a byproduct of a complex set of social forces with political, cultural, and economic dimensions, which in turn determine the type and functions of different forms of civil society. This chapter attempts to answer the question: how have the interactions between politics and free-market ideology shaped the nature of contemporary civil society and its functions in Kenya and South Africa? It is argued that the dominant free-market economic model has led to the emergence of two key forms of civil society in Kenya and South Africa, based on relationships to the state and economy, as well as functions in the production, maintenance, and the challenging of the dominant social economic order. These are: a dominant civil society that abets neoliberalism, and a counter-movement type of civil society.

The chapter is divided into five sections. In the next section, I engage conceptual issues of what civil society means in our context. The next section attempts to answer the question: why should we compare Kenyan and South African civil society? Here, I engage the debates on the factors responsible for civil society formation and their functions in Kenya and South Africa. I utilize the interactions of politics and economics in development theory and practice to develop a taxonomy of key civil society forms based on whether these forms of civil society are free market and state aiding or they challenge markets and state (i.e., pro-reform) in their character and functions in society. I then show that these two competing features of civil society are a permanent fixture on the contemporary Kenyan and South African socioeconomic and political scene. The fourth section deals with contrasting civil society formations and how these have coexisted in the creation of social order in the two countries. In the concluding section, I use the proliferation of different forms of civil society in the last two decades to support the claim that the nature, form, and functions of civil society in these two countries are reflective of socioeconomic, political, and cultural materiality.

Politics, Economy, and Civil Society: A Theoretical Statement

Understanding the nature and manifestations of civil society in Africa, as already noted, requires an interrogation of the nexus of politics and the economy, as these are traditionally, the coproducers of civil society. However, a note on what we mean by civil society and neoliberalism here is in order.

Due to its different theoretical origins and disciplinary traditions, as well as its content, civil society is a uniquely imprecise, fuzzy, and extremely complex and contested concept (see, among others, Chatterjee 2000, 2004; Mati 2009, 2008; Monga 1996; Voss and Williams 2009/2011; Chweya 2004; Katumanga 2004; Owiti et al. 2004 for similar ideas). As such, scholars of civil society disagree on whether studying civil society should be approached from an ontological or epistemological perspective[1] (see, for example, Corry 2010; Nasong'o 2007). Even within ontological perspectives, there are opposing views on what comprises civil society, and what is to be excluded from it. Such oppositions are due in part to clashing normative stances between dominant American and European conceptions of civil society.

While the American school sees civil society as characterized by qualities of civility, the European tradition criticizes this, privileging instead, a view of civil society as a mixture of many kinds of social organizations that can be "illiberal, anti-democratic and violent as well as liberal, democratic and peaceful" (Wild 2006, p. 2). Moreover, there is disagreement about whether civil society actually exists or is simply "a mere metaphor masquerading as a political player" (Nasong'o 2007, p. 23). Ensuing from such theoretical disagreements, literature on civil society can be categorized into their conception of civil society as: (a) a relational concept; (b) an arena of contestation; and (c) a process. Below, I briefly explore each of them before turning to how they relate to civil society formations in Kenya and South Africa. It is important from the outset to acknowledge that the three incorporate both normative and positivist perspectives and embodied in these conceptions, are the complexities, ambiguities, and contradictions inherent in the character of organizations that comprise civil society.

Civil Society As a Relational Concept

Some conceptions treat civil society as a residual category, in relation to two other sectors with the state as the first sector; and the market as the second (see, for example, Corry 2010; Kanyinga et al. 2007; Katumanga 2004; Mati et al. 2010; Voss

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[1] Ontological approaches are interested in defining what things "are," charting out their existence and finding methodology to uncover the truth of their being while epistemological approaches are interested with how things (structures, organizations, or identities) come to be made real, defined, and authorized, and how different perspectives generate different understandings of them (Corry 2010, p. 12). Epistemological approaches take civil society not as an "object out there waiting to be authoritatively defined but as a kind of societal process" (Corry 2010, p. 12).

and Williams 2009/2011; Chweya 2004). Such conceptions present civil society as a "bridge between the citizenry, the state, and the market" (Habib 2002, p. viii) or a cushion against the siege of both the state and the market. This is not to overlook the fact that there are instances where citizens either align with the state, against the free market and in "defense of the welfare (Keynesian) state system" (Chweya 2004, p. 28) or with market forces, as has been the case in Africa's second wave of democratization.

The relational conception is criticized on a number of grounds. For one, it assumes some coherence and clear lines of demarcation between the entities that make up civil society and the other two sectors. In reality though, there are differences in the forms of social, political, and economic organizations that fall within civil society, state, and market, creating doubts as to whether a third sector necessarily exists (see, for example, Evers 1995). In Africa, some commentators have gone as far as denying the concept of civil society of any "concrete reality, contending that it is essentially a child of the anthropomorphic fertility of the social scientific mind . . . a theoretical construct, lacking empirical locus, whose contemporary currency is only an intellectual fad that is inherently limited in heuristic value" (Nasong'o 2007, p. 23).

There are also disagreements among scholars of different disciplinary traditions on "whether civil society is primarily an economic or a sociological phenomenon" (Hyden 1998, p. 19). The interchangeable usage of the terms "nonprofit sector" and "civil society" is a case in point. Some commentators view such conflation of civil society with the nonprofit sector as "conceptually unsound, as the two terms denote quite different phenomena and use different perspectives, with the nonprofit sector being grounded in economic and social policy debates, and civil society being rooted in democratic political and social theory" (Heinrich 2005, p. 219).

The relational conception of civil society has also been challenged on the basis of whether civil society is essentially autonomous of the state or whether civil society and the state are organically linked (Hyden 1998, p. 19. See also Mamdani 1995; Nasong'o 2007; Shivji 2006). Some embrace the state—civil society dichotomy, arguing that unlike the state and the market economy, civil society "can scarcely be subjected to detailed planning or regulated without it losing some of its . . . qualities such as voluntary participation, value-based motivation, and independence from more institutionalized power structures" (Corry 2010, p. 11). Others such as Shivji (2006, p. 12) reject this, arguing that "whereas civil society likes to present itself as an ensemble of free individuals and as a separate sphere from state/politics, it is, as a matter of fact, the soil from which state power arises, and is embedded." As such, civil society and the state are mutually interdependent and therefore, any perceived dichotomy between them is oxymoronic, and a reminder of the "ideological strategy of current neoliberal offensive" to delegitimize the African state by emphasizing "its alien nature . . . [its] retrogressiveness . . . [its] rent-seeking, patrimonialism, and . . . autonomy" and in its stead, pushing civil society as an alternative to, and independent of the state (Nasong'o 2007, pp. 23–24).

Civil Society As An Arena and Means of Contesting and Challenging State and Market

This approach frames civil society as an arena and means through which ordinary citizens can challenge state and market excesses through transformative and progressive collective action that can overturn the control of the dominant class in society. Specifically, civil society is seen as a transformative antisystemic "providential spirit dispatched to redeem a political world gone awry" (Nasong'o 2007, p. 24) or a "corrective add-on to the blind spots of a market economy" (Corry 2010, p. 15). This view romanticizes the role of civil society in struggles for democratization and antiglobalization. It positions civil society as an arena where alternative leaderships and movements from below emerge and mobilize consciousness around real or perceived deprivation that can lead to new orders that dislodge hegemonic oppressive and exploitative forces in society (see, for example, Gramsci1971; Katz 2006).

This view has its merits and there is a growing body of literature that recognizes civil society is a contested space or a "domain of social organization and [...] an arena of contestation and generative practices made up of concrete organizations . . . between the state and economy . . . and includes a multitude of publics each with their own vision and interests" (Voss and Williams 2009/2011, p. 11). But the conception of civil society as a transformative antisystemic force also raises some fundamental empirical question: to what extent has African civil society been transformative? In addition, what is the significance of a resistance that is not transformative or geared toward the creation of the utopian counter-hegemony? The answer perhaps lies in the acknowledgment that there is not one type of civil society but different types of African civil societies. As Atibil (2010) rightly observes, there are clear demarcations between civil society as an arena of spontaneous citizens' collective action and the elite dominated and institutionalized/organized forms of civil society that, while purporting to speak for and on behalf of African citizens in policy making and implementation, have ended up reinforcing exclusion. Moreover, the relationship between the African State and civil society is shaped by clientilistic patronage, ethnicity, class (Nasong'o 2007; Ndegwa 1996; Ngunyi 1996), and religion (Karanja 2008; Gecaga 2007) in addition to massive co-optation aimed at demobilization of radical elements in civil society. Such co-optation though read by some activists and scholars to be betrayal occasioned by "catalepsy" of ideas (Maina 1998), or "paralysis of perspective" (Mamdani 1996), is due in part to the basic assumption that civil society is by definition primarily a countervailing power to the state. This assumption, according to Maina (1998, p. 135), ignores the fact that in Africa, the assumed boundaries between the State, political society, and civil society are rather porous, often blurring into each other . . . the State in Africa is neither indifferent nor passive (Ekeh 1992). Historically, its [*states'*] political project has been domination and its modus vivendi, the fragmentation of any opposition to that project.

As previously argued (see Mati 2012), such systematic co-optations have been the most potent tool for fragmenting the antisystemic faction of African civil society. The net result has been that popular struggles in Africa have in many instances been stillborn. The idea of civil society as process (see the following section) may provide some insights into why this is the case.

Civil Society As Process

Drawing on Foucault's (1978/2002) analysis of how holders of institutional power order society and ideas along certain practices while discouraging or obstructing others, this view conceives civil society as a zone of dialogue or struggle between diverse actors and holders of institutional power (Corry 2010, p. 12). The idea here is that civil society is "not free of power or coercion, nor essentially dialogical, but . . . to a large degree condition and constrain which actors can exist and what they can do and say. . . . In this light, civil society has been seen as part of, or even a tool for, the dominant liberal order" (Corry 2010, p. 16).

This conception challenges the Gramscian view of civil society as including non-coercive institutions between the state and the market, such as trade unions; schools; professional, educational, and cultural associations; political parties; churches; charities; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); self-help groups; social enterprises; networks; and clubs; etc. that help in the organization and perpetuation of consent to the hegemonic ideology. Nonetheless, there are parallels with Gramsci's idea of how holders of institutional power, with the assistance of the institutions of civil society, ensure reproduction of domination through legal codes and due process that legitimize repression. In this accounting, civil society is critical in the furtherance of, or in challenging neoliberal free-market orthodoxy in Africa. Before providing evidence for this, I first clarify what I mean by neoliberalism in this chapter.

Civil Society and Neoliberal Agenda in Africa

While acknowledging contentions over its exact meaning, this chapter uses neoliberalism, as a sui generis term for an ideological system of "heterogeneous set of institutions . . . ideas, social and economic policies, and ways of organizing political and economic activity [. . . *that advocates free market fundamentalism and*] minimalist state, taxation, and business regulation programs, flexible labor markets and . . . absence of barriers to . . . capital mobility" (Campbell and Pederson 2001, p. 5). Neoliberalism praises "the moral benefits of market society" and identifies "markets as a necessary condition for freedom in other aspects of life" (Mudge 2008, p. 705).

Under neoliberalism there has been a deliberate attempt to delegitimize the African state. This has been framed in the language of state irresponsibility, corruption, and the need for good governance. This accounts for the introduction of economic neoliberalism in Africa together with demands for democratization in the manner advocated by the likes of Milton Friedman (1962/2002). The twin push came laden with financial support for NGOs, most of them exclusively foreign owned and/or created and funded with no organic links in Africa, expected to cushion African societies from the adverse effect of the market. This twinning of political pluralism and economic liberalization came at a great price, especially for the African state and the organic forms of associational life with the state widely blamed for inability

to chaperone economic growth and development while at the same time alienating the ever-present organic grassroots forms of associational life in Africa.

In terms of their view of the African state, most foreign-owned or created NGOs in Africa share a common orientation with their paymasters. As a result, the attempt to delegitimize the state is not just neoliberal orthodoxy. Rather, the gospel has support from far and wide. In the last two decades, neoliberalism gained notoriety even among radical scholars and activists in different parts of Africa who relied on funding from the very agencies from the West in running NGOs that specialized in bashing the African state. Even those advocating for a role of the state, especially in development discourses and practice, still appended a role for civil society especially under socially responsible capitalism (Keynesianism) to be complementary to the state particularly in redressing inequalities created by market forces.

From the foregoing, these NGOs in Africa have, in the words of Howell and Pearce (2001, p. 67) both exonerated and protected the market. Besides the obviously valorized conception of civil society as do-gooders, I contend that civil society in the African continent has not only abetted the expansion of the frontiers of neoliberalism (Bond 2007), but also led to consolidation or the emergence of a counter-neoliberal type of civil society.

Kenya and South Africa: Political Economy and Civil Society

This section attempts to identify the similarities and differences in the nature of politics and the economy of Kenya and South Africa over time, against the background of formations of civil society in each case. Further, it attempts to answer the question: what conclusions can be drawn from their convergences and divergences? In the table below, I map out the typology of the politics, economics, and the subsequent characteristics of associational life (read as civil society) in the two countries since the precolonial era (Table 14.1).

From this table, we discern both similarities and differences between the nature of politics, economy, and civil society in the two countries. Essentially, both Kenya and South Africa were settler colonies and the nature of their politics, economy, and civil society had, as Mamdani (1996) argues, an observable racial dualism of two separate developments promoted through a policy of institutional segregation. On the one hand was a powerful colonial state with mainly whites (enjoying political and legal rights) and a few Africans as *citizens*. The state's role was to facilitate economic exploitation and surplus appropriation in agricultural and mining sectors, respectively, in the interest of the white settlers and their mother countries. On the other hand were separate *native* communities with underprivileged *subjects* of colonized people who included mainly rural-based African peasants. This duality determined the nature of social contentions that emerged. Principally, it divided African protest against European domination into urban or rural movements. These dichotomies between the urban and the rural remain a feature of modern day Kenya and South Africa.

Table 14.1 Typology of politics, economics and characteristics of associational life in Kenya and South Africa

Period	Country	Characteristics of politics	Characteristics of the Economy	Civil Society characterizations
Pre-colonial	Kenya	Traditional leadership	Subsistence	Ethnic affinity, informality, etc.
	South Africa	Traditional leadership	Subsistence	Ethnic affinity, informality, etc.
Colonial	Kenya	Repression of indigenous groups, divide and rule, settler led government	Agricultural extraction, settler economy	Urbanising formalisms, religions, labour unionism, violent anti-colonial struggles etc.
	South Africa	Repression of indigenous groups, divide and rule, settler led government, Anglo-Boer rivalries	Mineral extraction, settler economy	Religious, anti-colonial
Post-colonial I/Apartheid	Kenya	De-facto and de jure single party state	Developmental state, import substitution, export led growth	State capture and constraint, ethnic affinity, informality, NGO-ism, ethnic affinity and factionalism, labour aristocracy, etc.
	South Africa	De-facto single party state, repression of indigenous groups	Sanctions, self-sufficiencies	Civics, labour unionism, Bantustanism, ethnic/racial affinity, informality, transnationalism, violent anti-apartheid struggles, etc.
Post-colonial II/Post-Apartheid	Kenya	Multi-party-ism	Washington Consensus, significant informal sector	NGO-ism, transnationalism, Ethnic affinity and elite factionalism, labour aristocracy, counter-hegemonic movements, etc.
	South Africa	De facto single party constitutionalism	Global incorporation, Contested neo-liberalism, significant informal sector	Survivalist Service, NGO-ism, transnationalism, labour aristocracy, Counter-hegemonic etc.

The process of decolonization in the two countries involved both violence and negotiations. In the postliberation era, the similarities continue through the centrality of distributional issues and marginalization as key factors animating civil society. Second, there have been changes aimed at further entrenchment of exploitation and neoliberalism in both countries in the last two decades. This has tremendously affected the nature of the attendant civil society in the two countries.

Implications of Conceptual Contentions for Manifestations of African Civil Society

While acknowledging clashing contentions about the meaning and uses of civil society, I favor a Gramscian perspective because of its inherent dialecticism. Gramsci's conception of civil society as "sturdy structure . . . and powerful system of fortresses and earthworks" behind the state that serves as a stabilizing, conservative force and ensures popular consent to hegemonic forces (1971, p. 238), is persuasive because of the light it throws on how civil society is one of the mechanisms for exercising hegemonic control in society through subordination obtained by deliberate consent. Gramsci's view is further attractive for its postulation that domination and power can be challenged and transformed through a "war of position." From this, using a functionalist prism, contemporary associational life in Kenya and South Africa can be conceptualized as characterized by least three key forms of civil society, which are reflective of the interplay of the forces of the market and politics. The three forms of civil society are: (1) as part of historic bloc and are aided by the second type; (2) service provisioning type of civil society; and (3) a supposedly counter-hegemonic one.

African Civil Society As Part of the Historic Bloc

The first form of civil society is part of the "historic bloc" pushing for the increased penetration of the logic of the free self-regulating market. Specifically, this form of civil society coerces and orders social consent to certain ways of social economic organization—in this case the rule and logic of the market to all aspects of life through "coercive orthodoxy," or hegemonic co-optation of groups in civil society to ensure that:

> a certain way of life and thought is dominant, and is diffused throughout society to inform norms, values and tastes, political practices, and social relations (Sassoon 1982) . . . Elements of civil society are co-opted by the state and used to secure acquiescence of the dominated classes and identification with the hegemonic world-order. In this state of affairs civil society becomes part of an extended state, utilized by the ruling class to form and maintain its hegemony . . . the ruling class assimilates ideas that it sees as potentially dangerous, and thus creates cultural and political consensus (Cox 1993). It becomes an instrument of passive revolution, through which hegemonic forces allow limited (and to an extent, false) freedom of self-expression for the dominated groups, thereby maintaining the continued consent to the current relations of force (Katz 2006, p. 335).

In this regard, the role of trade union formations like the Congress of the South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and its many affiliates in South Africa, and the Central Organization of the Trade Unions (COTU) in Kenya in engineering consent to neoliberal forces among the working class has been poignant. On the surface, these trade unions appear to be in constant conflict with private capital and market. Yet, their politics have been hardly transformative. Rather, the leadership of labor unions has collaborated with political power elites (through, for example, the tripartite alliance in South Africa—made up of COSATU, the African National Congress (ANC), and the South African Communist Party—or the co-optation of COTU by KANU (Kenya African National Party) in Kenya in the 1980s) as well as with capital to stem any transformative forces. This is done through calculated tripartite wage bargaining processes in both countries as well as guarantees of the rights of workers to partake in protected strike actions. This has a cathartic effect on workers who recently have openly been disdainful of the aristocratic labor leadership. Understanding how the real mechanics of hegemony is maintained in this case, we look at the role played by the second subtype of the civil society that abets neoliberalism.

Civil Society As Service Provider

The second subtype of civil society organizations are involved in service provisioning. Similar to many other countries, the number of this type of CSOs have grown tremendously in the last two decades in these two countries. While these may appear neutral, they subtly serve an important ideological function of absorbing the toxic wastes of dominant market forces and in effect "aids those who feel the negative effects of the market systems while removing the potentially explosive needs or issues from the arena of industrial conflict" (Cohen and Arato 1995, p. 11).

Service provisioning NGOs "alleviating some of the overt and harsh effects of capitalist market and thereby absolves that market of blame and aids the reproduction of capitalism" (Chweya 2004, p. 28). But the role of service provision type of civil society organizations has been framed in the language of civil society as serving the function of "reliev[ing] some of the financial burden on the state, reduc[ing] the dependency culture that state provision had inadvertently generated, and remov[ing] the profit element that characterizes the contracted privatized services" (Chweya 2004). Nonetheless, evidence for service provisioning forms of civil society aiding the development of neoliberalism is confirmed for instance from Kanyinga et al. (2007, p. 17) who, reflecting on the Kenyan case, note that "the growth of the [civil society] has resulted from the declining capacity of the state to provide basic services." While the authors do not link the increase in the numbers of NGOs to the ascendancy of neoliberalism, there is a curious coincidence in that the sheer explosion of NGOs, self-help groups such as women organizations and youth groups, etc. has coincided with the peak of neoliberal ascendancy.

As already noted, the monetary support to emergent forms of civil society organizations to carry out service provision was an important factor that encouraged the proliferation of nonprofit sector organizations in both Kenya and South Africa. This

Table 14.2 Trends in early childhood mortality rates in Kenya (1974–1994). (Source: Ikamari (2004, p. 10). Data compiled from the 1989 Kenya demographic and health surveys (1989, 1993, and 1999))

Period	Infant mortality rate	Child mortality rate	Under-five mortality rate
1974–1978	64.1	44.2	105.5
1979–1983	57.6	37.8	93.1
1984–1988	59.6	31.5	89.2
1989–1993	61.7	36.7	96.1
1994–1998	73.7	40.8	111.5

is similar to the case in many other parts of the world where a "global associational revolution" has been observed (Salamon and Anheier 1998). What are the roots of this "global associational revolution?" Courtesy of the neoliberal economic policies christened the Washington Consensus, the 1990s saw major structural changes in the management of the economy introduced as part of donor aid conditionality in many developing countries. These called for fiscal austerity in the redirection of public expenditure priorities toward activities offering both high economic returns and the potential to improve income distribution, tax reforms, financial and trade liberalization, and privatization of state-owned enterprises (Williamson 2000 cited in Dervis and Özer 2005, p. 90).

These policies however failed to inspire much economic and social well-being for the majority of the world's population. Like in many other developing countries, neoliberal economic policies in Kenya and South Africa led to cataclysmic social and economic problems. In Kenya, for instance, this crisis was characterized by collapse of the state's ability to deliver essential collective goods and an increase in inequality, which destroyed basic social solidarity. This crisis was further characterized by spiraling unemployment and massive labor layoffs. The infamous cost-sharing in social services led to a near total collapse of the public healthcare and education systems.

This increased the precariousness especially for those at the bottom of the socioeconomic pyramid. Indicators of socioeconomic well-being such as infant mortality and life expectancy started to deteriorate. Analysis from the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey data on infant and child mortality since 1970s shown in the table below reveals that infant, child, and under-five mortality rates that had declined in the 1960s and 1970s started worsening from late 1980s (Table 14.2).

According to Ikamari (2004, p. 9), this situation is attributable to a combination of factors, including:

> Increased poverty, *adverse effects of economic hardships and cost recovery programs associated with structural adjustment programs*, increased childhood malnutrition, decreased use of certain maternity care services, decline in the coverage of child immunisations, inability of the public health system to provide services, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) also aggravated an already spiraling debt problem and depleted foreign currency reserves for Kenya. An analysis by Were (2001) using a time series data for the period 1970–1995 shows that Kenya's external

debt climbed rapidly from US$ 477.5 million in 1970 to US$ 4,412.4 million in 1995. At the same time, the "debt-to-GDP ratio and debt-to-exports ratio, [rose] from an average of 38.5 % and 121.1 % for the 1970–1980 period to 89.2 % and 268.2 % for 1991–1999 period, respectively" (Were 2001, p. 1). This had a negative impact not only on economic growth but also on provision of social welfare services as substantial amounts of revenue went to servicing this debt.

The effects of SAPs were not limited to social services. As argued elsewhere (Mati 2013, p. 247), "physical infra- structural developments were frozen while existing ones decayed into a sorry state of disrepair. Moreover, falling international commodity prices" led to the collapse of many primary farmer producer cooperatives in rural Kenya (see, for example, Ombongi and Kanyinga 2001). In urban centers, multiple ghettoes sprang up. The emergence of service provision NGOs must therefore also be seen in light of the above. Some of these initiatives were survivalist. However, in their functions many did not necessarily question the very economic policy foundations that had deepened society's precariousness. However, that was not the only type of NGOs that emerged, because a different kind of civil society formations framed along protection of human rights also emerged. To majority of the social entrepreneurs of this category of civil society, theirs were radical initiatives meant to dislodge a dictatorial regime. But the same forces never found it worth to question the neoliberal economic policies that had confined a great majority of the Kenyan population into penury. Instead, the so-called human rights groups concentrated on the achievement of political rights while socioeconomic rights were constantly trampled upon.

South Africa achieved, in the eyes of some, a remarkable transition to multiracial democracy. However, this transition also came cojoined with a conversion of the ANC from a largely socialist liberation movement to a ruling party driven primarily by capitalist economic policy. It is not in doubt that the ANC came to power in 1994 under incredibly difficult circumstances of a conundrum characterized by a shrinking economy and a falling per capita income in one of the most unequal societies in the world. The Reconstruction and Development Strategy (RDP) adopted as the election manifesto for ANC in 1994 aimed at addressing poverty and the legacy of apartheid, develop human resource capacity, build the economy, and entrench democracy. However, soon after the election, the redistributive goals of the RDP were slowly eroded in favor of more market-driven policies that stressed macroeconomic stability, fiscal discipline, and promoting capital investment. This shift culminated in the adoption of the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) policy in 1996.

ANC tried to graft aspects of RDP developmental aspect to GEAR. However, as Marais (1998, p. 192) argues, this was a futile bid since "a social development program cannot be appended to (let alone integrated with) a macro-economic strategy characterized by privatization, deregulation, fiscal austerity, trade liberalization . . . " In the end, because ANC was never keen to make any macroeconomic mistakes, their approach was based on reorientation of the existing resources other than seeking more resources through either domestic or international borrowing or hiking taxes. The GEAR policies have resulted in the maintenance of the status quo or in some cases these policies have exacerbated inequality (Roberts 2005; Hemson and Awusu-Ampomah 2005). These factors ensure a vibrant civil society on the one hand, dealing

with service provision and on the other hand, contesting the neoliberal economic policies in South Africa.

Civil Society As a Counter-Hegemonic Formation

The socioeconomic crisis engineered by neoliberal economic policies also led to reduced budget support and, by extension, dwindling state resources and inability to buy patronage and crash dissent. This made the state vulnerable to popular protests. Such protests have been not only against the political elite, but also against multinational corporations. In Kenya, popular protests by workers, students, and various social movements and some civil society organizations questioned neoliberalism while advocating for a greater role for the state in the provision of social services (Kanyinga et al. 2007; Chweya 2004). For its part, South Africa has been caught up in so-called "service delivery protests" which have had a distinctly violent character. For instance, there has been an average of 8,000 riotous collective action gatherings incidents per year since year 2005 (Bond 2010, p. 1 as cited in Mottiar and Fowler 2012). In addition, there have been multiple social movements aimed at resisting one or more forms of increased penetration of the market in the South African society.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the proliferation of different types of CSOs whose primary mission has been service delivery or protests against existing socioeconomic order over the last few years in both countries is not an accident of history. The tables 14.3 and 14.4 below, extracted from studies done under the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project while not using identical variables, do offer insights into the growth of civil society organizations in both countries (Tables 14.3 and 14.4).

On average, the percentage increase in number of CSOs in Kenya between 1997 and 2005 was 307 %. The key question is: what does this increase tell us about the state's ability to provide services to its people in the face of the onslaught of neoliberalism? Kanyinga et al. (2007), while not making a connection between this increase and the impact of neoliberalism, point to basic societal needs that the state is increasingly unable to meet:

Table 14.3 Number of nonprofit organisations in Kenya. (Source: Kanyinga et al. (2007). Note in the original: sourced from administrative records of various government agencies/departments excluding 2000 and 2001 whose records were incomplete)

	1997	1998	1999	2002	2003	2004	2005	% increase
Self-help groups	16,208	17,805	18,651	46,288	91,139	157,458	185,722	1,145
Women Groups	85,205	97,317	107,080	122,441	127,951	133,135	135,294	159
Youth Groups	3,426	3,765	4,283	5,538	9,978	10,945	11,083	323
Cooperatives	7,500	8,669	9,151	9,928	10,204	10,546	10,867	9,151
NGOs	836	831	1,254	2,280	2,789	3,185	4,099	490
Foundations/ Trusts	17	17	18	231	212	231	223	1,311
Unions	67	68	70	89	93	96	99	147
Total	*113,259*	*128,472*	*140,507*	*186,795*	*172,375*	*315,595*	*347,387*	*307*

Table 14.4 Period in which nonprofit organizations were established by sector (weighted). (Source: Swilling and Russell 2002, p. 2)

	Don't know	Pre-1976	1976–1993	Post 1994
Culture and recreation	624	5,182	4,936	9,845
Education and research	0	142	1,901	3,648
Health	598	2,401	1,288	2,212
Social services	328	6024	8,350	8,038
Environment	899	699	1,090	702
Development and housing	459	2,139	7,784	9,995
Advocacy and politics	243	1,478	1,913	3,154
Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion	0	47	258	0
International	0	0	0	192
Religion	1892	2,793	4,798	2,222
Business and professional association, unions	0	88	2,053	1,371
Total	*5043*	*20,993*	*34,371*	*41,379*

> Generally, an explanation for the growth in the non-profit sector could be approached from a historical as well as from conceptual point of view. From a historical point of view . . . [through] African tradition of communalism . . . people helped one another at times of need [as well as acting] collectively in addressing societal problems . . . These values continue to inspire volunteerism in Kenya. . . . the growth of NPOs is also attributable to the declining capacity of the state to deliver services. There has been a decline in the ability of the state to mobilize, direct, and control the development agenda and the corresponding renewal in the private sector as the primary engine of development; the rise of interest in civil society as a vital sector in the life of the state and society; the tremendous expansion of the purview of the work of civil society (especially NGOs) in the South; and the increased interaction between NGOs and market actors in areas such as corporate social responsibility. Theoretically, it is suggestive that the liberal social-contract theory contemplates the evolution of organisations and partnerships (such as between governments and the non-profit sector) in the ever changing institutional structure of free societies as new and changing institutions seek to advance their distinct and separate purposes. (Kanyinga et al. 2007, p. 17)

A similar scenario has been recorded in South Africa as shown in table 14.4 above, which demonstrates the increase in the absolute numbers of CSOs, especially after 1994.

Swilling and Russell (2002) explain that by 1999, nonprofit organizations had been in existence for an average of 19 years. While religious organizations and health organizations had been in existence for an average of 38 and 31 years, respectively, it is telling that the newest forms of nonprofit organizations were education and research (an average of 8 years), development and housing (an average of 10 years), and trade unions (10 years). However, even more instructive is the number of CSOs formed post-1994, all responding to particular needs in society. This shows an increase of the latter types of CSOs due to increased penetration of market forces and the ensuing widening of the social service deficit.

Specifically, most of the CSOs serve two primary purposes: ensuring that society is ordered on free-market logic, or opposing the same. However, most service organizations serve a stabilizing and pacifying role by ensuring that they render the state

irresponsible in the provision of services, or acting as subcontractors for the state. Moreover, contrary to the notion of South African exceptionalism from the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, and despite dissimilar levels of economic development, both Kenya and South Africa have similar economic histories and experiences, i.e., capitalist mode of economic organization and separate developments for different races during colonialism and the apartheid era. The parallels have continued in the era of political liberalization. This has happened, according to Bates (1999, p. 83), because the "new regime left the former repressors in possession of a political hostage: the private economy." Bates argues that this is a necessary condition for stability post transition because "when tyrannies collapse, the subsequent political transition can result in renewed authoritarianism." This is because,

> Even at the end of the political struggle, a retreating despot can threaten to bequeath political chaos and physical destruction, rather than a peaceful and prosperous common wealth. Lacking the legitimacy to govern, he may still possess the power to destroy. This power renders the period of transition a seedtime for liberty, for it is a time when even the tyrant seeks the legal restraints, political guarantees, and fundamental rights, and when the insurgents are motivated to provide them to secure a peaceful political surrender. (Bates 1999, pp. 83–84)

This is demonstrated in the Kenyan case by the protracted Lancaster House negotiations from 1960 to 1963. The departing colonial government ensured that their rights to land would remain unchallenged and the independence constitution said as much. Moreover, the departing colonial elite went into great depth to ensure that no real transformation in the independent especially on land occurred. To ensure this, a member of the colonial cabinet, Bruce Mackenzie, was retained as the Minister for Agriculture and in-charge of land in the postindependence government. This ensured that Kenya stuck to the production relations under globalized capitalism with its economy being mostly agricultural, that continued producing primary agricultural goods for the core (Britain and other developed economies) without any added value in form of industrialization. The same level of an elusive economic stability has ensued in South Africa. Indeed, the protracted constitutional negotiations are a pointer to this. Nonetheless, this has resulted in frustration due to the failure of democracy to deliver a better life for a majority of South African. The resulting democracy, while stabilizing in the immediate posttransition periods has also bred further sources of contention. Definitely, the ideological incongruences of the GEAR macroeconomic policy has not helped matters. The net result of the general feeling of betrayed dreams for millions of the poor has therefore been the great cocktail of violent protests and social movements in the last decade in South Africa. These coexist with service delivery CSOs, most of whom adopt an apolitical stance to issues of social justice.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that contemporary civil society formations in Kenya and South Africa are reflective of two broad forces in society. While the first force aims at embedding neoliberalism, the other opposes it. As such, the nature of existing civil

society either serves as a stabilizing hegemonic status quo, or pushes for transformation and expresses dissatisfaction through recurrent episodes of a rebellion against longstanding social, economic, and political marginalization. This has been happening in an environment of states' irresponsibility or inability to meet basic needs of its citizens because of the dictates of the neoliberal economic order that has motivated further deprivations and a "crisis of distribution." These conditions have left the greater majority of masses of citizens out of any economic gains. Under these circumstances, collective action associations offer a way to challenge economic and political power while others organize to provide basic services.

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Chapter 15
Africa Rising? Afro-Optimism and Uncivil Society in an Era of Economic Volatility

Patrick Bond

Reading the business press, one would not know that Africa is losing an estimated 6 % of its wealth each year, thanks to the "Resource Curse". You would be forgiven for having the opposite impression when reading most reports from those with pro-globalization, export-oriented, petro-minerals-centric economic ideologies. Most multilateral financial institutions celebrate Africa's national economies as among the world's leading cases of post-meltdown economic "recovery". Yet, the neoliberal position neglects several features that have made Africa's supposedly resilient economies far more vulnerable to both global and local economic and environmental crises. These include excessive financial and trade integration into a volatile world economy, resource-extraction costs, the "ecological debt", (as well as other nonremunerated value transfers) and climate change damage, as well as the internal features of economies suffering from the "Resource Curse" and processes of extreme uneven and combined development.

Africa's exploitative trade, finance, investment, and labor-migration relations within crisis-ridden world capitalism have somewhat evolved in recent years. From the early 2000s, ongoing resource extraction by Western firms was joined, and in some cases overtaken, by China. The phenomenon of "land grabbing" combined with larger-scale development of biofuels and genetic modification, while domestic financial liberalization generated not only rising credit access but also over-indebtedness. Still, Africa's subordinate position in the international economic order did not change.

As for progressive social resistance, it is telling that a Polanyian double-movement emerged in the civil (and often uncivil) society, especially beginning in 2011. This was true not only in North Africa (where socio-economic grievances are central to the revolts in even the (neo-liberally) best-performing of African countries) and Tunisia but also in sub-Saharan Africa, where after years of ineffectual "International Monetary Fund (IMF) riots," growing unrest is having a surprisingly powerful effect in crucial sectors and geographical spaces from Senegal in the west to Uganda in

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the center and to Swaziland in the south. South Africa's 2012 revolts, including the Marikana massacre, deserve special attention in this respect. However, first, we consider the core problems within a crisis-ridden world capitalism, one in which African vulnerability has become a crucial feature.

World Capitalist Crisis

In *Looting Africa* (Bond 2006), I set out a full argument about how the world crisis has unfolded over the past four decades and how Africa's vulnerability has worsened. To summarize and update these concerns, it is first useful to go back to 1971 when the post-World War II Bretton Woods system broke down. This was the beginning of a general rise in financial and monetary instability. A series of speculative bubbles and panics ensued, reflecting uncontrolled financial turbulence. To some extent, these were offset or displaced by bailouts, but they generally destroyed more than 15 % of the value of the financial assets at stake within a short period of time: The dollar crash (1970s), gold and silver turbulence (1970–1980s), Third World debt crisis (1980s), US farmland collapse (1980s), energy finance shocks (mid-1980s), crashes of international stock (1987) and property (1991–1993) markets, the long fall (from 1973–2002) in non-petroleum commodity prices and related securities, and after the dot.com crash of 2000–2001, vast new devaluations of real estate, commodities, financial institutions, and exposed sovereign securities in Europe (2007–2013). Other examples of investment gambles gone sour include derivatives speculation, exotic stock market positions and bad bets on currency, commodity and interest rate options, and futures and swaps, with specific victims covering enormous losses. Emerging markets offered spectacular examples of financial panic, including Mexico (1995), South Africa (1996, 1998, and 2001), Southeast Asia (1997–1998), South Korea (1998), Russia (1998), Brazil and Ecuador (early 1999), Argentina (2001–2002), and Turkey (2001–2003). Trouble moved north, as far as Iceland (2008), Ireland (2009), Greece (2010), Portugal (2011), and Spain (2011). In 2012, more "Quantitative Easing" (money printing) and commitments to bailing out the lenders to southern Europe were announced by the US Federal Reserve, the European Central Bank and the Bank of England.

Powerful underlying forces associated with capitalist crisis tendencies are the main reason for such extreme turbulence. Stagnation characterized the real sector, and the world's per-capita annual gross domestic product (GDP) increase fell from 3.6 % during the 1960s, to 2.1 % during the 1970s, to 1.3 % during the 1980s, and to 1.1 % during the 1990s, followed by a rise to 2.5 % for the first half of the 2000s, followed by a crash in absolute terms at the end of the 2000s. To be sure, the character of goods measured over time has changed (high-technology products enjoyed today were not available in the last century). But, the overall story of "overaccumulated capital" generating stagnation, uneven development, financialization, and ultimately, unprecedented crises remain easy to retell. A few more details about the process provide us with more empirical evidence of global economic chaos.

Many debates about the crisis have focused on what is mainly a symptom: Declines in the corporate rate of profit during the 1970s to 1990s, emanated from the United States. At first glance, the after-tax US corporate profit rate appeared to recover from 1984, nearly reaching the 1960s to 1970s highs (although it must be said that the tax rates were much lower in the recent period). On other hand, interest payments remained at record high levels throughout the 1980s to 1990s. By subtracting the real (inflation-adjusted) interest expenses, we have a better sense of the net revenue available to the firm for future investment and accumulation, which remained far lower than that in the earlier periods. US corporations responded to declining manufacturing-sector accumulation in telling ways. Manufacturing revenues were responsible for roughly half of the total (before-tax) corporate profits during the quarter-century post-war "Golden Age," but fell to below 20 % by the early 2000s. In contrast, profits were soon much stronger in the financial sector (rising from the 10–20 % range during the 1950s to 1960s to above 30 % by 2000) and in corporations' global operations (rising from 4–8 % to above 20 % by 2000). Since the 1979 "Volcker Shock" (dramatic interest rate increases imposed by Paul Volcker) changed the interest/profit calculus, there have been more revenues accruing to capital-based in finance than in the non-financial sector, to the extent that financiers doubled their asset base in relation to non-financiers during the 1980s to 1990s.

Similar trends continued into the 2000s, with low investment rates (especially after the dot.com software bubble burst), high debt loads and even bankruptcy threats to what were once some of the United States's most powerful auto companies. Hence, the restoration of profits for capital in general, disguised the difficulty of extraction of surplus value, leaving most accumulation hollow, based increasingly upon financial and commercial activity rather than production. Although the productivity increased and the wage levels fell, profitability was mainly found outside the production process, especially in finance. Nevertheless, with much lower interest rates, low inflation and relatively low unemployment, resulting in a steady GDP, a rising stock market and a recovery from earlier outbreaks of currency volatility,it appeared to many investors that the US economy could continue along this trajectory.

This naiveté changed gradually from 2007, with the peaking of the real estate speculation, and then evaporated immediately in September 2008 as the world economy began what initially appeared to be an even worse decline than in 1929–1930, in terms of decline in industrial output, trade and stock market valuation. Commodity prices crashed by record amounts, and the world GDP, industrial production and Foreign Direct Investment levels plummeted. The extreme economic devalorization and financial panic required several major interventions: Very rapid increases in government debt, dramatic declines in interest rates and a vast inflow of new liquidity from the US Federal Reserve, which raised global money supply after a break associated with the 2008 crash. This was soon followed by similar measures in Europe and the 2009 International Monetary Fund issuance of new Special Drawing Rights to boost world liquidity.

While I address the volatility associated with the ongoing financial processes and minimalist intrastate regulation later, for now, David Harvey's (1982) analyses of spatio-temporal "fixes" (not resolutions) and of systems of "accumulation by

dispossession" are appealing as theoretical tools. They help explain why economic crisis does not automatically generate the sorts of payments-system breakdowns and mass unemployment problems witnessed on the main previous conjuncture of overaccumulation, the Great Depression. Several obvious variables—the rise in US debt in comparison with the production of goods in the US economy, the rise of financial sector debt (in relation to other sectors), and the rise of profits attributable to financial (not productive) activity, underinvestment and rising inventories—were all quite extreme during the 2000s.

Is there a framework that explains these events? Based on Harvey's broader theory of historical geographical materialism, four core arguments emerge about the way financial volatility relates to social power and global macroeconomic management:

- First, the durable late twentieth century condition of overaccumulation of capital—as witnessed in huge gluts in many markets, declining increases in per capita GDP growth, and falling corporate profit rates—was displaced and mitigated ("shifted and stalled" geographically and temporally) at the cost of much more severe tensions and potential market volatility in months and years ahead;
- second, the temporary dampening of crisis conditions through increased credit and financial market activity has resulted in the expansion of "fictitious capital"—especially in the real estate sector and other speculative markets based upon trading paper representations of capital ("derivatives")—far beyond the ability of production to meet the paper values;
- third, geographical shifts in production and finance continue to generate economic volatility and regional geopolitical tensions, contributing to unevenness in currencies and markets as well as pressure to "combine" the market and non-market spheres of society and nature in search of restored profitability; and
- fourth, capital uses power associated with the two stalling and shifting (temporal and spatial displacement) tools above to draw additional surpluses from the non-market spheres (environmental commons, women's unpaid labor, indigenous economies), via extra-economic kinds of coercions, ranging from biopiracy and privatization to deepened reliance on unpaid women's labor for household reproduction in an ever-expanding process of long-distance labor migrancy.

The foregoing gives a better sense of why the international financial architecture is on the verge of collapse and explains why national economies have been wrecked because of their excessive reliance upon international financial flows. In this global context, it is even more critical to be skeptical about the "Africa Rising" argument that was especially ascendant in 2011–2012.

Unpacking the African "Recovery"

Either:

> Africa owes its takeoff to a variety of accelerators, nearly all of them external and occurring in the past 10 years:

- billions of dollars in aid, especially to fight HIV/AIDS and malaria;
- tens of billions of dollars in foreign-debt cancellations;
- a concurrent interest in Africa's natural resources, led by China; and
- the rapid spread of mobile phones, from a few million in 2000 to more than 750 million today.

Business increasingly dominates foreign interest in Africa. Investment first outpaced aid in 2006 and now doubles it.

Or:

Africa owes its economic decline (running at more than 6 % of gross income per year once nonrenewable resource depletion is considered) to a variety of accelerators, nearly all of them external and occurring in the past centuries during which slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism locked in the continent's underdevelopment, but several of which—along with climate change—were amplified in recent years:

- stagnant overseas development aid (Elliott 2012)—around 60 % "phantom" (ActionAid 2006), anyhow—to most African countries, except to 14 "fragile states" [IMF 2009b]), with Washington leading further cuts in funding to fight HIV/AIDS and malaria (Shaw 2012);
- tens of billions of dollars in foreign debt cancellation (of what was mainly unrepayable "Odious" loans to dictators [CADTM 2008]) in 2005 yet at the same time a squeeze on low-income African finance ministries that immediately afterwards caused a dramatic rise in debt repayments (from 5–8 % of export earnings [IMF 2009b]);
- a concurrent looting of Africa's natural resources, led by China and the West, resulting in dramatic recent falls in mineral and petroleum wealth (when calculated as "Adjusted Net Saving" to incorporate resource-stripping); and
- the rapid spread of mobile phones, which because of high costs and low internet connectivity, has done very little to solve the digital divide (Calandro et al. 2010).

Banking increasingly dominates foreign interest in Africa, as elite disinvestment into Western and Eastern financial markets continues to outpace aid and investment, amounting to an estimated $1.4 trillion in capital flight from the continent—both sub-Saharan and North ends—from 1970–2010 (Ndikumana and Boyce 2012a, b).

The first paragraph is from *Time* magazine's Africa correspondent Alex Perry (2012), writing the cover story for the first week of December 2012. The same sentiments were expressed in a report by the Washington-based International Institute of Finance (2012); the *African Economic Outlook 2011* from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, United Nations Development Programme and African Development Bank (2011); the World Economic Forum's (2011) *Global Competitiveness Report*; the African Development Bank's (2011) discovery of a vast new middle class; the International Monetary Fund's (2011a) *Regional Economic Outlook*; the World Bank's (2011a) Africa strategy; and IMF (2011b) research on African growth.

None of these Afro-optimist statements reveal that the continent is actually losing a net 6 % of the gross national income each year, thanks to the Resource Curse writ large (measured as "adjusted net savings", for example, as in Fig. 15.1). Recent recalibrations of the GDP measure raw materials stripped from Africa's soil not just as once-off credits to GDP but also as debits; the decline in "natural capital" that occurs *because the minerals and petroleum are non-renewable* and lost forever.

Even the World Bank's (2011b) book titled *The Changing Wealth of Nations*—from where the 6 % figure is derived—is rather conservative in calculating

Fig. 15.1 Adjusted net saving in sub-Saharan Africa as a percentage of income. (Source: World Bank 2011b, p. 11)
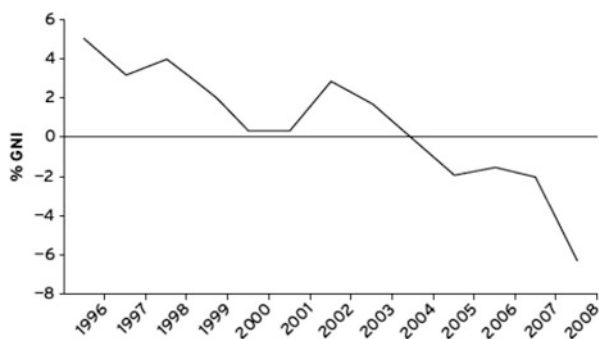
non-renewable resource depletion, leaving out several important minerals and also neglecting the tax fraud and transfer pricing associated with transnational capital. These problems are documented by Khadija Sharife (2011) in *Tax Us If You Can* and by Leonce Ndikumana and James Boyce (2011, 2012a, b) in various studies that deserve much more attention, e.g., their recent book on *Africa's Odious Debts* had updated 1970–2010 estimates of flight capital from Africa.

According to the *Changing Wealth of Nations*, the wealth of resource-based countries Canada and Australia soared during this period, because their extraction is largely done by home-grown companies that reinvest and return profits to local shareholders. Most of the extractive corporations operating in Africa send profits to London, New York, Melbourne, Paris, Toronto, Rio de Janeiro, Shanghai, or Beijing, with Johannesburg representing a "branch plant" halfway house (no longer the site of accumulation for the South African mining capital). The world's largest mining and metals house, BHP Billiton, is actively disinvesting and Africa's largest company, Anglo American, is continuing its shift of investment outside South Africa. In summary, a much different kind of Resource Curse than that typically argued by mainstream economists is at work. The drain of natural resources—especially, non-renewable minerals and petroleum—leaves Africa in a net *negative* "genuine savings" position, as the World Bank's (2011b) research confirms.

From 2001, the problem of declining adjusted savings in South Africa—and hence the continent, given the vast weight of formerly Johannesburg-based corporations—has become even more acute, thanks to the delisting of the largest firms from the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (Bond 2005). This process hastened not only the outflow of mineral wealth but also the profits and dividends that in earlier years would have been retained in South Africa. But in most Afro-optimist reports, information about the role of these firms in causing the African Resource Curse is scarce (although to his credit, Perry does cite the obvious Marikana massacre as indicative of the South African crony capitalism). Such authors and their institutions are informed by export-oriented, petro-minerals-centric, finance-driven ideologies, and *Time* is no exception (perhaps for advertising-related reasons). The more likely scenario is that Africans will continue to be big losers of the BRICS's sub-imperialist carve-up of the continent's land, minerals, and hydrocarbons, and if that is the case, BRICS

summits (such as Durban in March 2013) will increasingly resemble, economically, the political deals performed in Berlin in 1885.

Under these circumstances, are we entering an "African century"? How can we be if Africa is the continent that will suffer most from climate change? In November 2012, even the World Bank (2012) president, Jim Yong Kim, expressed concern about a 4° temperature rise, "which is what scientists are nearly unanimously predicting by the end of the century, without serious policy changes." Already 400,000 people die from climate change each year (Daily Beast 2012), and the Christian Aid (2006) estimates that 185 million Africans will perish from climate change-related causes this century. As the Doha COP18 and Durban COP17 and every other climate gathering shows, those with power, from Washington and Brussels to Beijing and Pretoria, are increasingly aware, but, judging by their negotiation strategies, they do not really care.

The Complexities of "Recovery"

Africa's alleged recovery is quite complex. As the world crisis unfolded in 2009, for example, the continent's largest economy, South Africa, was recorded by *The Economist* magazine (26 February 2009) as the riskiest among the world's 17 main emerging markets, largely due to its current account deficit. That deficit had soared after 2001, thanks to capital flight by most of the largest companies formerly listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). At that stage, in order to pay its overseas liabilities (especially profit and dividend outflows) as well as host the 2010 Soccer World Cup, South Africa's foreign debt increased by around a quarter to US$ 115 billion by early 2012—having begun at just US$ 25 billion in 1994 when Nelson Mandela became the president. Other African countries with dangerously high-debt ratios were Ghana, Mauritius, and Senegal). The South African economy witnessed more than a million net job losses in 2009–2010, plus worsening inequality, leaving it with the highest Gini coefficient among major countries, even worse than Brazil, in the wake of six currency crashes since 1994 and extreme stock market volatility (Ashman et al. 2010, Maharaj et al. 2011).

Yet, with minor exceptions (the promise of a national health insurance), there were no substantive changes in the developmental or macroeconomic policy, not even with the potential that president Jacob Zuma would lean more toward the labor and even the Communist influence. Elsewhere in Africa, uneven development caused by adherence to the Washington Consensus in other smaller but higher-growth, resource-cursed economies, such as Equatorial Guinea (Appel 2011), were even more extreme.

Global pressures on Africa continued unabated, especially with Chinese and Indian capital locking in the West's ruinous extractive strategies and authoritarian resource curse politics. In spite of the rhetoric about a Keynesian turn in October 2008 under Dominique Strauss-Kahn's leadership, the reaction of the IMF staff to the crisis in Africa was a reversion to the Washington Consensus dogma. Of the 22 IMF programs on the continent underway in October 2009, according to the Center

for Economic and Policy Research (Weisbrot et al. 2009), 17 programs were contractionary orders and only five programs were expansionary. Even the wealthiest African economy, South Africa, had been advised in September 2008 to intensify its neoliberal bias (Bond 2008), although, in September 2009, the Keynesian messages were finally delivered and the IMF's (2009a) Article IV Consultation endorsed a somewhat more relaxed fiscal and monetary stance.

By that time, Africa's state deficits were exploding because a very slight spending increase was conjoined with a huge revenue drop as the commodity prices crashed, resulting in a dramatic switch from a positive fiscal balance (6 % of GDP) to a huge deficit (−6 %) between 2008 and 2009 (IMF 2009b). The crisis meant that the capital inflows shifted from an $ 80 billion inflow in 2007 to a $ 25 billion outflow of portfolio investments (mainly in the South African financial assets) and thus, a net decline in the total inflows. Although remittances held up, foreign direct investment fell back in 2009, leaving aid as the only rising financial inflow. However, even this was conditional, with most flowing to 14 "fragile states": Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR), Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo, and Zimbabwe.

Under the circumstances, most of Africa experienced a rising fiscal deficit and higher public debt. Most central banks imposed lower interest rates after 2009 than those that prevailed in 2007. Most banks let their money supply rise, in part to compensate for private credit contraction. A few countries went further: New exchange controls helped Tanzania, Rwanda, and Kenya fend off hostile financial forces. These classically Keynesian strategies also explain why Africa did not suffer as much as the other regions during the crisis, even if the IMF harried so many weaker debtors with austerity directives. Slightly relaxed macroeconomic strategies help explain, partially, why, in the wake of a huge commodities boom (2002–2008) and world-leading windfall profits for multinational extractive industries, a modicum of GDP growth was recorded in several African countries.

In reality, Africa's economic policies were indeed "imposed from Washington," for, according to John Weeks (2010, p. 8), "Over twenty years, 1990–2009, the governments of 46 sub-Saharan countries sought to manage their economies under IMF programs during almost half the country years (417 of 920)." Weeks concludes of the IMF and World Bank: "The two international financial institutions played a major if not decisive role in policy making for all but a few countries of the region." Only a few countries escaped Bretton Woods Institutions' direct tutelage for extended periods (although most countries had long bouts of home-grown neoliberalism), such as Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, The Gambia, Liberia, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe. For every other country, as Weeks (2010, p. 8) reports, "[t]here is little evidence, rigorous or circumstantial to believe that the 'reforms' of the 1980s and 1990s lay the basis for that [2000s economic] recovery." Instead, the essence of the recent GDP growth was the post-conflict peace dividend and the 2000s rise of commodity markets.

Seeking an understanding of Africa's economic plight thus requires much more serious inquiry than what the multilateral institutions, and their allies appear willing to consider. For example, a careful inspection of GDP clearly shows that the internal driver of growth in Africa during the 2000s, far outstripping exports, was "private consumption." One side-effect, given African deindustrialization of even basic consumer-durable industries, was the rise of import bills. But, it is instructive to examine why private consumption across Africa was, from 2004 to 2008, well over twice as large a component of GDP growth as exports. This was true in all oil exporters and middle- and low-income countries alike. Certainly, in the subsequent period, 2008–2010, African governments showed the ability to raise private consumption using three Keynesian countervailing measures: Budget deficits (so that falling tax revenues were not "pro-cyclically" amplified throughout the economy), lower interest rates, and expanded money supplies. In spite of their overall orientation to the Washington Consensus, the IMF staff was sufficiently worried about the depth of the world crisis in 2008–2009 in allowing large deficits, especially in regionally powerful countries such as South Africa.

Aside from state spending that trickled through to private consumption, one alleged reason for the private consumption boost should be addressed given that, in May 2011 it received international publicity: The vast new "African middle class." Allegedly, "one in three Africans is middle class" and, as a result, Africa is ready for "take-off", according to the African Development Bank chief economist, Mthuli Ncube, who defines middle class as those who spend between $ 2 and $ 20 per day, a group that includes a vast number of people considered extremely poor by any reasonable definition, given the higher prices of most consumer durables in African cities. Those spending between just $ 2 and 4 per day constitute a fifth of all sub-Saharan Africans. Even Ncube admits this, while the range from $ 4 to 20 per day amounts to 13 %, with 5 % spending more than $ 20 per day. Below the $ 2 per day level, 61 % of all Africans are mired in deep poverty (Smith 2011).

Neoliberal dogma asserts that the preferred route out of poverty is access to microfinance, which compels borrowers to become more productive so as to repay loans. However, just as in many advanced capitalist countries suffering huge debt overhangs, working-class producers and consumers have had significant problems in the microfinance movement's two largest markets, Bangladesh and India, leading, respectively, to the forced resignation of Grameen Bank's Muhammad Yunus, in part because of fraudulent claims of financial success as well as the suicides of more than 200,000 indebted small farmers in India (Bond 2011). The untenable rise of credit mechanisms in Africa, especially in South Africa where the default rates are at an all-time and very dangerous high, goes unremarked upon by the African Development Bank.

Indeed, South Africa's consumer debt crisis sheds light on African macroeconomic problems. One basis for rising debt by working-class and new middle-class consumers was the untenable rise in property prices, which soared by 389 % between 1997 and 2008 (the highest in the world, with the second highest bubble, Ireland, at less than 200 %). Wage levels had been outstripped by profits for most of the previous 17 years of post-apartheid neo-liberalism, leaving workers to rely upon higher

rates of consumer credit. By late 2010, the main state credit regulator, Gabriel Davel (2011), registered "impaired" status for 8.3 million South African borrowers, a rise from 6.1 million impaired borrowers in 2007. The role of over-indebtedness was central in the financial crisis experienced by workers at Lonmin's Marikana platinum mine in 2012, as observed in the latter sections.

Another major reason for the new Afro-optimism is increased cellular telephony access in many areas that were formerly off-grid for communications. The World Bank's (2011b) Africa policy paper argued that the "success of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), especially mobile phone penetration, shows how rapidly a sector can grow. It also shows how the public sector can set the conditions for the exponential growth of a vital industry that could transform the continent." The reality is less encouraging. Although Africa is better off with cell phones than it was without (say, 15 years ago), the actual performance of the industry reveals telling weaknesses. These include the role of multinational capital in absorbing profits and dividends, the lack of genuine competition (collusion is notorious even in the largest economy—South Africa), relatively high prices for cellphone handsets and services and limited technological linkages to Internet service. Researchers Enrico Calandro, Alison Gillwald, Mpho Moyo, and Christoph Stork (2010) have unveiled a host of ICT deficiencies, all underscoring the point that although "the mobile market has experienced significant growth, outcomes have been sub-optimal in many respects." For example, cellphone penetration "figures tend to mask the fact that millions of Africans still do not own their own means of communication." Moreover:

- Africa continues to lag behind other regions both in terms of the percentage of people with access to the full range of communications services and the amounts and manner in which they can be used—primarily as a result of the high cost of services;
- the cost of wholesale telecommunication services as an input for other economic activities remains high, escalating the cost of business in most countries;
- the contribution of ICT to gross domestic product, with some exceptions, is considerably less than the global averages;
- The national objectives of achieving universal and affordable access to the full range of communications services have been undermined either by poor policies … [or] by regressive taxes on usage as a general trend across the continent, while the voice divide is decreasing, the Internet divide is increasing and broadband is almost absent on the continent; and
- the fixed-line sector continues to show no signs of recovery as most countries experienced negative growth between 2006 and 2008 (Calandro et al. 2010).

Indeed, for nearly all of Africa, cellphone penetration rates "remain below the 40 % critical mass believed to trigger the network effects associated with economic growth" and, even in more mature markets (Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tunisia, and South Africa), "[t]he high 'penetration' figures result from the use of multiple-SIM cards, resulting in over-counting, often by several million" (Calandro et al. 2010). As for Africa's Internet use,

- Broadband uptake trails even other developing regions in the world, with a penetration rate below 2 %;
- low-penetration rates are mainly a result of the prohibitively high costs of Internet services;
- the landing of several undersea cables and a number of terrestrial fiber investment projects has led to a significant reduction in the costs of accessing the Internet. In some countries, the drop in wholesale prices has not, however, filtered to end-user prices; and
- digital literacy and the affordability of access devices like personal computers are expected to remain a challenge (Calandro et al. 2010).

Calandro et al. (2010) concluded that: "Large numbers of citizens across the continent still lack access to or cannot afford the kind of communication services that enable effective social and economic participation in a modern economy and society." In short, the Bretton Woods Institutions' visions of both microeconomic growth (dependent upon unsustainable consumer credit and uneven ICT productivity enhancements) and macroeconomic austerity are profoundly unjustified.

Civil Society Fights Back

The reproduction of Africa's exploitative trade, finance, investment, and labor-migration relations within crisis-ridden world capitalism has met with sustained resistance, especially in North Africa. Since the Washington Consensus narrative was unchanged in all important respects, contradictions grew more extreme. There was even awareness in Egypt's military, for example, that neoliberal reforms carried out by Mubarak were responsible for the revolts insofar as they compelled a core working-class constituency—independent trade unions—to view their struggles in political terms. This was conceded in May 2011 by no less a figure than Major General Mohammed al-Assar of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, who claimed:

> The military brass were deeply opposed to the privatization programme. That in turn eased their decision to side with the Egyptian public against the 30-year autocratic rule of Mubarak. Al-Assar told state television on Wednesday that the army has been against the "plans to sell Egypt" and viewed them as a threat to social peace. He said that Field Marshal Mohammed Tantawi, the council's president and minister of defence, had repeatedly raised objections to the privatisation programme, as shown in the minutes of several cabinet meetings he attended. His opinion was often overruled by Mubarak and other top officials who had favoured following economic prescriptions from Western countries. (Mekay 2011)

However, it is equally certain that the counter-revolutionary forces in Egypt, including the army leadership, would not be able to deliver the socio-economic progress demanded in Tahrir Square. They soon banned strikes and protests, and by late 2011, were repressing the renewed Tahrir Square protests. With class struggles breaking out as part of the process, Samir Amin (2011) celebrated the groundedness of the movements:

The workers' strikes in 2007 (the strongest strikes on the African continent in the past fifty years), the stubborn resistance of small farmers threatened with expropriation by agrarian capital, and the formation of democratic protest groups among the middle classes (like the "Kefaya" and "April 6" movements) foretold the inevitable explosion—expected by Egyptians but startling to "foreign observers" . . . Although the youth movement is diversified in its social composition and in its political and ideological expressions, it places itself as a whole "on the left". Its strong and spontaneous expressions of sympathy with the radical left testify to that.

In this context, it was not surprising that one webzine supporting the revolution, *GlobalFairNet* (2011), reported that in relation to the June 2011 IMF loan proposal (eventually agreed to in September 2012), "Egyptians were largely skeptical, with the deal receiving negative feedback from online citizens and activists." Indeed, as one small reflection of the potential for wider conscientizing, a Facebook group "No IMF Deal for Egypt" (2011) was started in early June, "dedicated to resisting attempts to hijack our new republic through imposing monetary, economic, or political regulations on Egypt via the IMF or any other lending institution." Perhaps the most acute observer of the potential for emancipation in Africa is Sokari Ekine (2011), who follows the continent's blogs at the weekly *Pambazuka News*. Her June 2011 review of developments in several countries is deeply revealing:

Uganda, Swaziland, Kenya, and Botswana actions are in response to concerns over food security, rising unemployment particularly amongst youth, political marginalisation, corruption of government officials and a pushback against the entrenched leadership of the circle of "rulers for life". Military dictators have been replaced by democracy dictatorships under militarised states.

In Kampala, Ekine (2011) wrote:

The government has blamed inflation on external factors out of their control, obviously believing Ugandans are so ill-informed as to not make the connection between the $740 million spent on fighter jets and tanks . . . Museveni who, in a show of militarism, chose to wear military fatigues during the recent swearing in of MPs, complained that his guests, President Kabila of the DRC and Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria, were pelted with stones by people.

In Nairobi, Ekine (2011) reported:

Grassroots movements such as Bunge La Mwananchi [The People's Parliament] and the 'Unga Revolution' [a collection of civil society groups including Bunge La Mwananchi] campaigning for economic and social rights have been formed in response to the rising cost of living and loss of social benefits.

In Manzini,

The Swazi pro-democracy uprisings which began on 12 April were met with beatings, teargas and hundreds of arrests. Many of the protesters were driven 100 miles into the country where they were dumped by the police. Student leader Maxwell Dlamini and Musa Ngubeni of the Swaziland Youth Congress were arrested, tortured and remain in detention.

In Gaborone,

Botswana, much revered in the west as 'Africa's success story,' public sector workers—transport, schools, clinics and government staff—began striking on 18 April. The ruling party has been in power for 45 years and people are calling for a change. The leader of the opposition, Duma Boko has called for an 'Egypt'-style uprising.

In Harare in February 2011, Robert Mugabe's forces arrested 45 attendees of an International Socialist Organization Zimbabwe meeting who were reviewing footage from Tahrir Square and Tunisia. In Dakar, Senegal's well-respected mass movements rose up in late June, burning down the country's national electricity building and tax authority and protesting at cabinet ministers' houses to force both a resolution of an energy crisis and a withdrawal of President Abdoulawaye Wade's proposed legislation that would have seen him extend his neoliberal political rule. That protest was successful, as was the January 2012 "Occupy Nigeria" protests against the doubling of the fuel price mandated by IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde. Millions of Nigerians took to the streets, and it became evident to President Goodluck Jonathan that he would have to concede on the socio-economic front or be ousted from power.

In addition to the movements to democratize societies, which are invariably drawn from and compel further struggles for socio-economic justice, innumerable micro-struggles continue. These include community campaigns to preserve natural resources and rethink the merits of extractive industries (especially minerals, fossil fuels, and river sources) in places like the Niger Delta, Zimbabwe's diamond fields, and South Africa's platinum and titanium belts. Others are national initiatives of labor and its allies to meet basic needs and balance local economies through domestic ("import-substitution") production, with South Africans being the most active.

South Africa's Marikana Massacre: "Moment" or "War of Movement"?

There are six basic facts about the confrontation at Marikana, 100 km northwest of Johannesburg, circa 4 p.m. on 16 August 2012:

- The provincial police department, backed by national special commando reinforcements, ordered several thousand striking platinum mineworkers—rock drill operators—off a hill where they had gathered as usual over the prior 4 days, surrounding the workers with barbed wire and firing teargas;
- the hill was more than a kilometer away from the Lonmin property, the mineworkers were not blocking mining operations or any other facility and, although they were on an "unprotected" wildcat strike, they had a constitutional right to gather;
- as they left the hill, 34 workers were killed and 78 others suffered bullet-wound injuries, all at the hands of police weapons, leaving some crippled for life, with about half shot dead while moving through a small gap in the fencing, and the others murdered in a field and on a smaller hill nearby, as they fled;
- no policemen were hurt in the operation—although it appears that a sole miner with a pistol fired the first shot—and some of the policemen attempted a clumsy cover-up by placing crude weapons next to the dead bodies of several men;
- Two hundred and seventy mine workers were arrested that day, followed by a weekend during which state prosecutors charged the men with the "murder" of

their colleagues (under an obscure apartheid-era "common purpose" doctrine of collective responsibility), followed by an embarrassed climb down by the national prosecutor after the society registered utter disgust; and

- there was no apparent effort by the police to discipline errant troops in the subsequent months, except when before-and-after photographs supplied by the police showed that weapons were planted on dead mineworker bodies, ostensibly to imply there was a threat, and indeed the police moved again and again to intimidate Marikana activists in the wake of the massacre, including murdering—with rubber bullets one Saturday morning—a popular local councilwoman (from the ruling party) who sided with the ANC.

The details about how the massacre unfolded were not initially obvious, because the mainstream media embedded behind police lines (unaware at the time of the "killing kopje") and official police statements together generated a "fog of war," as in the words of the former Intelligence Minister, Ronnie Kasrils (2012). It was only a few days later that observers—the September Imbizo Commission (2012), University of Johannesburg researcher Peter Alexander et al. (2012), and *Daily Maverick* reporter Greg Marinovich (2012)—uncovered the other shootings. Most journalists relied on official sources, especially the police and the National Prosecuting Authority.

Such media bias allowed the impression to emerge in conventional wisdom that police were "under violent attack" by irrational, drugged, and potentially murderous men from rural areas in the Eastern Cape's Pondoland, as well as from Lesotho and Mozambique, who used "muti" (traditional medicine) to ward off bullets. Plenty of press reports and even the South African Communist Party's (SACP) official statement referred to the workers' apparent pre-capitalist spiritual sensibilities—"a sangoma is today still able to convince sections of the working class that bullets turn into water if you have used "intelezi" "(Nzimande 2012)—to try to explain why they might charge toward the police, through the 5-m gap in the barbed wire, with their primitive spears and wooden sticks. It actually seems far more likely that as the first few dozen mineworkers came running through the gap and saw the police line-up, they then began edging alongside the fence, rather than moving directly at the heavily armed police (although it is apparent that one of the workers fired with a sole handgun). The police claim that six handguns were recovered from dead, wounded, and arrested mineworkers, but this was thrown into question by evidence of systematic postmassacre tampering at the scene of the crime.

Working conditions were the long-term cause of what happened at Marikana. The typical rock-drill operator's take-home pay was said to be in the range of $ 511 per month, with an additional $ 204/month as a "living out allowance" to spare Lonmin and other employers the cost of maintaining migrant-labor hostels. Most workers were from the Eastern Cape's Pondoland, Lesotho, and Mozambique; many therefore maintained two households, having families to support in both urban and rural settings. In spite of the structural changes in the mines that blurred the distinction between shop steward and foreman, hence drawing National Union of Mineworkers's (NUM) local leaders into a cozy corporatist arrangement with the mining houses, NUM and its competitor unions had organized the majority of labor on the vast platinum fields.

But, controlling the workers was another matter as South Africa's share of world platinum reserves is more than 80 %. The belt stretches in a distinct arc around the west side of the Johannesburg–Pretoria megalopolis of 10 million people, and up toward the Zimbabwe border. The area also has vast gold and coal deposits. Tens of thousands of workers who subsequently went on wildcat strikes in the Northwest, Limpopo, Free State, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, and Gauteng Provinces did not do so out of the blue. They began leaving NUM in droves from late 2011 because of its worsening reputation as a "sweetheart union" whose general secretary even recommended that 9,000 Lonmin workers be fired for not heeding back-to-work commands in 2011. The workers had participated in various forms of labor and community-based protests over the previous years, as the 350 % price increase for the metal during the 2002–2008 boom left the main companies—AngloPlats, Implats, and Lonmin—extremely prosperous, without evidence of trickle-down to the semi-proletarianised workforce.

Therefore, it was those 3,000 Lonmin rock drill operators who demanded a raise to $ 1,420/month as a basic gross "package"; they struck for over a month (3 weeks beyond the massacre) and ultimately received what was reported as a 22 % wage package increase, which in turn catalyzed prairie-fire wildcat strikes across the immediate mining region and then other parts of the country during September–November. But, like a vast proportion of ordinary South Africans, this was a time of extreme household indebtedness. It soon became clear that the Marikana workers were victims not only of exploitation at the point of production but also of exploitative debt relations in which, as Milford Bateman (2012) remarked, "We have perhaps just witnessed one of the most appalling microcredit-related disasters of all in South Africa." Financial desperation was compounded by legal abuse, carried out by the same race/gender/class power bloc—White male Afrikaners—who had been beneficiaries of the apartheid system (details are in Steyn 2012 and Derby 2012).

As a political–economic phenomenon, this was actually not unusual, for the move to liberalized economic relations in 1994 shifted the power system from one of direct coercion in the spheres of labor control (especially migrancy from Bantustans under apartheid-allied dictators) and socio-political power, to indirect coercion by finance and law. The formalized migrancy system and evolution of labor relations on these mines did not improve the socio-economic conditions of the workers, given the rising debt burden. By 2012, this left "anywhere between 10–15 % of South Africa's workforce with a garnishee order issued" to compel repayment (Malcolm Rees 2012).Wages as a share of the social surplus had fallen from 55.9 % in 1994 to 50.6 % by 2010, which in absolute terms translates to $ 17 billion. In addition, much greater inequality in wage income was also a factor, contributing to a rapid rise in the Gini coefficient over the same period. One reaction by the working class was to turn to rising consumer debt, to cover rising household consumption expenditures. Having risen rapidly to $ 4.96 billion in late 2007, the outstanding unsecured credit load registered with the national credit regulator had risen to $ 13.75 billion by March 2012 (Steyn 2012). This was a huge load because, according to Rees (2012), "*Moneyweb* reports indicate that at least 40 % of the monthly income of SA workers is being directed to the repayment of debt."

Given this pressure, even after the massacre, the Marikana workers refused to return to their rock-drilling jobs until they received a massive wage increase. Following the intervention of the South African Council of Churches (especially, the Anglican Bishop of Pretoria, Jo Seoka), the workers won a 22 % wage increase. This inspired other South African mineworkers who soon embarked upon wildcat strikes, leading in many cases to their own substantial above-inflation pay hikes. Similar militancy was soon evident in national trucking, the Durban auto sector, municipal labor, Western Cape farmworkers, and other sectors. It began to feel, in late 2012, like the fabled Gramscian shift from "War of Position" to "War of Movement."

Although historical comparisons are important, we must be careful not to overdetermine the lessons. In other words, if today's struggle is against what might be termed class apartheid, then the logical question is whether the resistance signified by Marikana is similar to the early 1960s, and whether there will be much more repression before a coherent opposition emerges? Or, will the contagion of protest from this and thousands of other micro-protests across the country start to coagulate, as in the 1976–1994 period, into a network similar to the United Democratic Front (implying an inevitable split in the ANC-Cosatu-SACP Alliance, led by genuine communists and progressive post-nationalist workers) and then the formation of Worker's Party to challenge ANC electoral dominance? Or, might something happen quite suddenly to rearrange power relations, as in 1992, and as we saw in Egypt in the wake of independent labor organizing against state-corporate-trade union arrangements in the years prior to the Tahrir Square mobilizations in early 2011?

One thing is clear: If the strike momentum continues to gather, and if the capital insists the state to put its foot down on the workers, aided by sweetheart unions, as the NUM is now known, things may come to a head sooner than later.

Conclusion

Given the extreme decline in the continent's measurable wealth, an entirely different understanding of Africa's integration in the world economy has become necessary. An ecological debt is owed to most African countries by those in the North, where economies have prospered through looting African resources or through using more than their fair share of carbon emissions space. To get to that point at which legitimate demands for redistributive justice can be made on Northern elites—perhaps backed up by placing cartels on raw material exports—two processes need to be joined.

First, there are small scale efforts to pay climate debt, although these are not usually described as such. The words "Loss and Damage" have become increasingly familiar since the late 2012 global climate negotiations, in part because Washington's negotiator Todd Stern continued the USA's refusal to accept liability. Still, a "Green Climate Fund" was set up by the US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, as a *quid pro quo* for the Copenhagen Accord fiasco in 2009, and while Washington is a consistently unreliable partner, the idea was to capitalize it sufficiently to transfer $ 100 billion from North to South each year. After the Durban climate summit in 2011, it was

already in trouble because of the failure to provide the needed cash and because the World Bank became an interim trustee. This is the sort of initiative that needs to be recaptured by those who are critical of the *status quo* such that financialization and carbon-trading revenue-raising tactics do not characterize the Green Climate Fund and that its payments do not go to Third World dictators who fail to pass along the proceeds to genuine climate change victims.

The second process is gaining control of natural resources, in part so as to attempt the "Leave the Oil in the Soil" strategies that the Ecuadoran government proposed to the Norwegian and German politicians starting in 2007, in the case of the Amazon jungle's Yasuni National Park. If an enlightened global-governance self-interest cannot generate systems like paying Ecuador $ 5 billion not to extract Yasuni oil (without being subject to offsets or carbon trading), then activists will have to work much harder so that the kind of looting of Africa discussed above finally comes to a halt. And, the first stage in that work is to convince the world that the alleged African recovery is a false narrative, one that obviously is required by multilateral financial institutions to keep Africa as poor as possible, by disguising extreme exploitation as "growth."

One of the few honest remarks from the Bretton Woods Institutions came from Strauss-Kahn in the weeks before his demise in mid-2011. Asked about African revolts, "Do you have any fears that there is perhaps a far left movement coming through these revolutions that want more, perhaps, closed economies?" he replied:

> Good question. Good question. There's always this risk, but I'm not sure it will materialize. Look, during the global financial crisis we went just through, at the beginning many were afraid of the possibility of an increase in protectionism. It didn't happen. Why? Because, I think, that most governments, maybe not all of them, but most governments and most people, man on the street, have understood that there was no good solution in this direction. I'm not saying that everybody agrees with this, but most had understood that the closed economy was not the way to benefit from global growth and certainly from investment. And we're in a globalized world, so there is no domestic solution. (International Monetary Fund 2011b)

But, it is only with "far left" movements in uncivil society seeking "domestic solutions" through control, first of their national economic sovereignty and then through continental connections—*as so many Latin American leftists have done so effectively*—that can we move from misleading promotional claims about African GDP "rising" to a genuine Afro-optimistic *up*rising, bottom-up and people powered. Until then, the global financial agencies' desperation for an African success story should be taken with a pinch of salt.

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Chapter 16
Civil Society and Neoliberalism

Usman A. Tar

Introduction

> Neoliberalism does not constitute a single coherent ideology. It constitutes a hotchpotch of economic and political diktats, which, in turn, have weakened the state in Africa as more and more of its functions are outsourced to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), creating "less order, less and less security" for the mass of the African people. (Zack-Williams and Mohan 2007, p. 417)

Few concepts have generated as much debate as the term "civil society", particularly in the era of post-Washington Consensus or "neoliberalism"—a period when civil society and free market have been rebranded, packaged and appropriated as politically correct formulae for "delegitimizing" the state and empowering the private sector. In Africa, the neoliberal paradigm emerged at a time of structural crises as African states were forced to adopt a clutch of socio-economic and political liberalisation programmes that only appear to have compounded the continent's (Africa's) development crisis.

In this chapter, the focus is on the neoliberal construction of civil society and its efficacy or otherwise in managing change in Africa. In the literature, most references are pertinent to a particular fraction of civil society: urban-based, voluntary civic associations that are a force par excellence for engaging the state in the interest of the people. Civil society in this regard is often understood as an amalgam of civic virtues and a universal tool for demonstrating and achieving democratic ideals. A key precursor of this ideal is Alexis de Tocqueville (1994a, b [1836]), who, in his writings on the nineteenth century post-colonial America, argued that a strong, vibrant and dense civil society—one capable both of confronting the state and of providing a site for associational democratic practice or internal democracy—was essential for building and consolidating democracy. Inspired by Tocqueville, other scholars have constructed civic associations as the key space or "front" that energises the citizenry in confronting the state. Thus, "a 'dense network of civic associations' is said to

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promote the stability and effectiveness of democratic polity through both the effects of association on citizens' 'habits of the hearts' and the ability of associations to mobilise citizens on behalf of public causes" (Foley and Edwards 1996, p. 38). Indeed, the tendency in much of the recent intellectual and policy debate has been to place civic associations as the centrepiece of democracy (e.g. Hall 1995). Emphasising the "voluntary" and "civic" orientation of civil society, Larry Diamond, for instance, views the agency of civil society as central to the global wave of democratisation:

> In this third wave of global democratisation, no phenomenon has more vividly captured the imagination of democratic scholars, observers, and activists alike than "civil society". What could be more moving than the stories of brave bands of students, writers, artists, pastors, teachers, labourers, and mothers challenging the duplicity, corruption and brutal domination of authoritarian states. (Diamond 1994, p. 4)

In the current neoliberal era, there is a persistent tendency, particularly in the neoliberal literature and policy, to equate civil society with puritan civic virtue (e.g. Putnam 1995; Carothers 2000; Chambers and Kopstein 2001). This tendency has been countered by many who note its "dark side" and its anti-social (instead of anti-state) manifestation (e.g. Ikelegbe 2001; Fatton 1999). The tendency to exaggerate the virtues and democratic potentials of civil society, in particular civic associations, is a problem that is common not only in practice but, crucially, also in theory:

> The distinguishing mark of civil society theory is that it privileges civil society [in particular, civic associations] over all other moments or spheres of social life, on the grounds that civil society furnishes [i.e. defends and epitomises] the fundamental conditions of liberty in the modern world. (Fine 1997, p. 9 quoted in Grugel 2002, p. 27)

This chapter begins by noting the global views of the civil society, and questions the notion that the African continent lacks essential components for a spontaneous transition to democracy, in particular, liberal political institutions such as civil society. The chapter goes on to explore the resonance of the neoliberal discourse in Africa as well as the ambivalence of the neoliberal construction of civil society. Finally, the chapter offers an alternative genealogy of civil society in Africa by tracing the ethnography of the concept, arguing that civil society is culturally constructed.

A Never-Ending Debate?

Much energy has been invested in the "civil society debate", but there are legitimate reasons to join the bandwagon particularly in the context of Africa. Here, the "timing" of the debate is perhaps more important because it arrived at a critical period when the continent was overwhelmed by state authoritarianism, structural decline and the challenge of democratic transformation. The dependency of the state on external donor funding allowed for the imposition of a neoliberal formula for economic and political development—a minimalist state and the substitution of civil society to fulfil the welfare needs of the people, energise the population and build autonomous spaces for democratic engagement. Harsh "regimes" of structural adjustment and political

conditionality, foisted by western donors as a precondition for debt relief, resulted in the imposition of the idea of a dense and vibrant civil society as a precursor to democratisation.

The globalisation of civil society and liberal democracy also signalled a triumph of the neoliberal intellectual and political formula. Arguably, it also played a role in forging, even if at face value, common visions of civil society amongst the actors of different intellectual and political views. Many, irrespective of their political standpoint, have come to view civil society as a "euphemism" for a section of society with the potential to resist state domination and achieve democracy (Puplampu and Tettey 2000, p. 253). In the 1980s and 1990s, whilst the liberals were celebrating the triumph of their vision of civil society, even radical critics seemed to have joined the bandwagon, if only briefly, with qualified glorification of the concept. For instance, Neera Chandhoke, a neo-Marxist, argued that "the value of the idea of civil society can be grasped if we remember that it has been resurrected whenever the power of the state has been challenged and sought to be controlled" (Chandhoke 1998, p. 30).

Yet, others warn against an unconditional subscription to the underlying values or "given" constructions of the concept. Questions of ethnography, historical origin and culturally constructed visions of civil society have perhaps posed the greatest obstacles to a universal acceptance of the idea. Some scholars have convincingly argued that given their "historicity", many modern political and conceptual terminologies such as civil society, democracy and the state are problematic in analysis and application in non-western societies. One example is Ellen Meiksin Wood, who shows that "current usage of 'civil society' or the conceptual opposition of 'state' and 'civil society', has been inextricably associated with the development of capitalism" (Wood 1990, p. 60). The dialectics of capitalism created "centres" and "peripheries" and, therefore, it could be argued that the term civil society is likely to be more problematic in the peripheries than in the centres of capitalist development. For Frank Kunz, "given its ancestry, when the concept of civil society is applied to non-European areas, it faces analytical problems, even the charge of ethnocentric bias" (1995, p. 182). Others warn that the discourse of civil society unnecessarily privileges some—typically liberal—voices above others. For instance, Beckman (1998) strongly argues that radical alternative thought, which emphasises class and conflict, has been pushed to the backstage in the current neoliberal epoch. Yet, he claims that the perspective provides a useful alternative framework for understanding the dialectic logic of hegemony and inequality. For him, the perspective may also provide clues for the fragmented, sectarian and conflict-ridden nature of both the state and the civil society.

Despite this, the liberal vision of civil society has gained universal currency as a shorthand for understanding and building democracy—evidence of which is seen in the promotion and funding of civil society organisations by international donors in the global South. Given this, it is important to locate the origin and substance of such a privileged viewpoint (for instance, by tracing neoliberalism to mainstream liberal theory or to a particular theorist). This will allow for an understanding of the context-dependency of civil society, the link between local and mainstream debates,

and, therefore, a useful engagement with the debate. It will also allow for a prob-
lematisation of the debate in terms of the gulf between the conceptual language and
the empirical realities, the universal and local constructions, the secular and sectarian
manifestations, etc. It is in this context that we explore below the western and the
global metanarratives and their impact on the local reality in Africa.

Another rationale is to acknowledge, as a minimum standard, the importance of
civil society as a tool for empirical discourse. As argued by Pearce (1997), civil
society is particularly useful as an analytical tool for exploring the practice and
meaning of the democratisation process, particularly in less-developed countries.
She identifies at least three uses of civil society discourse in assessing the process
of democratisation. Firstly, it offers the means of examining how, and under what
circumstances, social events impact on the political process. This provides an alterna-
tive framework for democratisation, which had hitherto focused on the state, parties
and elites. Secondly, it offers the means for empirically testing the extent to which
a vibrant civil society can make a difference to the process of political change in a
researchable way. Thirdly, it draws particular attention to the factors that facilitate
or hinder the growth of associational life.

The Neoliberal Conception of Civil Society

It is important to highlight the key premise of the global western debate that constructs
Africa as lacking the vital components of democracy (Harbeson 1994). The key task
is to sketch the main assumptions and then trace the genesis of such a debate in
mainstream western philosophy.

The Genesis of Neoliberal Theory

An example of the western conceptualisation of civil society—one that provides the
philosophical basis of recent intellectual and donor of visions of how the state should
be politically transformed in the global South—is offered by Alexis de Tocqueville
in his ethnographic and philosophical account of civil society and democracy in
nineteenth century America. Described as a quintessential liberal, de Tocqueville
was a French European inspired by what American civil society and democracy had
to offer to his native continent. In a way, therefore, he offers a *hybrid* perspective
where European and non-European traditions meet and are theorised in challenging
terms—as is happening in Africa today. Second, as his thinking continues to influ-
ence liberal writers to date (*a la neo-Tocqueville*), de Tocqueville deserves special
attention. An example is Putnam, who argues that "the importance of a strong and
active civil society to the consolidation of democracy, [signals] an acceptance of the
Tocquevillean view of achieving society by way of dense associational life" (1995,
p. 65). Other liberal theorists also proudly confess to the quintessential influence of

de Tocqueville: Michael Edwards notes that "civil society [is] . . . part of society that is distinct from states and markets, the most common understanding in use today and the direct descendent of de Tocqueville's idea about nineteenth century America" (Edwards 2004, p. 20).

De Tocqueville's two-volume study was based on participant observation of American democracy at work. He noted the "flowering" and deliberative power of associational entities, which he described as an asset of American democracy. He observed at first hand, for example, that when there was a blockage in a thoroughfare that caused traffic congestion, neighbours immediately formed themselves into "a deliberative body" (a civic group): "this extemporaneous assembly gives rise to an executive power which remedies the inconvenience before anybody has thought of recurring to a pre-existing authority superior to that of the persons immediately concerned" (1994a, p. 191). By emphasising the capacity of ordinary people to create deliberative bodies, de Tocqueville seems to assert that civic groups are capable of substituting for the state, at least to some extent.

According to de Tocqueville, the strength of civil society lies in its capacity to pool together into concrete associational frameworks the visions and aspirations of motley individuals who need each other to present a common front. His definition of an association says it all:

> An association consists simply in the public assent which a number of individuals give to certain doctrines and in the engagement which they contract to promote in a certain manner the spread of those doctrines . . . An association unites into one channel the efforts of divergent minds and urges them vigorously towards the one end which it clearly points out. (1994a, p. 192)

He extols American associational life as extensive, claiming that the "associational spirit", political or otherwise, influences "every act of social life" (1994a, p. 191):

> In no country in the world has the principle of political association been so successfully used or applied to a greater multitude of objects than in America. Beside the permanent associations which are established by law under the names of townships, cities, and counties, a vast number of others are formed and maintained by the agency of private individuals. (1994a, p. 191)

The vibrancy of associational life is dependent upon the uncompromising nature of how people treasure their rights. The people see themselves as the protectors, rather than mere recipients, of their rights and obligations. Rights of association and other rights go hand in hand: "the free institutions which the inhabitants of the United States possess, and the political rights of which they make so much use, remind every citizen, and in a thousand ways, that he lives in society" (1994b, p. 105). De Tocqueville notes that Americans of all ages and all conditions constantly form associations. They have "not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds, religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive" (1994b). He also observed that Americans form associations "to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools" (1994b). They form associations even

for what may appear as absurd reasons: "if it is proposed to inculcate some truth or to foster some feeling by the encouragement of a great example, they form a society" (1994b, p. 106).

These associations are based on "achieving", as opposed to "ascriptive", social structures, providing a stabilising mechanism for America's plethora of plural "settler communities"—a political ecology that contrasts sharply with that of continental Europe. In the early and contemporary America, there were/are ascriptive associations too: "Italian Americans", "African Americans", etc., but, because these associations were/are influenced by the "achieving" social infrastructure and the concept of unity in diversity, they rarely developed sectarian or backward-looking manifestations. De Tocqueville noted the heterogeneous nature of associations in America, where potential conflict between diverse groups were seemingly tamed by incentives for unity. He noted that "there is no end which the human will despairs of attaining through the combined power of individuals united into a society" (1994a, p. 192). To him, Americans have more opportunity within the framework of an association than if they are acting alone:

> When an association is allowed to establish centres of action at certain important points in the country, its activity is increased and its influence extended. Men have the opportunity of seeing one another; means of execution are combined; and opinions are maintained with a warmth and energy that written language can never attain. (1994a, p. 193)

Thus, he saw more of harmony than "fault lines" within and between the plethora of associations that are established to promote diverse public causes: safety, commerce, industry, morality, religion and so on. De Tocqueville's emphasis on a heterogeneous but unifying civil society in America seems to run contrary to the situation in developing societies of Africa, where conflicts are seen within and between ascriptive and modern achieving associations. Against this backdrop, de Tocqueville eulogised the virtuous democratic practices that made America stand out as a role model. He idealised the benchmarking features of an ideal democratic society—one he was visioning for his native France and greater Europe:

> Thus the most democratic country on the face of the earth is that in which men have, in our time, carried to the highest perfection the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desires and have applied this new science to the greatest number of purposes. (1994b)

In summary, de Tocqueville appreciated the potentials of a dense, vibrant and united civil society for achieving and sustaining a democratic system. Specifically, his reflections on how America offers a model of developing democracy based on an active civil society seem valid not only for his native country (France), but also for other societies. What is more notable is that linking the success of democracy to the emergence of an active civil society formed the basis of liberal prescriptions for achieving democracy in the twenty-first century post-colonial settings.

A key issue in the Tocquevillean (and mainstream liberal) visions of civil society is that the concept is often inextricably linked, both in terms of evolution and in terms of substance, to the emergence of western capitalist societies. Abrahamsen notes that:

> The notion of close affinity between capitalism and democracy is almost as old as liberal theory itself, and it is commonplace of Western political discourse to regard democracy as the characteristic political form of capitalism . . . But while it is obvious to all but the most dogmatic that capitalism and democracy do have a number of features in common, their relationships is far from straightforward (Abrahamsen 2000, p. 76).

In terms of compatibility, Abrahamsen argues that capitalism and democracy share "the same anti-paternalistic thrust: the individual, whether as voter or consumer, is assumed to be the best judge of his or her own interest" (Abrahamsen 2000). This compatible proviso is seen to facilitate the development of civil society as an independent centre of debate, information and decision making. On the other hand, Abrahamsen argues that, in many ways, capitalism and democracy do "pull in different directions"—i.e. they are also incompatible (Abrahamsen 2000):

> Capitalism, with its emphasis on competition and initiative, inevitably creates elites, inequalities and concentration of wealth . . . Put simply, the social and economic inequalities linked to capitalist competition prevent political equality in two different ways. First, those with superior economic resources have more influence over and more bargaining power vis-à-vis the holders of state power. Second, they are more capable of 'setting the agenda' because their economic strength, higher education, more competent mastery of communication techniques and so on. (Abrahamsen 2000, pp. 76–77)

It is arguable whether the foregoing liberal argument applies to Africa and other developing economies where the state is not the manager of capitalism per se. An issue is how the liberal notions of democracy and civil society can be applied in societies that are not fully capitalised and are still grounded in the pre-capitalist modes of social and economic relations. This draws our attention to important issues that are overlooked by the Tocquevillean and mainstream liberal visions: issues of inequality, class and power, which differ from one society to another, depending on their systems of production. The Marxist view provides a useful alternative viewpoint and is pursued elsewhere (Tar 2009; see also Allen 2004; Beckman 2004; Baylies 2004; Hearn 1999, 2001; Howell and Pearce 2001).

The Resonance of Neoliberal Prescriptions in Africa

In the 1980s, western bilateral and multilateral donors, especially the International Finance Institutions, came up with the so-called "Washington Consensus"—a set of "political conditionalities" governing the conduct of aid beneficiaries in Africa and the developing world. This neoliberal prescription was apparently driven by a felt need to curb the powers of the state and, contrarily, empower civil society and free market as a sine qua non for stabilising the structural crises that had bedevilled those states since the 1970s. In the African context, the apparent consensus amongst western theorists and political actors is all the more interesting because they reinforce a standard political formula adopted by international donors in explaining the reasons for the political problems in Africa and in prescribing what ought to be done to achieve democratic stability (see Abrahamsen 2000).

There is an assumption that a vibrant and active civil society remains the key to achieving democracy in Africa, and that such a society is conspicuously lacking. It becomes imperative to ask: which "civil society" are we talking about? In addition, how justified is the assumption in a terrain where anti-state and democratic struggles were pioneered by labour unions well before the emergence of civic associations? An issue here is how we define civil society and recognise it in the real world—an issue that is briefly problematised in the following paragraphs.

Neoliberal scholars and policy makers often cast civil society, in abstract terms, as an arena that is independent from the state (political influence) and market (economic influence), where individuals forge associational ties and pursue collective visions and aspirations in an essentially "civilised" manner. For example:

> Civil society is that set of diverse non-governmental institutions, which is strong enough to counterbalance the state, and, whilst not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of the peace and arbitrator between major interests, can nevertheless prevent the state from dominating and atomising the rest of the society. (Gellner 1995, p. 32)

> Civil society is the realm of organised social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, autonomous from state, and bounded by a legal order or set of shared rules. It is distinct from 'society' in general, in that it involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interest, passions, preferences, and ideas, to exchange information, to achieve collective goals, to make demands on the state, to improve the structure and functioning of the state, and to hold the state officials accountable. (Diamond 1997, p. 6)

In each of the foregoing definitions, we find a consistent reference to such notions of civil society as "an intermediate sphere", "autonomous from the state and market", "voluntary", "bounded by a set of shared rules", etc. These normative benchmarks that visualise civil society, in the cultural mould of western societies, as virtuous, civic and essentially democratic are then upheld as a key institutional "export" for unstable societies undergoing democratic change. Hence, we see the obvious influence of de Tocqueville, who called for the adoption of the liberal, specifically the American, model of civil society as a basis for democracy. The key problem is that by exclusively privileging the kinds of groups found in developed democracies, there is the danger of ignoring cultural specificity, understood here as the way in which different societies evolve different institutions, including the state and civil society. In most developing states, where the state came into existence through colonialism and where social relations are only partially capitalised, the relationship between state and civil society is not defined by individualistic or economistic modes of capitalist social relations. Such societies are still largely governed by authoritarian forces, and civil society is not necessarily autonomous, voluntary, democratic or even civil.

A similar western vision of the state and civil society in neoliberalising Africa is found in an edited volume that emerged from an international workshop on *Reordering of the state in Africa*, held at the Hebrew University, Israel, and whose contributors were mainly drawn from liberal Africanists based in America and Europe. The volume brought together what its authors called a common "vision of African politics . . . [that differs] from the conventional wisdom of the early years of independence [that is state-centrism]" (Rothchild and Chazan 1988, p. ix). This new

vision not only demeaned the state and challenged the state-centric perspective, but also drew attention to the nascent emergence of a vibrant civil society in Africa and newly emerging minimalist states: "political processes in Africa in recent years display a complex image of government enfeeblement, growing societal activity beyond the reach of the state and heterogeneous forms of political reordering" (Rothchild and Chazan 1988, pp. 325–327). Thus, with few qualified exceptions (e.g. Bratton 1989), the prevailing opinion is that in Africa, civil society is a newfound construct that needs to be taken on board in building and consolidating democracy.

The foregoing forms the intellectual bedrock of "political conditionality" adopted by western nations and donors in foisting the neoliberal political agenda on African countries. The key principle of the donor agenda, as imposed in the late 1980s, was "reversing the top-down approach to development for a more participatory bottom-up approach" (Osaghae 1998, p. 5). Associated with this was the focus on civil society as an organised front for engaging the authoritarian state as well as being a key facilitator of liberal democratic transformation. According to Nelson Kasfir:

> For many scholars and donors, civil society became an instrument, perhaps the most important one, that will make African states more democratic, more transparent and more accountable. In the rapidly changing [policy and intellectual] literature on democratisation, much attention is paid to the public role that civil associations undertake either to confront authoritarian or support newly democratic states. (Kasfir 1998, p. 1)

In advocating the neoliberal agenda, western donors and intellectuals developed "a designer concept of civil society" (Wachira 1998, p. 137) as part of a web of "the social formations that have emerged through the history of their societies that can and will lead the movement to reform their governments" (Kasfir 1998). What they emphasised was "a small set of organisations with special characteristics [to] form the core of civil society, a concept that has been given a relatively narrow and normative meaning" (Kasfir 1998). Similarly, they emphasised liberal democracy as a necessary solution to the crises of governance that bedevils most developing countries. In other words, donor agendas are anchored on "the desirability of economic liberalism and liberal democracy . . . [and the assumption] that donors and creditors in the north all subscribe to and advocate as the model to be followed by the south" (Abrahamsen 2000, p. x). Both components of the donor agenda—i.e. economic liberalism and liberal democracy—emphasise the fundamental transformation of existing crisis-ridden structural institutions of developing countries. The reason why donors imposed their agenda is not farfetched: it "entitles the north to develop and democratise the south in its image" (Abrahamsen 2000). Needless to say, therefore, the donor neoliberal agenda is rooted in mainstream western theory. In practice, there are numerous contradictions and illogicalities in such views of civil society, especially as they relate to African societies.

Neoliberal Theory and Practice: Ambivalences and Contradictions

In the context of Africa, there are numerous ambivalences associated with neoliberal theory and practice. The key questions are: to what extent is neoliberal theory and practice oblivious of associational life in Africa? Contrary to the experience elsewhere, especially Europe, why is the African state rolled back in a manner antithetical to the ideals of liberal development? What categories of "civil society" are emphasised and empowered, and does such privileging augur well for democracy and development in the continent? Can a civil society flourish in a weak and collapsing state? In the following sections, the foregoing questions are explored in detail based on a discussion of two key contradictory factors: de-legitimisation of the state and privileging of urban civic associations.

De-Legitimisation of the State

One of the apparent "legacies" of neoliberalism is the downsizing of the state, and this is rooted in the suspicion that liberals have for the state: a strong state is an obstacle to market-driven development and efflorescence of civil society. However, a down-sized state carries the risk of undermining the very ideals of liberalism:

> Liberals have very often been suspicious of the state and anxious about its power and scope; yet, in almost all liberal thought, the state remains the central vehicle for the achievement of liberal ends and arrangement. The primary tension here then is that within liberal thought the state is conceived of as both weak and strong. The state must be weak because it is purely an enabler, little more than a neutral mechanism providing security to allow free and equal individuals to pursue their life projects unhindered by others. (Williams 2010, pp. 404–405)

Experience in democratic reform since the 1980s shows that a weak state could not possibly support the form of development or democracy needed by Africans. If democracy is to be rooted in the people, then, a strong state is needed to provide a solid structure for change. Some have argued that the neoliberal provision of a weak state takes away a vital base of people-oriented development in the continent:

> The neoliberal agenda project seeks to delegitimize the state as the locus of nationalist aspiration and resistance . . . the neo-liberal theory conceals its own massive use of state power, transnational and local, for the construction of civil society in its own image while suppressing actually existing civil society which it defines as "vested interest". (Beckman 2004, p. 232)

For others, neoliberalism has usurped and obscured "the massive role of state powers in the economic domination of imperialism of transnational corporations". In so doing, "the African state was contrasted with the developmental states of Asia as being too interventionist, thereby producing a soporific civil society, while in fact the problem is not the depth of intervention but the quality" (Zack-Williams and Mohan 2007, p. 418).

As argued elsewhere (Tar 2009, pp. 57–58), there are several contradictions lodged in the seemingly united stance of western donors in exporting neoliberal democracy and civil society to developing countries. The first is the contradiction between the principles of state sovereignty, particularly "non-interventionism", and the realities of multilateral developmental intervention. As development since the late 1980s has shown, state crises have provided western donors the opportunity to re-cast developing countries in their own image and in a manner that contravenes the basic principles of democracy as well as international law. The second is the contradiction between external agendas promoted by international donors and the domestic context of struggles for democracy staged by popular forces against state authoritarianism and austerity measures. Whilst there are debates on the relative importance of the two (see also Wiseman 1995), it is premature to assume that internal and external factors are mutually reinforcing. External influence has not always yielded the desired result in terms of providing efficient solutions to the crises of governance : minimising the state or empowering civil society. Indeed, because the donor criteria were inconsistent, difficult to define and implement, and often influenced by conflicting foreign policy objectives of different Western nations, external intervention appeared to be geared towards meeting those conflicting external visions rather than towards providing internal solutions. Thus, whilst structural adjustment opened up national economies to foreign investment and repatriation, most countries remained worse-off and some states more authoritarian than ever.

A third contradiction is that between the so-called "democratic claims" of the neoliberal agenda and the autocratic approach adopted by the powerful countries and institutions behind the same. Whilst arguably based on the rhetoric of political goodwill—overcoming structural crises, building democratic culture, etc.—in reality, the implementation of "political conditionality" required a measure of high-handedness, which came in at least two ways. On the one hand, donors have often used the most compelling tools at their disposal—debt relief suspension, sanctions, the exclusion of erring countries from the membership of international organisations, military action, etc.—to compel the adoption of democracy in the global South. On the other hand, to secure the future of political reform and economic liberalisation, donors have often supported (or turned a blind eye to) state repression and other authoritarian measures—both from compliant regimes or even democratic ones. This ridicules the visions of democracy and good governance upon which donor interventions were often based.

A final contradiction relates to the current re-conceptualisations of "state" and "civil society" that we see in the neoliberal era. In the decades following independence, donors were instrumental to the construction of "strong states" and "weak societies" in developing economies. In other words, they supported the rise of dictatorships, which in turn weakened civil society and denied democratic challenge. However, by the 1980s, donors were at the forefront in defending democracy, empowering civil society and rolling back the state. This inconsistency draws our attention to the power of discourse in (inter)national politics. It is also clear that power is an essential component of the theoretic and practical reconstruction of the linkage between the state, the civil society and the democracy. Similarly, the risk of taking

nascent reconstructions at face value becomes clear, especially their real-life value in the peripheral, not-yet-full-blown-capitalist-societies of Africa.

The Privileging of Urban NGOs and Civic Associations

With the arrival of neoliberalism in the 1980s and 1990s, only civic associations and NGOs became celebrated icons of "civil society" theorising and donor support. Three key types of neoliberal and donor privileging are worth noting. First, more often than not, donor narratives construct civil society in terms of urban-based, formal, non-governmental, professional organisations:

> Donors are heavily involved in encouraging and financing organisations that fit this notion of civil society. They begin with the notion of a dense organisational activity in Western European countries and particularly the United States which has both taught its members the democratic skills and promoted interests which governments might otherwise overlook. (Kasfir 1998, p. 3)

Julie Hearn's (2001) close examination of donor support for civil society in Ghana, South Africa and Uganda reveals that such support was selectively channelled to specific urban groups that were seen as having the networking and organisational potentials to mobilise popular support for donor-friendly economic and political liberalisation. Because donors see civil society through a particular lens, they overlook the realities of Africa's deeply rooted associational life by subordinating them to a narrow section of the whole picture. In other words, donor support for urban-based civic associations has facilitated these groups and brought them into the limelight. These also neglected a whole range of associations, those perceived as counter-productive to the neoliberal agenda—e.g. labour unions.

A second type of privileging is the glorification of a narrow segment of civil society—specifically, urban civic associations—as benign, internally democratic and democratising; in essence, their potentials as assets of anti-state and democratic struggles. By limiting civil society to specific groups, the dominant paradigm also ridicules the principle of inclusivity, which forms the cardinal principle of the liberal argument. The exclusion of a vast majority of associational forms in the conceptual "map" is often informed by visions that deem only urban groups/NGOs as "democratic role models" or beacons of popular will. In Africa, it is problematic to use modernising visions as the only yardstick for inclusion. There are lots of reasons to caution against such an assumption:

> The heterogeneous and segmented nature of civil society . . . cautions against definitions that treat it as inherently democratic. Civil society in Africa (and elsewhere) embodies a diverse set of traditional, ethnic, professional, class, local, regional and national interests. While heterogeneity itself does not prevent voluntary associations from mobilising for democracy, it increases the likelihood that many may become agents of ethnic and parochial interests, especially where state boundaries are still in dispute and nation-building an incomplete process. (Abrahamsen 2000, p. 55)

A third kind of privileging is the construction of civil society, in a narrow sense, as groups in opposition to the state, excising those that are under the influence of the state or those beyond its purview. Indeed, Jean-François Bayart (1986) posits that in Africa, the state plays a key role in the construction of civil society, meaning both groups that are aligned to the state and those against it. Similarly, in Africa, civil society is not exclusively formal, professional and organised as in the western democracies. It includes groups that are relatively unorganised or those that operate far from the purview of the state as well as those that have nothing to do with the state. The so-called prodemocracy movement ought to, therefore, comprise groups other than civic associations. Even if civic associations are privileged in terms of their assumed potential to organise in a conventional way and resist/engage the state, these groups do not always demonstrate such potentials. Similarly, many groups are controlled by the state thus contradicting claims that they operate outside state control. Many associations (such as labour unions, at least initially) had no access to donor funding or lacked the "credentials" to qualify for such funds; yet, they were quite active in anti-state and democratic struggles.

By emphasising the need for broader consideration of the content and spread of civil society, it is argued here that, in the context of Africa, diverse forms of associations populate "civil society"—an arena in which the state plays an important role through socio-economic and political policies productive of social differentiation and collective action. Also, in the case of prodemocracy associations, they are driven by conflicting, but also occasionally complementary, class interests. It is also worth noting that the nature of state construction in the colonial and post-colonial era contributed in no small measure to determining, even disrupting, the agency of civil society and its potentially democratising role. Similarly, the privileging of civic groups/NGOs by donors is partly responsible for a limited view of civil society (Tar 2009, p. 49).

Towards an Alternative Genealogy

One unfortunate consequence of the dominant notion of civil society is that a western construct has been elevated to the status of universal applicability. Yet, civil society is culturally constructed and there are wide variations across time and space. The case for an alternative genealogy of civil society has been powerfully stressed (e.g. Hann and Dunn 1996; Howell and Pearce 2001; Obadare 2004, 2005). As revealed in the foregoing, there are widely held preconceptions that the African continent lacks any form of associational life. Contrary to the prevailing view that Africa lacks any significant civil society, the literature on associational life in Africa shows that "there is prima facie evidence of a nascent civil society in certain African countries" dating back to the pre-colonial era (Bratton 1994, p. 1; see also Wallerstein 1964; Bratton 1989, 1994; Bratton and van de Walle 1992; Haynes 1997; Olukoshi 1997, etc.). For instance, Bratton argues that:

> Far from being stunted in sub-Saharan Africa, [associational life] is often vibrant. While many pre-colonial cultures in Africa may have lacked states, they certainly did not lack civil societies, in the broad sense of a bevy of institutions for protecting collective interests. Large areas of Africa have never experienced effective penetration by transformative states and the rural folk there continue to grant allegiance to traditional institutions such as clan, age-sets, or brotherhoods. Upon these foundations, Africans invented fresh forms of voluntary association during the colonial period as a response to the disruptive impact of urbanisation and commercialisation. Sometimes these new organisations were updated expression of long-standing informal solidarities . . . in other cases; they gave collective shape to new occupational and class identities. (1989, p. 411)

Several key points emerge from the above. First, it signifies the cultural relationality of civil society and associational life, showing, in particular, that well before the modern state came into being through colonial conquest, civil society was evident in Africa. Second, the statement clearly emphasises the density of associational life in terms of a "bevy" of association representing diverse group interests, ranging from traditional to modern associations and from age groups to clans. This visualisation may sound muddled, even too sectarian, but it depicts the reality in Africa. Finally, Bratton argues that the bevy of "informal solidarities" played a crucial role in giving rise to "occupational and class identities" that emerged in the colonial and post-colonial settings (1989).

The Nigerian context is worth considering here. The historical and sociological literature on Nigerian politics shows that civil society and associational life have been in existence for a long time:

> Stretching back from colonial times, Nigeria has always been remarkable for the vitality of its free institutions and associations that operate outside state control and have in several instances posed challenges to the state . . . newspapers and magazines, market women associations in several cities, and "esusu" (exchange) associations in rural areas, . . . religious bodies across the country, [and] trade unions. (Ekeh 1992, p. 200, emphasis added)

It is instructive to note, however, that early African studies hardly used the terms "civil society" or "associational life". Paradoxically, as these concepts were re-invented in the 1980s and 1990s, the predominant tendency was to assume that associational life was something new to Nigeria. Nevertheless, whilst the term "civil society" was hardly employed in early studies, its more nuanced categories—such as ethnic associations, hometown association, town union, youth associations, elders' forum, self-help groups, trade associations and so on—were in use for a long time, indicating that both deep-rooted primordial and other socio-economic identities provided the basis of associational life and also that such collective identities were responsive to new circumstances. For instance, in his sociological research on the Yorubas, N. A. Fadipe "discussed the importance of associational life and identified four principal types—political, religious, occupational, mutual help and convivial" (in Barkan et al. 1991, p. 460). Fadipe's conclusion reflects what was obtained and is still obtained in contemporary Western Nigeria, i.e.:

> The tendency to form associations and corporations is very strong among the Yoruba. To a large extent it derives from the organisation of the people into compounds. They are formed for the purpose of promoting and protecting common interests in the field of politics, economics, religion, recreation and enjoyment . . . One interesting result of this tradition of

associations is that wherever there is an appreciable community of Yorubas, either outside Yorubaland or even outside their own particular communities, an organisation will spring up complete with officers. This organisation will certainly have . . . its convivial and mutual help features strongly developed. (Fadipe 1970, p. 243 cited in Barkan et al. 1991, pp. 460–461)

This pattern has been buttressed by findings from other studies. For instance, the work of Coleman (1958) on Nigerian nationalism examined the role of ethnic and voluntary associations. Others such as Hodgkin (1956) and Wallerstein (1964) also paid attention to the role of voluntary associations in nationalism and national politics. Similarly, in a study entitled "West African urbanisation: a study of voluntary organisations in social change", Little (1966) credited urbanisation with the rise of associational life. He noted that colonial urban associations emerged in response to sharp social inequalities of colonial urban management policies. In the process, he noted that these associations became creative, adaptive and transformative agents of change.

Colonialism did not invent civil society in Africa, but it provided a decisive moment in its growth. The Nigerian experience is quite telling. Early associational life was largely based on existential and primordial factors—such as discussed above. With the establishment of colonialism, however, new forms of civil society emerged that eventually coalesced into popular forces for decolonisation. Examples of this include cultural associations that later transformed into political movements and parties—most of which were initially founded by urban professionals. The first such group was the Nigeria National Democratic Party, developed out of an ethnic/cultural association founded by western educated professionals. It dominated the Lagos politics until 1938, with the support of "Yoruba elements of chiefs, imams, market women leaders, wealthy merchants, Christian leaders and Nigerian and non-Nigerian professionals" (Agbaje 1997, p. 366).

Another group, the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), emerged in the 1950s as a result of "a political awakening among a new generation of northern elites whose exposure to western education had bred reformist inclinations and who had become alarmed to discover their region's massive and pervasive disadvantage in every aspect of modernisation" (Diamond 1988, p. 37). The NEPU was dominated largely by "anti-establishment" young professionals drawn mainly from more common backgrounds. Similarly, the Jam'iyar Mutanen Arewa (i.e. the northern solidarity association) was initially formed as a cultural association by the western educated traditional elements in northern Nigeria. It later transformed into the Northern People's Congress in the 1950s. The party maintained a steady support from heterogeneous northern groups by exploiting pan-northern ideology and contained the expansion of southern parties into the region until it was disbanded in 1966. Even today, the founding ideology of the party continues to provide a revolving source of pan-northern political ideology and an associational platform for northern politicians and sectarian groups in civil society, such as the Arewa People's Congress (see Paden 1986; Ikelegbe 2001).

Finally, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa (Association of the Descendants of Oduduwa) was formed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and his fellow western-educated Yoruba compatriots to provide a pan-Yoruba front that would counter the emergence of the

Igbo movement as a national political force. In 1950, it was registered as a political party, the Action Group, and became a consistent opposition party in the Nigerian national parliament until the military coup that ended the Nigerian post-colonial democratic experiment in 1966. The ideology of the party still provides a central politicising vision for politicians and sectarian civil society groups in south-western Nigeria—e.g. the Odu'a People's Congress (see Ikelegbe 2001 for details).

Three key issues arise from the foregoing examples. First, western educated professionals spearheaded the formation of civil society organisations as platforms for social and political action. Initially, they represented the interest and visions of educated men in particular areas, this presenting an ethnic face. Second, these associations became vibrant in the run-up to Nigeria's independence, transforming from non-political to political organisations. Finally, the boundary between the "political", "apolitical" and "non-political" civil society became blurred by the reality of national and regional politics.

Colonialism and capitalist penetration not only created new forms of civil organisation, but also allowed for a metamorphosis of the existing (pre-colonial) "civil society" into a new political setting. Thus, it is reasonable to claim that civil society is an enduring feature of post-colonial Nigeria, which both antedated and survived colonialism. It played a role in the colonial political economy and, in the long run, formed an important pillar of the struggles against imperialism—seen as a popular uprising for democratising or overthrowing the colonial state. There is no way one can understand the political dynamics of contemporary Nigeria without grounding them in the colonial impact. Alternatively, it could be argued that colonialism engendered civil society as it centralised oppressive state power as a focus for discontent or resistance. Some of the associations formed under the colonial rule obviously borrowed from pre-colonial social formations, whilst many more emerged in the context of evolving social classes.

However, the colonial state typically sought to control, even eliminate, some groups in civil society. As most pre-colonial associational entities had deep-rooted "primordial" heritages (culture, ethnicity, religion, etc.), which contravened the secular ideology promoted by the colonial state, many of them were repressed through legislation and clamp-down. Nevertheless, the colonial state did not succeed in obliterating such primordial groups—they both survived and formed an important component of the wider civil society. Similarly, as Nigerian colonial state policies were essentially exclusionary, "the bifurcated state" became characterised by its policy of privileging organisations of the petty-bourgeois, especially associations perceived as friendly to the state—as Mamdani notes for Africa in general (1996: Chap. 1).

Repressive colonial policies became a source of local resistance, which helped in strengthening civil society. Amongst the new forms of associational life, founded mainly by petty-bourgeois elements, were the labour movement, trade associations and professional associations, amongst others. These modern associations co-existed, both complementarily and fragmentally, with the traditional type. Together, these groups protested against colonial policies and eventually coalesced into wider forms of struggles against colonialism. In the post-colonial era, these

groups formed the core of the movement against military rule and unpopular state policies (Abutudu 1995). Ekeh argues that in Nigeria "associations and institutions that enhance the prospect of individual liberties and personal freedom by operating outside the state's control … possess the capacity to confront the state when these liberties are threatened" (1992, p. 207).

Conversely, there has been a tendency to exclude from civil society organisations that appear "primordial", traditional or rural. Yet, these associations still constitute the bulk of associational life in Africa. As argued by Robert Fatton, these features make African civil society dangerously conflictual. For him, "civil society in Africa was the prime repository of 'invented' ethnic hierarchies, conflicting class divisions, patriarchal domination, and irredentist identities fuelling deadly conflicts in many areas of the continent" (Fatton 1999, p. 1).

More positively, Celestin Monga has argued that African civil society comprises "those birthplaces where the ambitions of social groups have created the means of generating additional freedom and justice … civil society in Africa is informed by all those who are able to manage and steer communal anger [dissent, protest etc.]" (1995, pp. 363–364). Monga's civil society comprises churches and mosques, networks of communication and forums of discussion, including a "multiplicity of increasingly dynamic informal groupings, even if these are often established along Weberian lines of sex, age, kinship and religion" (1995, p. 360). In short, it can be reasonably argued that the conceptualisation of civil society in this case needs to be extended to include groups that are often overlooked, even underestimated, in the literature. As noted by Patrick Chabal:

> … in the African context, civil society, in so far as it can be defined, consists not just of what is obviously not part of the state but also of all who may have become powerless or disenfranchised: not just villagers, fishermen, nomads, members of different age groups, village councillors, or slum dwellers, but also professional, politicians, priests and mullahs, intellectuals, military officers and all others who are, or feel they are, with no due access to the state. (Chabal 1994, p. 83)

However, Chabal was under no illusions about the complex characteristics of African civil society. It is "a vast ensemble of constantly changing groups and individuals whose only common ground is their exclusion from the state, their consciousness of their externality, and their potential opposition to the state" (Chabal 1994). Chabal further observed that in the African post-colonial context, where the state generally preceded the nation, civil society was necessarily determined first and foremost in its relation to the construction of the state.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the civil society debate in Africa in terms of the pivotal influence of western neoliberal theories and donor discourses. It is argued that the dominant western argument that has influenced donor political conditionality in Africa is problematic. This chapter highlights the substance of such dominant views

and traces its origins to Alexis de Tocqueville's account of associational life in America. De Tocqueville's theory is seen as particularly relevant because, in addition to providing a grounded theory for western notions of civil society, it is also a theory that speaks about the rise of civil society in the nineteenth century post-colonial America, and in a manner that draws attention to plural societies of the global South.

The chapter raises several critical issues on the existence of civil society in its pre-colonial and post-colonial settings. It exposes narrow conceptualisations of civil society, which pre-empt a more holistic construction encompassing modern and primordial groups as part of civil society and the risks of privileging civic associations and NGOs as sole precursors of democracy thus excising other associational forms and entities—some beyond the reach of the state, yet sociologically significant. The chapter argues that associational life was evident in the colonial and post-colonial eras and in Nigeria. New forms of associational life emerged in the post-colonial era amid struggles against state authoritarianism/military rule. The assumption that civil society organisations refer only to urban NGOs means that they are seen as harbingers of democracy, whilst, at the same time, in need of tutelage from global patrons. It is thus argued that the privileging of civic organisations in terms of donor funding and state collaboration leads to undemocratic outcomes as they become the sources of patronage and power in themselves.

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Part IV
After Development: Gender, Sexuality, and Civic Change

Chapter 17
Popular Organizations in South Africa: From Civics to Service Delivery Protests

Elke Zuern

The end of the Cold War brought with it great expectations for civil society and democracy across much of the globe. South Africa was by no means immune to this excessive exuberance. In 1994, the country finally defied its long history of apartheid rule, segregation, and colonialism to create a new democratic system that promised to include all, regardless of race, gender, or religion. Its constitution stipulated a wide range of rights including not just political and civil but also social and economic rights. Popular organizations played a significant role in bringing about the demise of the apartheid system and were now arguably poised to facilitate popular participation in continued democratization. The so-called civic organizations, which were founded in many poor black townships across the country during the long struggle against apartheid, were expected to play a primary role in the expansion of democracy.

A civic leader in the Eastern Cape encapsulated this broad enthusiasm for the civics as a key aspect of South Africa's new civil society.

> A civic organization is a grassroots, non-partisan organ of civil society which acts as a proactive watchdog over democracy, freedom and development. It doesn't act as a guide dog . . . underdog or bulldog but rather as a watchdog over democracy, freedom and development. The overall objective . . . is (the) democratization of society and that is the overall objective of civil society, democratization and transformation. (Sandi, interview. August 5, 1997)

In short, civil society, and in this case South Africa's civics, was often presented as the solution to decades of authoritarian governance, underdevelopment, and a general lack of freedom. There is, however, a fundamental contradiction within this ideal. If civil society includes a wide diversity of organizations, which broadly reflect the society of which they are a part, these organizations will be challenged by the same divisions, conflicts, and shortcomings that impact society as a whole. There will not only be watchdogs but also bulldogs and underdogs as well as subtle and not so subtle guide dogs allied to domestic elites or transnational institutions. To expect local organizations to radically transcend the very context within which they

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operate requires either a cherry picking of organizations or intense idealism as to the outcome of societal interactions.

This chapter employs a broad understanding of civil society as formal and informal societal organizations, including social movements. This approach eschews the commonly presented liberal ideal of civil society as a sphere clearly distinct from formal politics (independent of political parties and the state) and the economic sphere (excluding any business or other for-profit ventures; Cohen and Arato 1992). Instead of assuming stark boundaries between societal organizations and political parties, state institutions and economic enterprises, the following analysis explores the interactions across these lines to understand the very nature of societal organizations. As will be argued below, some of the greatest lessons from the study of formal and informal organizations come out of the contradictory roles such actors often play in formal politics. These organizations should not be assumed to be emancipatory or to necessarily support the expansion of democracy or human rights (Chaterjee 2004; Fatton 1995; Ndegwa 1996). This was most clearly seen during the wave of xenophobic violence that spread across South Africa in May 2008. While numerous civil society organizations played a crucial role in providing aid for those who fled the violence, and many worked to discourage further violence, a small number of others played a role in fomenting the anger that contributed to violence (Everatt 2010; Peberdy and Jara 2011; Sinwell 2011; von Holdt and Alexander 2011).

Attempting to offer an overview of civil society in any country is in many ways an impossible task. Quantitative measures tend to capture only certain types of organizations and only a particular snapshot of those organizations (Obadare 2011). In this way, they bias our understanding of a complex and diverse set of actors and relationships toward those most easily quantifiable actors (formal organizations registered with the state) and the most quantifiable aspects of organizations (funding, formal membership, participation in state-sanctioned bodies). In-depth qualitative studies allow for the exploration of a wider range of organizational models (including informal organizations) and a focus on the complex and often contradictory political interactions between these organizations and other domestic actors and the state and international actors. Ideally, they would be reflective of broader trends and challenges, but this is difficult to demonstrate in the absence of a wide range of case studies. Despite this, the benefit of such a bottom-up approach is that it builds an understanding of societal organization based upon existing indigenous actors within their particular historical context rather than applying external frameworks that are often derived through the quite different historical interactions of western states and societies (Fowler 2012; Opoku-Mensah 2008; Osaghae 2005).

This chapter presents an in-depth analysis of South Africa's civic organizations and the new social movements and service delivery protests that followed in their wake (for greater detail, see Zuern 2011; see also Patrick Bond's contribution to this volume, Chap. 15). Each of these organizational forms and protest actions were formed to draw attention to the basic material needs in poor townships communities. Their demands included affordable housing, access to electricity, clean water and other basic services. At their peak in the early 1990s, the civics provided the broadest and deepest organizational structure connecting township residents within their local

communities and across the country. Many of the challenges faced by civic organizations and their successors are reflective of broader issues faced by South Africa and its new democratic system as a whole. However, there are clear biases. Civics, as the term is used in South Africa, are overwhelmingly the organizations that grew out of poor urban black townships communities. As such, they do not represent the interests of all South Africans across class and race categories.

Civics were central actors in the anti-apartheid struggle, and most allied themselves with the party that led that struggle and now dominates all levels of government, the African National Congress (ANC). This ruling party–civic alliance has been particularly fraught in ways that demonstrate the stark challenges of dominant party democracy. As the civics failed to fully engage some of the most prominent issues in many township communities, a range of what have been dubbed "new" social movements arose to fill the gaps. In the last decade, so-called service delivery protests have expanded dramatically. Together, these organizations and mobilizations demonstrate both the idealism and the stark challenges faced by South Africans living in poor urban communities. From the idealism many embraced regarding the civics in the early 1990s, the increasing violence of service delivery protests has led to significant discouragement concerning the role of township activism in bringing about change to benefit the broader public. Recent protests and police responses have led to well-placed concerns over the direction of state–society interactions and the degree of violence they entail. However, as will be demonstrated below, the most significant shift from the exuberance of the early 1990s to the second decade of the twenty-first century is the degree of township-based organization that exists independent of the structures of the ruling party.

Civic Idealism and Its Decline

In 1990, with the beginning of South Africa's formal transition process, the civics stood at a crucial turning point in their history. From their beginnings in the late 1970s in Soweto and Port Elizabeth, they had become an extremely popular form of township organization. The civics played a significant role in the domestic struggle against apartheid through actions such as rent and consumer boycotts and by advocating for a new system that would ensure political as well as economic and social rights. After the legalization of formerly banned organizations, including a number of leading civics, civics across the country took advantage of the greater space now available by revitalizing their structures that had been forced into dormancy by state repression and by expanding their network across the country. This brought the civics' own, somewhat idealized, estimates of their local structures to 2,000 nationwide (Sandi 1994, p. 1). They were now able to convene meetings openly and, in response to the perceived lowered risk of participating in civic actions, their supporters turned out in record numbers. An activist in Vosloorus commented: "The only people that did not support us now, I would say, it was the people that were working for the then

government, mainly the councilors ... and the police" (Sibisi, interview. July 31, 1997).

Civic leaders in many areas obtained crucial technical and financial support from a number of nonprofit agencies and, with this assistance, began a concerted effort to increase local organizational capacity, improve national- and regional-level coordination, and train civic leaders and organizers. This support was, however, short-lived. By late 1994, after Nelson Mandela was elected president, financial support for civics from all external funding sources suffered a steep decline. The new postelection environment in South Africa would have called for a shift in funding strategies in any case as funders shifted their support to the now democratic state, but the significant reduction in support was also a product of a broad disillusionment with the civics. A report by the Kagiso Trust, which at the time was considered the most knowledgeable organization in terms of local community groups, spelled out key civic shortcomings including poor administrative capacity and a disconnected leadership (Zuern 2001).

Despite South Africa's new democracy, the civics faced considerable challenges. These can be broadly divided into challenges emanating from the environment in which the civics were forced to operate and those that were a product of the civics' own internal contradictions. First, the period from early 1990 to late 1994 was marked by stark violence leading to over 15,000 deaths (Klopp and Zuern 2007). Some areas, including many townships around Johannesburg where civics had been quite strong, became war zones. The sources of violence are complex but were generally a product of the actions of security forces (commonly referred to as the "third force") seeking to destabilize townships and derail a transition to majority rule and violent competition (encouraged by the security forces) largely between two leading opposition actors (the ANC and Inkatha, later the Inkatha Freedom Party). Civics often attempted to organize, or at least participate, in negotiations to end violence but such talks were ineffective without the intervention of neutral, outside authorities to confiscate arms, arrest combatants, and patrol "hot-spots."

In Katlehong, Thokoza and Vosloorus (collectively referred to as Katorus), the civics were dramatically undermined by the violence. Particularly in these areas, the civic members often became actively involved in the violence and the civic leaders became targets. Civics in many areas were also involved in self-defense. In Naledi, which was close to one center of violence in Soweto, the civics set up roadblocks and collected funds to purchase weapons. While the initial waves of violence beginning in 1990 caught many communities off-guard and unarmed, using only stones and knives to protect themselves and unsure of who was attacking them, by 1993, many communities were well armed and organized. They had clearly identified friends and foes. While this war-readiness often benefited those who were armed, the divisions that were drawn in township communities and the influx of arms would have severe repercussions for years to come.

A second set of challenges came from within the civics and their alliance with the leading opposition movement and later political party, the ANC. In 1992, a new national-level civic organization was launched to coordinate local actions to give the civics a stronger voice in national and regional politics. This new organization, the South African National Civic Organization (SANCO), was informally allied with

the ANC. As demonstrated in the quotation above, leaders argued that the civics would play a "watchdog" role over local and national government. This meant that the civics promised to advocate for poor communities on material or "bread-and-butter" issues at the same time that they were allied with the party in government. The contradictions of this idealized role would soon become apparent.

The ANC, realizing that its own local structures were weak, sought to maintain its linkages to the grassroots through local associations, most importantly the civics. A local ANC councilor and former civic leader explained:

> We need SANCO more than yesterday, today. It provides us with an opportunity at government level of realizing our intentions of building partnerships with communities, and partnerships cannot be loose. There is no way that you can interact with that community if that community is not organized. Therefore organs of civil society provide that type of organized formation that will serve as a good link between the community and the government, hence practicalizing the partnerships that we want to build. (Buthelezi, interview. July 22, 1997)

For ANC leaders, this close partnership implied the subordination of the civics to the ruling party in the interests of a broader "national democratic revolution."

In 1995, following its support for the ANC in the 1994 national and provincial elections, SANCO offered a blanket endorsement to the ANC for the local government elections. Local SANCO branches were instructed to work for the ANC's campaign. In return for its support, the ANC placed SANCO leaders on its election lists, ensuring many a position in the local government. As a result, SANCO stood to lose up to 80 % of its local, regional, and national leaders. If all SANCO leaders were forced to resign their positions as they entered the government, SANCO structures in three provinces would not have enough elected representatives remaining to form a quorum to call a meeting to elect new leaders (*New Nation*, November 3, 1995, p. 12). SANCO had already grappled with the problems that the departure of key leaders from its ranks would have. Its first president, Moses Mayekiso, left SANCO in 1994 to become a member of parliament and in January 1995, its second president, Lechesa Tsenoli, joined parliament to fill a vacancy. Their actions echoed a common pattern in which leaders and ordinary members of popular organizations take advantage of opportunities in newly democratic or democratizing states. This, alongside the broader challenges of transition, often leads to the significant weakening of leading organizations, at least in the short term.

SANCO's initial policy sought to avoid this by stipulating that any leader joining the government would have to resign SANCO leadership. However, because SANCO had already lost two presidents within the first year of the democratic regime, many felt the need for at least a slight change in policy. SANCO's National Executive Committee therefore agreed to allow both Mayekiso and Tsenoli to attend executive meetings but not to vote. In practice, this policy failed to define clear roles but allowed SANCO leaders to simultaneously hold SANCO and government offices. When over half of SANCO's leaders did enter government through local elections, many retained their SANCO positions. A regional SANCO leader commented: "How will a SANCO leader, who also holds the position of councilor, conduct himself if he is called on to lead a march of residents against the local authority? Who will

he lead the march against—himself?" (*New Nation*, February 28, 1997, p. 33). Another regional leader argued: "As a former leader of SANCO, now an ANC leader in government, you don't account to SANCO. You account to ANC and report to SANCO. You report to SANCO what is happening but cannot be held responsible for actions by SANCO" (Sandi, interview, August 5, 1997). The conflict became one between pragmatism (SANCO simply could not afford to lose so many of its leaders) and principle (SANCO leaders had consistently argued that SANCO was an independent "watchdog" of government). Principle lost out to pragmatism in what the national president of SANCO described as a "somersault" for the organization (Hlongwane, interview, June 9, 2004).

By 1996, most local civics that would eventually join SANCO had joined, and although some civics left SANCO because of its support for the ANC in the national, provincial, and local elections, the majority remained. By this time, the level of activity of most local civics across the country had declined significantly. As individual civic leaders and, at times, entire civic structures worked to help the ANC in national and local election campaigns, little energy was spent on independent civic programs. Volunteerism within the civics had also decreased markedly as those who could find new positions in the government and business understandably did so. SANCO's support for the ANC in the elections only worked to sharpen the decline in popular participation in civic affairs. A local civic leader in Alexandra commented: "It was after the elections that things became worse because we lost most of the leaders [to political office], and most of the people didn't understand how we may deign to be something else and not ANC when we were voting ANC during the elections" (Mbalukwana, interview, June 27, 1997).

The Promise of New Social Movements

Democracy in South Africa brought all adult citizens the right to vote, but, at the same time that their political and civil rights expanded, envisaged socioeconomic rights seemed to contract. A politics of cost recovery was introduced, reducing subsidies and requiring consumers, even in desperately poor communities, to pay close to the full cost of services such as electricity and water. Banks and municipalities were able to quickly evict poor residents from their homes after relatively short periods of nonpayment and low arrears. At the same time, democracy reshaped expectations for claim making and for popular contention. All South Africans were now expected to play their formal role in the electoral process by turning out to vote. Their newly elected representatives would then chart a course for democracy and development. When citizens sought to challenge decisions, large or small, they were to employ legal processes to work through formal institutions and to be patient. More radical demands, it was argued, needed to be deferred in order for democracy to take hold. SANCO followed this logic, seeking to work through its alliance with the ANC to address the needs of poor township residents while discouraging popular protest.

SANCO's alliance with the ANC, and therefore the government, along with the centralization of state policy making under Thabo Mbeki, the demand for unity within the ANC (which remained the dominant party), the weakness of opposition political parties, and the shortcomings of local government authorities all weakened key formal avenues of interest representation for the poor majority. As a result, within 5 years of the end of apartheid, some of the loudest voices representing the concerns of the country's marginalized citizens began to come from the extrainstitutional protest actions of social movements, many of which incorporated local civics independent of SANCO. These movements, which began their rise to prominence in the late 1990s, comprised a range of actors including the Treatment Action Campaign, the Concerned Citizen's Forum, the Anti-Privatization Forum, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, the Landless People's Movement, and the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign (Ballard et al. 2005; Bond 2006; Gibson 2006). Other movements, most notably Abahlali baseMjondolo ("the people who live in shacks"), later became central actors in this resurgence.

These movements received substantial local and international press attention for their demands ranging from medication for HIV/AIDS patients to land reform and redistribution. They worked to resist housing evictions and the privatization of electricity and water supplies. Together, their actions publicized both citizens' socioeconomic demands and the state's responses to them. In 2002, based on a national survey, David McDonald estimated that up to 2 million people had been evicted from their homes for nonpayment (2002, p. 162). In 2006, Hemson and Owusu-Ampomah estimated that 1.1 million people were affected by cutoffs annually (Hemson and Owusu-Ampomah 2006). These figures underline the significant number of South Africans who faced a service and housing crisis. Poor residents were evicted in large numbers, and those who remained in their homes were often forced to live without electricity, at times even without water.

In response to these challenges, groups such as the Valhalla Park United Civic Front (a local organization of the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign, WCAEC) employed "strategic engagement" with the state, largely through the development of personal relationships with local authorities ranging from the police to officials working in the housing office. However, the Valhalla Park Civic also stressed that its activists reserved the right to take more radical action when the state did not respond to or dismissed their concerns. A case in point was the civic's demand that the council build speed bumps on a main road where a number of children had been hit by passing cars. After the council repeatedly turned down the civic's request, "civic activists dug a four-meter wide and approximately one-meter deep hole across the main road in the middle of the night" (Oldfield and Stokke 2006, p. 15). The hole was repaired and speed bumps were installed the next day. Activists also employed strategies of illegal land invasions and court actions, demanding their constitutional right to emergency housing, leading to a legal victory for the right to housing against the city of Cape Town (Oldfield and Stokke 2006, pp. 14–16).

In contrast to Valhalla Park, residents in Mandela Park, a poorer community, experienced a much more confrontational relationship with the state. The Mandela Park Anti-Eviction Campaign (MPAEC) made demands consistent with those of the

broader anti-eviction campaign, but had far less success in its attempts to engage local actors ranging from private bank personnel to government housing officials. By early 2002, an estimated 2,000 households faced eviction. The MPAEC asked the government to intervene by helping to fix the houses and buying back the land from the banks. When these requests were not met, MPAEC members marched to the company that was disconnecting electricity and called for a flat rate of R10 (10 South African Rand, about $ 1.40) per month for basic services. Activists held sit-ins at the National Building Society offices as well as the Khayalethu Home Loans Company. They also went to the provincial parliament. When the MPAEC sought to defend a pensioner who had her belongings repossessed, the police fired rubber bullets and arrested 12 people. MPAEC members increasingly responded by moving people back into their homes after they had been evicted (Desai and Pithouse 2004, pp. 251–256).

The MPAEC's actions offer a clear parallel to earlier civic strategies. Writing of the 1980s, Tom Lodge noted: "When evictions were carried out, [civic] street committees mobilized the community to oppose them or to reinstate evicted residents in their houses. The political climate became so charged that new tenants were frightened to occupy a house that had been vacated due to eviction for nonpayment of rent" (1991, p. 270). In the 1980s, evictions were a strategy implemented to defend the viability of the apartheid state. In the post-apartheid period, they became part of the neoliberal model of cost recovery encouraged by the World Bank and embraced by the South African government as the pathway to economic growth and development. In both periods, the policy quickly led to violence. Police clashed with protesters and participants were charged with violations, including trespassing, public violence, and intimidation.

In Mandela Park, SANCO lost ground to the MPAEC. In an effort to address the housing crisis and to maintain its own organization, SANCO offered to represent residents in negotiations with the ANC and the banks that owned property in Mandela Park. Although these negotiations did not lead to a positive resolution for residents, they did present returns for SANCO. As a product of its role in local negotiations, SANCO received a 20 % share in the Khayalethu Home Loans Company, which provided finance for loans in Khayelitsha. Thereafter, when residents received letters demanding payment, these were jointly signed by Khayalethu and SANCO (Desai and Pithouse 2004, p. 250). The struggle against evictions therefore also became a struggle against SANCO (Xali 2006, p. 129). Residents formed the MPAEC to resist the policies that SANCO sought to enforce and took over the building that it had formerly used. As the MPAEC became active in resisting evictions, tensions with SANCO increased and MPAEC members accused SANCO of ongoing harassment and "unethical methods" (anonymous MPAEC activists 1 and 2, interviews, July 2003).

In Soweto, SANCO employed a different strategy to maintain its significance in local communities frustrated by government policies. Despite its rhetoric as a revolutionary social movement and representative of South Africa's poor, SANCO continued to support the logic of credit-control measures even when this meant widespread electricity disconnections and the installation of water-flow restrictors.

As residents in Soweto became increasingly desperate and angry, SANCO continued to lose support and groups such as the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC), which took a more radical approach, gained in popularity. The SECC, which sought to address Soweto's electricity crisis, gained national and international attention through "Operation Khanyisa" (switch on) that offered free illegal reconnection for residents whose service had been cut. Within 6 months, the SECC claimed to have reconnected 3,000 households (Egan and Wafer 2006, p. 47) under the slogan "Electricity is a right, not a privilege."

SANCO's response to this challenge was to leverage its position as an ally of the ruling party. In 2002, SANCO participated in negotiations with Electricity Supply Commission (ESKOM) and government representatives, which led to an agreement that residents with faulty meters would pay a flat fee of R120 (about $16) per month until their meters were repaired (SAPA, April 26 2002). In areas such as Zola, within Soweto, civic leaders strategically drew attention to these agreements to try to convince community residents that SANCO, rather than the SECC, would find a solution to their problems (Sugar Monnakgotla, interview, July 15, 2002). Despite the weakness of its local branches, SANCO sought to assert itself as the primary broker between township residents and state actors.

SANCO's greatest triumph came in May 2003. ESKOM (the public electricity supplier) and the Ministry of Public Enterprises (headed by Jeff Radebe, a recent member of SANCO's National Executive Committee), along with the Human Rights Commission and SANCO, came to an agreement to write-off R1.39 billion ($ 190 million) in Johannesburg electricity arrears. Although this write-off was clearly in response to the influence of movements such as the SECC, the SANCO rather than the SECC was included in the negotiations. SANCO presented itself as the public representative of the poor and was given at least formal credit for the write-off. A supporter of the SECC campaign wrote: "All but moribund 12 months ago, SANCO has suddenly come to life with resources and influence from political heavyweights in national government, determined, it would seem, to counter the growing influence—and anti-neoliberalism—of SECC . . . " (McDonald 2003).

A SANCO leader summed up SANCO's strategy regarding the challenges it faced from groups such as the SECC and the ways in which it employed its relationship with the government.

> Credit goes to SANCO . . . . As a civic movement we grab those people that support Trevor [Ngwane of the SECC], look at their issues, and actually change them. We can strategize . . . . Let the credit come to SANCO, and then SANCO will take the credit back to government. It is quite a nice ballgame. . . . Whilst now we confront, they deliver. The credit goes to SANCO. You take the credit back to government. You call a mass meeting, address the people, and say government has delivered . . . . That is how you deal with it. You actually strategically try to isolate them [SECC and others]. (Anonymous Gauteng SANCO leader, interview, January 2004.)

SANCO presented itself to local communities as a problem solver that could employ its relationship with the government to address residents' concerns. This argument, however, deliberately ignores the role that the SECC had played. Without pressure from the SECC and massive nonpayment, ESKOM would never have offered such

a large write-off. In contrast to SANCO's claimed success in Soweto, where the SECC mobilized, it failed in Tshwane, where there was no group like the SECC. In Tshwane, SANCO leaders also participated in a series of negotiations with the metropolitan government council, but the council refused SANCO's request to write-off outstanding arrears, arguing that effective credit-control measures were already in place (SAPA, May 12, 2003). Without popular pressure, government representatives saw no reason to address citizen's demands.

In South Africa, significant pressure for the enforcement and expansion of economic as well as political rights has come from outside the formal institutions of the state, but it has also changed the way those institutions operate. The 2004 national government elections took place amid great popular mobilization, demanding that the government pay more attention to the needs of the poor. In response, government budgets allocated increased funding to infrastructural investment, public work programs and social welfare, including social support grants to children, the disabled, and the elderly as well as education and health care spending (Habib and Valodia 2006, p. 248). Seekings reports: "Expenditure on social assistance almost doubled from about 2 % of GDP in 1994 (and 2000) to about 3.5 % in 2005" (2007, p. 19). Although such grants did not address the central demands of movements such as the WCAEC and the SECC for the enforcement of right to housing and basic services, they did allow the ANC government to argue that it was engaging in pro-poor policy reform. Government officials repeatedly argued that this increase in spending was not a result of increased social mobilization but rather part of a long-term plan. It was quite striking, however, that increased resources were allocated from the early years of the twenty-first century just as resurgent movements were gaining great domestic and international attention.

The Demands of Service Delivery Protests

Alongside the new social movements, so-called service delivery protests also began to draw national attention in 2004. By the end of the decade, these more-spontaneous, less-organized protest actions had dramatically eclipsed the new social movements in media attention. An early commentator on the new phenomenon of service delivery protests, Susan Booysen, argued: "It was increasingly clear that the politics of getting service delivery was changing gears—away from a sole reliance on the mechanism of voting and representation and towards the grass-roots application of a combination of mechanisms, using both voting and protest as a means to obtain more effective service delivery" (2007, p. 22). Viewing these protest actions through the lens of the civic and social movement protests that preceded them, it becomes clear that this was not so much a change of gears as it was the continuation of earlier means of interest representation. The demands made by the service delivery protesters included, but were not limited to, service delivery. They also consistently decried the lack of accountability of local councilors and often alleged corruption, once again paralleling the demands made by the earlier civics and many of the new social movements.

From the late 1990s, President Mbeki centralized power in the executive and demonized movements that challenged his economic policies by labeling them "ultraleft." The president's undermining of political contestation spread to his opponents on a wide range of issues. As he attempted to maintain control of the state and defend his policy decisions, he removed members of government who defied him (Feinstein 2007) and aggressively protected his supporters against all critics. As a result, he lost the support of much of his key constituency: The intelligentsia and the urban middle and upper-middle classes (Gevisser 2007), and his approval ratings dropped precipitously in 2007, leading up to the ANC party elections. This shift was a product of several factors, but, most importantly, the sense that Mbeki was defying popularly accepted and expected democratic norms (Habib 2008). Mbeki's shortcomings opened the door for South Africa's embattled Jacob Zuma to become both the leader of the ANC and the president of the country. In the most bitterly contested ANC election in decades, ordinary members of the ANC engaged their leaders from the floor, and Zuma won an overwhelming victory. The heated and open debate offered promising signs for democratic engagement within the ANC (Friedman 2007), even as analysts worried where President Zuma might lead South Africa to (Hassim 2009).

While service delivery protests had been in the news since 2004, they exploded after Zuma's election. Alexander (2010, p. 28) notes that according to the data collected by Municipal IQ, the first 7 months of the Zuma administration saw more service delivery protests than the last 3 years of the Mbeki administration. This explosion was at least in part a response to Zuma's presumed greater responsiveness to the protesters demands. Thandakukhanya, outside Piet Retief in Mpumalanga province, was the site of one of the first large protests after Zuma became president. In a memorandum sent to the provincial premier, David Mabuza, the Concerned Group, stated its purpose: "to request the office of the premier to facilitate an urgent investigation to our local Mkhondo municipality in connection with the following high rate of alleged corruption happening within the municipality" (reproduced in Sinwell et al. 2009, pp. 9–11). The memorandum detailed residents' concerns and demands, including the call for more-transparent and accountable local government.

Echoing many previous civic and other movement demands, the memorandum called for "proper consultation in terms of resource distribution and infrastructure" and recommended that local councilors be suspended pending the outcome of investigations. On June 22, the Concerned Group met with the premier and asked that the local councilors be suspended. Premier David Mabuza promised to come to the area for an open forum on the following Sunday to respond to the community's concerns, but argued that he could not suspend the councilors until investigations had been conducted. On the agreed upon date, the Premier failed to visit the township but sent representatives to meet with community members (Sinwell et al. 2009, p. 2). In July, residents staged another march during which the Concerned Group was unable to control the situation as some protesters burned tires and blocked roads. Cars belonging to the municipality, a health clinic and a public library were burned; two protesters were killed, reportedly by police and security forces (*Times*, December 26, 2009).

Similar demands not just for "service delivery" but also, importantly, for government accountability were repeated in townships across the country. In Thokoza and Diepsloot in Gauteng, Khayelitsha in the Western Cape, Duncan Village in the Eastern Cape and elsewhere, citizens took to the streets. As the protests grew, two areas received the greatest media attention: Siyathemba and Sakhile, both in Mpumalanga. Protests in Siyathemba township outside Balfour began with a march to the local municipal offices. When the municipality failed to respond, a community meeting was held, but clashes erupted between the police and the residents after the police fired rubber bullets and teargas in an attempt to disperse the crowd (Sinwell et al. 2009, p. 5). Some protesters also blocked roads and looted shops owned by foreign nationals. In response to the protests and the destruction that ensued, President Zuma surprised residents by briefly visiting the township and promising to listen to their concerns. In Sakhile, described as a "battlefield" by the local press (*Sowetan*, October 14, 2009), residents promised to continue their protests, including the barricading of roads and the burning of government buildings, until the president also came to resolve their issues (*Mail and Guardian*, October 15, 2009). Sakhile township residents demanded the "right to elect their own representatives," instead of ANC party structures determining candidates for local office, and called for an inquiry into alleged corruption. Protests and the police response led to significant destruction of property and the injury of at least 14 people (*Mail and Guardian*, October 16, 2009). Although President Zuma did not visit Sakhile, ANC officials did come to the area and, in a surprise move, fired the municipal mayor and her entire committee just days ahead of a presidential meeting with all the country's mayors and municipal managers (*Sunday Independent*, October 25, 2009, p. 1).

In response to the protests in Siyathemba and Sakhile, the Zuma administration signaled a willingness to listen. In stark contrast to Mbeki, who repeatedly attempted to silence the movements that challenged his policies, Zuma sought to present himself as someone who would engage citizens' concerns. The president condemned the destruction of property and violence that became part of the wave of protests, and also noted the role that protest plays in supporting democracy. "This is our heritage. It is what makes South Africa the vibrant democracy it is today and will continue to be in the future" (quoted in *Mail and Guardian*, November 9, 2009). The Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs tabled a report arguing that the protests indicate an "escalating loss of confidence in governance." The report continued to assert that "a culture of patronage and nepotism is now so widespread in many municipalities that the formal municipal accountability system is ineffective and inaccessible to many citizens" (RSA 2009, p. 11). In response to the protests, the ANC began an audit of local councilors in late 2009, but the audit remained internal to the ANC and excluded local communities (*Mail and Guardian*, October 23, 2009).

Although the protests drew important attention to the demands for accountable government, most were able to attract attention only by blocking roads and destroying property and through the corresponding police responses, which included rubber bullets and teargas. The news media ran pictures of burning tire blockades, damaged public buildings, and police taking aim at protesters. This immediately raised the question of the "civility" or "civicness" of the protesters. How could protesters

destroy public buildings when they claimed to be agitating for better public-service delivery? How could protesters press for more-responsible government when they were proving to be irresponsible themselves? Minister in the presidency, Trevor Manuel, in a talk at the Graduate School of Public and Development Management in Johannesburg condemned the protesters' actions, arguing that a behavioral change was necessary for development (October 26, 2009).

This argument that citizens must be more civil and must work to support state-based initiatives has long been employed to challenge the legitimacy of popular demands. It suggests that the public must defer to the expertise of technocrats and policy makers. It also deliberately ignores the question as to what opportunities ordinary citizens have at their disposal for participation and engagement with their elected representatives. In its review of four protests in mid-2009, the Center for Sociological Research at the University of Johannesburg found that each protest "only occurred after unsuccessful attempts by community members to engage with local authorities over issues of failed service delivery" (Sinwell et al. 2009, p. 1). Arguments concerning the need for behavioral change to allow for development also ignore the demands of the protesters for democratic accountability. Instead, they frame citizens' actions as merely "service-delivery protests" that might be addressed with minimal infrastructural improvements.

In these cases, as with many civic and new social movement protest actions, residents first sought to employ institutional routes to petition government, but government actors failed to engage their requests by meeting with local residents, listening to their concerns and working to address them. In each case, protest actions began with organized nonviolent marches. Those that later turned to violence tended to do so as a product of interactions with local authorities, particularly the police. Trevor Manuel's arguments concerning the need for a certain degree of popular civility in order for democracy to function echoed the arguments of civil society analysts such as Robert Putnam (1993, 2000). While this argument may be convenient for a government minister seeking to institute his model of development, it is based upon a misunderstanding of how democracy is established and deepened. The expansion of democracy has historically been a product of protracted struggles that often meet with great resistance from those who seek to defend their privilege.

Zhekele Maya, a member of the Dipaliseng Youth Forum in Balfour, summed up the importance of social mobilization arguing that "protest is a democratic right" in South Africa today, but it only became a right "through a culture of defiance" (Center for Sociological Research workshop, October 30, 2009). Ideally, residents' questions and concerns would be addressed by an effective public administration overseen by accountable elected officials, but every study of local government in South Africa, both by government and nongovernmental actors, has repeatedly demonstrated that this is often not the case. In this context, the discourse of civility suggests that citizens should accept a lack of accountability when their petitions are ignored and government offices offer no response to residents' questions and concerns. It is exactly the perceived "uncivil" actions that draw attention to claims for democracy that are easily sidelined when presented via institutional means.

Violence, Profit, Parties, and Politics

In 2012, service delivery protests reached a new high. While 10 such actions were counted by the Municipal IQ in all of 2004 and 105 in 2009, in just the first 10 months of 2012, 160 protest actions were recorded. Violence has also increased. By 2012, more than three in four protests were marked by violence (Municipal 2012). This raises significant concerns. Surveys conducted by Afrobarometer demonstrate that protesters are almost twice as likely as people who did not protest to report feeling that their MPs and their local councilors listen to people like them (Lavery 2012, pp. 5, 6). However, if protests are increasingly marked by violence, and they are seen as important in having one's voice heard, the political process itself is becoming more violent.

Perhaps an even more worrying concern is that a significant number of these actions are led by members of the ANC who use the protest as an opportunity to further their own political careers or to bargain for tenders. Von Holdt and his colleagues' research demonstrated that community residents knowingly participate in protests led by ANC members with personal goals. Residents still hold out the hope that these protest actions might also draw attention to their demands (Von Holdt et al. 2011). Based on interviews in affected communities, Von Holt reports:

> One of the consequences of this is that in the aftermath there is no residue, no durable independent organization, civil society, that remains after the protest. Once the councilor has been dismissed and a new councilor put in or there have been by-elections ... the committees and the crowds disperse. The leadership is absorbed back into the ANC ... it is quite striking the extent to which the local ANC is absolutely the place where community leadership find their role and always gravitate back to it, because that is where power lies, that is where resources lie, that is where networks lie. (Von Holdt in von Holdt and Alexander, 2011, pp. 104, 105)

The transition from civics and new social movements to the more ephemeral service delivery protests represents a decisive weakening in organized methods of interest representation in poor township communities. After 1994, the civics struggled to maintain independent local organizational structures when they were clearly working for the ANC during the elections and defending government policies after elections. The new social movements arose to fill the gap left by the civics that many defined as simply "co-opted." Those movements that most clearly challenged the government's economic policies were demonized by the ANC in general, and Thabo Mbeki in particular. The ruling party worked hard to undermine its challengers by refusing to negotiate with them and trying to demonstrate that it was addressing popular demands. These strategies, along with the regular cycle of movements, saw the decline of many of the new social movements. Service delivery protests have now appeared as an increasingly popular means of demand making. However, while the core protest demands are remarkably similar from the 1980s to the present, recent protest actions are more likely to be characterized by violence and to occur in the absence of any durable form of community organization outside of the dominant party's structures. This decline in some form of durable and relatively independent community organization in many of South Africa's township communities is one

of the most worrying post-apartheid developments. There is a profound shortage of township-based watchdogs, but there are plenty of guidedogs and bulldogs and, certainly, many underdogs.

These are discouraging developments for any democracy. Democracy relies not on the goodwill of those in power but upon institutions and actors who can check the influence of those with significant political and economic power. While the case studies discussed in this chapter are not necessarily representative of civil society as a whole, they do demonstrate a crucial set of weaknesses in South Africa's democracy. Many popular organizations struggle with the co-optation of their organization as a whole or of key leaders (as was the case with SANCO). They also face the challenges of working with aspirants to positions in the dominant party (as is often the case in the recent service delivery protests). Other organizations battle just to gain access to members of the governing party and to have a voice in a system of governance that is so fully dominated by a single party. This last challenge is significantly compounded for actors who do not have significant economic influence, and was a central challenge faced by the new social movements that critiqued the ANC's core economic policies.

The case studies discussed here also illustrate the lack of clear boundaries between civil society, as it is often defined, and political parties. Each of the three types of actors discussed here had a different set of relationships with the ANC, but, in each case, these relationships were central to the ways in which their actions unfolded and what broader impact they might have. In many cases, individuals wore two hats, playing a role in the ruling party and in popular organizations. Similarly, actors such as SANCO became involved in private enterprize, demonstrating the lack of clear boundaries between the perceived nonprofit actors in civil society and business. Some central players in service delivery protests also used protests actions as a way to position themselves to access not just positions in government but also government contracts. It is within the messiness of these interactions, their defiance of neat categorization, and the dramatic challenges that they offer to broad generalizations that politics and the future of democracy plays out.

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Chapter 18
"If Good Food is Cooked in One Country, We Will All Eat from It": Women and Civil Society in Africa

Hannah Britton and Taylor Price

Preamble

There is no single way to describe the shape, composition, and strategies of African women in civil society. Across the continent and through the phases of contemporary history, women have utilized the civic space in various ways: as a site of economic and social advancement, as an area to mobilize for national liberation, as a place to rebuild and regenerate after conflict, and as a network for transnational mobilization for the advancement of women's rights and status. What clearly resonates is that civil society remains a collective resource for women to access and utilize in different ways, depending on their needs. Sometimes, the space can facilitate overt, confrontational, and direct action. At other times, women may use the space more covertly to activate their "slivers of agency" (Enloe 2000) in the face of colonial rule, religious fundamentalism, or authoritarian dictators. In times of democratic openings and national transformations, women may use civil society formations to demand greater political representation and state recognition.

Most of the recent, significant national advancements for women have resulted from the collective action of women's organizations and social movements pressuring states and political parties for change. The upsurge of African women in national offices is the result of intentional, strategic organizing of women in civil society to foster cross-party support for women's representation (Tripp et al. 2009; Bauer and Britton 2006). These national processes have been supported by the new networks of transnational feminist activists, which have fostered the cascading effect (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998) of women's advancement in the public sphere. The international norms of women's rights and women's representation have diffused not only from

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the global community but also perhaps even more meaningfully within Africa itself (Tripp et al. 2009; Bauer and Britton 2006).

The success of women pushing to have their political voice count has been matched by collective efforts to stamp out discrimination and violence against women. Across the continent, there are issue-based organizations working in collaboration with, and sometimes in opposition to, the government. These national organizations link themselves with transnational and regional networks to advance the status of women. These networks are sites of cross-national policy diffusion and the promotion of models of best practices. Women are learning from women in other countries, and they are using collective, regional pressures to demand change and advance women's interests.

Despite these advances, modern challenges persist that threaten to stall or reverse the progress made by women in civil society. The patterns of authoritarian leadership and one-party dominance in some states with significant female representation are beginning to reveal more insidious efforts. Parties are beginning to co-opt women's seats with the effect that women are in danger of becoming merely loyal votes or a public face that legitimizes otherwise draconian rulers. The global economic restructuring around neoliberal policies is a threat to the social structures, welfare policies, health systems, and educational frameworks that often affect women first and most directly. Increased human trafficking, gender-based violence, and gender discrimination continue to undermine the safety and advancement of women, girls, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) citizens across the continent. The NGOization of the women's movement and the careerism of gender technocrats also threaten to undermine the feminist ideals and gender activism that characterized many twentieth-century movements.

Nevertheless, to maintain the advances made by women in Africa, women are initiating new efforts to utilize their collective resources within civil society to foster a more equitable and just future. Transnational action and mobilization across borders ensures that successful policies and programs no longer stop at the border's edge. As Gladys Mutukwa, head of Namibia's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, stated at the 2007 National Conference to End Gender-Based Violence, "if good food is cooked in one country, we will all eat from it."

Women and Civil Society

Despite women's pivotal role in the fabric of civil society, theorizing about the interaction between gender and civil society is underdeveloped. There is a fracture in what is considered to be civil society—Is it public space occupied by organizations and groups? Is it inclusive of the private sphere of the family, household economics, and sexual practices? Does it address gender relations, public norms, and cultural practices? Each of these traditionally "private" practices has very public implications for women's power and voice. Gender theory demonstrates that the seemingly impenetrable wall between public and private spheres is porous and artificial. A more

useful approach is to determine how politics works within civil society and how it blurs the lines between these spheres: institutions may determine the nature of gender relations, but gender relations also influence the construction and reproduction of state institutions (Howell and Mulligan 2005).

As a result of historical and cultural pressures, women have often been denied the right to access and participate in Africa's state institutions and public spaces. Women often then turn to civil society as a space within which to mobilize for advances in social status, economic roles, and political voice. But, civil society is not always a hospitable sphere for women. Mama (2005) cautions against a romantic notion of civil society due to "the deep conservatism of many of Africa's local cultures and production systems" (p. 4). Thus, civil society is invariably also a site of continuous engagement and agitation. The key is for women to use this space to form networks and see openings in the practices and norms that try to dictate their movement and mobilization.

Civil society thus becomes more than a site for transformation: it becomes a collective resource that women can marshal in service of agitating for their rights. Even when authoritarian states attempt to suffocate public voices, civil society houses a variety of networks that women can access to identify support and fissures within regimes in order to begin to dismantle the regime.

For the purposes of our discussion here, we rely on Keane's (1988, p. 14) definition of civil society as "an aggregate of institutions whose members are engaged primarily in a complex of non-state activities—economic and cultural production, voluntary associations and household life—and who in this way preserve and transform their identity by exercising all sorts of pressures or controls upon state institutions." This vision of civil society usefully incorporates the boundary-crossing nature of gender relations, social constructions, and cultural norms that can influence the interconnected spheres of the private/public divide.

History of Women's Civil Society Groups in Africa

Colonial governments throughout Africa regarded civil society groups with great suspicion, fearing that they "could be instrumental in mobilizing the colonized against the colonizers" (Makumbe 1998, p. 306). Motivated by this fear, the colonial state actively "defined and controlled associational life" for Africans (Tripp et al. 2009), an effort that is today blamed for the relatively weak state of civil society in Africa. Despite colonial efforts to prevent most attempts at mobilization, however, Africans still found ways to create and join informal associations.

Although prevented from involvement in public life in many colonial states, women formed countless associations specifically targeted at assisting or improving the lives of other women, including female secret societies among Kono women in Sierra Leone, through which women participated in struggles for land; dance associations that provided entertainment and a mutual aid network in Mombasa, Kenya; and financial self-help groups among Kikuyu women in colonial Kenya (Fallon 2008, p. 2). In addition, churches across Africa, including Namibia

(Cleaver and Wallace 1990) and Malawi (VonDoepp 2002) provided—and continue to provide—an important organizational space for women. Churches also served as an important resource from which women drew recruits for groups that addressed women's practical needs. Some scholars take the importance of church-based associations even further. In Lesotho, for example, Christian churches' pious associations and prayer unions for women gave members experience in challenging the authority of white church officials. Basotho women would prohibit Europeans (usually the wives of missionaries or colonial administrators) from attending their prayer union meetings and ignore priests' demands that pious associations that were deemed to have grown too powerful to be disbanded (Epprecht 2000).

However, similar to other civil society organizations, such groups were not always a positive force for women or indigenous populations. In colonial Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), for example, white women settlers from South Africa and the United Kingdom formed home craft clubs that taught African women domestic activities such as sewing, housekeeping, and cooking (Shaw 2008). While these groups offered one of the only sites in Rhodesia for black and white women to interact, and while these groups allowed black women to socialize and learn important information—such as hygiene practices that cut down on the incidence of childhood diseases—the clubs had a less altruistic purpose. Shaw (2008, p. 258) argues that these home craft clubs were used by the Rhodesian government to "showcase black progress in the face of African independence movements to the North" and to improve African women's "dispositions toward the colonial powers" (Shaw 2008, p. 268). Thus, the power of women's civil society groups were harnessed for both constructive and, arguably, destructive purposes.

Although many women's groups flourished during the colonial period, most colonized states were effective at preventing women from organizing across ethnic lines. European administrators drew upon different ethnic groups to fill stratified jobs, resulting in class differences among indigenous groups and resentment from poorer communities (Thiong'o 2009). In the more extreme cases of Namibia and South Africa, the apartheid regimes attempted to segregate members of ethnic communities even within urban townships, thereby keeping communities split and less likely to organize against the state. The social fragmentation that resulted from the engineering of class differences among indigenous communities prevented women from organizing across ethnic groups on the shared basis of gender.

Efforts by colonial powers to entrench and enforce western gender norms also contributed to the exclusion of women from the public and political spheres of society. In many cases, the adoption of western gender roles represented a break with precolonial practices. Before colonization, women often held positions of great ceremonial and public significance. In precolonial Nigeria, for example, Yoruba women were heavily involved in politics, as women selected and crowned the king (Fallon 2008). In Ghana's Asante kingdom, queen mothers were (and still are) key decision makers in the selection of chiefs and kings (Fallon 2008). In many instances, then, colonial efforts to relegate women to the private sphere led to a level of social and economic subordination of women to elder men that had not been previously seen in these societies (Walsh and Scully 2006).

The successful exclusion of females from colonial politics across the continent did not prevent women from forming civil society groups but did ensure that few of them adopted politicized agendas (Walsh and Scully 2006). Fallon (2003), for example, found that Ghanaian women's groups deliberately separated themselves from the colonial state, believing that it overlooked women's everyday concerns, and addressed their own economic and social needs by forming women's groups that engaged in income-generating activities. Although African women have mobilized around particular political issues throughout history, in many parts of the continent this mobilization has been sporadic, focused upon a specific issue, and marked by a decline in action following the conclusion of a given campaign (Hassim 2006). Moreover, as we show in the next section, anticolonial movements frequently used African women's bodies as "symbols of imperial resistance" (Walsh and Scully 2006), even though African women themselves were rarely at the forefront of these movements.

Women's Groups in Independence Struggles

The independence struggles that erupted across Africa beginning in the 1950s presented both extraordinary opportunities and unprecedented obstacles for women's associations. Most anticolonial movements employed female-related symbolism in the struggle for hearts and minds, drawing upon images of women as mothers, caregivers, and embodiments of tradition and culture (Walsh and Scully 2006). Women often capitalized on these traditional gender roles to justify and validate their political activities. Through the act of claiming these conservative gender roles, women in many liberation struggles were able to legitimize their radical protest strategies (Wells 1993; Britton 2005; Fallon 2008). Women could embody a "motherist" identity to facilitate their national boycotts, marches, mass action, and collective acts of civil disobedience (Tripp et al. 2009).

Despite the unique identities women could claim, they were a rarity among the official leaders of these anticolonial struggles. Nationalists frequently failed to include discussions on the status of women or gender equality policies in their demands for independence and plans for postcolonial states. Across Africa, independence movements espoused a commitment to gender equality while putting these issues on the backburner by arguing that women's liberation could not be achieved before national liberation (Bauer 2004). Nonetheless, nationalist movements "ultimately represented, however subtly, an opening of women's own radius of action, and a significant departure from their previous life" (Geisler 2004, p. 39), and this interruption to the status quo and prescribed gender roles contributed to the creation of influential women movements—borne out of civil society organizations—that achieved unprecedented rights for women in many parts of Africa in the postconflict period.

The period of anticolonial struggle that began in the 1950s was the first time that civil society groups and women's movements in Africa were able to connect in significant numbers with like-minded activists in other regions of the continent and

around the world (Keck and Sikkink 1998, Snyder 2006). Politically active women, often forced into exile by the colonial regimes they opposed, returned to their home countries armed with a "new vocabulary of feminist theory" (Seidman 1999, p. 295) and lessons about what did and did not work for women's movements in other parts of Africa. The transnational ties that African women fostered while in exile are still salient in women's civil society groups and movements today.

Independence struggles created new openings for women's involvement in political activism. In many African states engaged in military conflicts with colonizing powers, female members of opposition groups were often allowed—or even required—to serve in their armies. The military wings of the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) in Mozambique, Southwest Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia, and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in Zimbabwe included female recruits, although it is believed that very few of these women actually saw combat (Geisler 2004). Some female excombatants have argued that their experiences fighting alongside their male comrades—and in some cases commanding them—warmed the latter to the notion of equal rights for women, while others maintain that although gender roles were often less rigid in military camps, the status of women did not markedly change with the advent of independence. Indeed, most women who fought on behalf of liberation movements later felt that they had been "used" by the movements' male leaders, who reaped the rewards of independence without rewarding women for their efforts (Geisler 2004).

In addition to incorporating women in their armies, opposition parties often attempted to engage women in their cause by establishing women's wings. These wings were framed as a space in which women could assume leadership positions and identity and put women's issues on the party agendas. In practice, however, women's wings made it easier for independence parties to "contain" women's issues in one marginalized body. Moreover, political parties often employed women's wings as a tool through which they can control women's associations (along with other forms of associational life; Tripp et al. 2009). Independence parties often appealed to women to put their struggle for gender liberation on the backburner, assuring them that they would achieve liberation once their countries had been liberated (Tripp et al. 2009). After liberation, however, majority of African women saw little change in their status, despite new constitutions that appeared to ensure gender parity.

Exiles and the United Nations (UN)

Colonial powers' attempts to take out nationalist movements resulted in the flight of political activists, threatened with imprisonment, torture and, in some cases, death, from their home countries. The exiles borne of these independence movements found themselves in the unique position of being able to learn from and collaborate with like-minded activists in neighboring countries, and these collaborations still reverberate in politics and civil societies across Africa.

Female political exiles found educational opportunities to which they never would have had access at home, including United Nations (UN)-sponsored training institutions for Namibians exiled to Zimbabwe and Angola and access to engineering, law, and medical degrees at North American and European universities (Bauer 2004). Female exiles gained independence, autonomy, and insights into other cultures' gender norms while abroad. These experiences were foundational in shaping female exiles' attitudes on gender roles and the direction of their lives once they returned home. Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that a large percentage of female elected officials in many African countries were once political exiles. In Namibia in 2002, for example, 50 % of the female parliamentarians were exiles during that country's independence struggle (Bauer 2004, p. 500).

African women's engagement with regional and transnational activists fostered international discussions of experiences, philosophies, and political strategies in women's movements around the world. For countries that gained independence relatively late, such as Namibia and South Africa, these conversations were incredibly useful for helping their women's movements avoid the mistakes that had bedeviled other gender equality movements. Moreover, the timing of many independence movements fortuitously coincided with the United Nations' Decade for Women. African women found in the UN a willing partner in the fight for women's rights and a forum for discussion and collaboration with feminists across the continent. As countries throughout the developing world achieved independence in the 1950s–1970s, thereby qualifying them for UN membership, poverty was made a priority by the UN (Snyder 2006). In the 1970s, the UN's new focus on poverty led to the creation of the women and development movement and school of thought (Snyder 2006), which quickly began to stress the importance of meeting basic needs and overcoming poverty in developing countries (Snyder 2006). The overlap in the mission of many civil society groups and the United Nations' development strategy greatly benefited grassroots women's organizations. For the first time, women's NGOs received direct assistance from the UN, rather than having to go through the government, and community-owned loan funds were made available to women's groups (Snyder 2006). Thus, by the end of the 1970s, the UN had become "the guardian and advocate of [the] global [women's] movement" (Snyder 2006, p. 35).

The Namibian Experience

The experience of women and women's groups with the SWAPO, Namibia's independence party, is worth examining in some detail because its trajectory during its independence struggle vividly illustrates many of the patterns and problems that African women experienced during the liberation movements.

SWAPO's 1976 party constitution established its rhetorical commitment to gender equality, stating that the organization aims to "... combat all reactionary tendencies of individualism, tribalism, nepotism, racism, sexism, chauvinism and regionalism" (1976 SWAPO Constitution, quoted in Becker 1995, p. 144). As one facet of its

commitment to gender equality, SWAPO required unmarried, childless females to serve in its military wing, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN). Some former female PLAN fighters have suggested that the presence of females on the battlefield improved their standing in the eyes of their male counterparts (Lush 1993), while others have argued that, after independence, men ignored their contributions and took women's political "piece of the cake" (Geisler 2004, p. 61).

Another wing of the independence party, the SWAPO Women's Council (SWC), also provided unprecedented opportunities for female participation in a social sphere long deemed verboten to women by the patriarchal dictates of the apartheid, colonial and, in some cultures, precolonial regimes. Although the SWC offered unique prospects for female leadership within a Namibian political party, it also limited the potential influence of female leaders on SWAPO by delegating all "women's issues" to one council within the party. By compartmentalizing women's needs into one wing, SWAPO's main leaders rarely had to deal with these issues directly. SWC leaders had little power because they could not act without the approval of the central leadership. In addition, as Bauer (2006) asserts, the embodiment of women's activism almost exclusively within the context of political parties has served to divide women along partisan lines and prevent them from mobilizing on the basis of sex since SWAPO's inception.

Although the SWC's rhetoric often emphasized improving the status of women and correcting past social inequalities, it must be remembered that women's rights never held a position of great importance for the leadership of SWAPO. Every action of the SWC and SWAPO aimed not at enhancing women's rights but at securing freedom from South Africa; gendered rhetoric and a wing focused on women provided strategies for swelling the ranks of SWAPO supporters and helping to ensure the party's electoral victory in the independence election. Despite the marginalization of women within the organization, female SWAPO adherents were generally willing to subordinate their desires for gender equality to the "larger" issue of Namibian independence from South Africa.

SWAPO's influence in the 1960s politicized women and created the possibility of institutional representation. By the early 1970s, however, many SWAPO members, particularly those in leadership roles, had fled the country. Many remained in exile until independence in 1990 in neighboring Angola, Zambia and Zimbabwe, while others traveled to Europe or the United States, often to pursue university degrees. The near-total lack of SWAPO members and its political influence within Namibia during the most violent years of the independence war opened a space for civil society organizations to address women's needs and demands (Leys and Saul 1995).

Various civil society groups stepped in to fill the void created by the departure of SWAPO members. Some of the activities undertaken by these groups mirrored the efforts and goals of SWAPO, while others directed their energies at improving conditions for particular portions of the population. The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) represents one such group that specifically addressed the practical needs of women. The YWCA brought women together to undertake small projects, including creating gardens, sewing, and knitting (Cleaver and Wallace 1990). Similar to many women's groups, the YWCA's immediate goal was economic and

social development, which women achieved both by selling the clothing they made and by feeding their families from the produce they grew. The YWCA promoted a more "subversive" agenda as well, according to its Namibian president Agnes Tjongarero, who believed the projects enhanced women's self-confidence and led to "awareness of oppression . . . by the system . . . [and] also their husbands, their fathers, and so on" (Cleaver and Wallace 1990, p. 90).

The Namibia Women's Voice (NWV) represents another important member of the liberation struggle period civil society groups; indeed, the NWV was considered likely to become the leader of a non-partisan grassroots women's movement. Founded by the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN), an anti-apartheid organization that worked closely with SWAPO, the NWV resulted from international donor pressure put on the CCN to create a more inclusive, democratic structure. Despite the money-driven beginnings of the NWV, the group quickly gained attention and approval for its focus on "bread and butter" women's issues that SWAPO had ignored in its quest for independence (Becker 1995, p. 204). The NWV established offices in all 13 regions of the country and undertook dozens of projects, including the establishment of soup kitchens, kindergartens, leadership training courses, and income-generating activities such as sewing circles (Soiri 1996). Despite the popularity of the NWV, the group disbanded in 1989, shortly before Namibia officially gained its independence. SWAPO believed the NWV had lessened the SWC's influence and prioritized the improvement of women's status over Namibian independence.

Postconflict Period

Civil war and violent conflict often create opportunities for significant transformations in gender structures and national rules of engagement (Meintjes 2001; Powley 2003). While the end of colonial domination and civil conflict meant new openings for women to participate in civil society and public life, the imprint of precolonial and colonial ruling patterns often dictated the confines within which women could act and speak. Countries that gained independence early in the decolonization period often saw very limited changes in women's roles following the cessation of conflict. In part, this was because the rulers left in place by exiting colonial powers were authoritarian or because the liberation forces or military rulers that took power often dealt with dissent harshly. Women's political participation and agitation for representation was regarded as threatening and unpatriotic. As a result, women often retreated into the same limited spheres of association and action they had used during the colonial rule. Despite women's crucial roles in independence struggles as soldiers and activists, women's resubordination was evident across the continent, from Mozambique (Sheldon 1994) to Angola (Scott 1994) and from Zimbabwe (Ranchod-Nilson 1994) to Eritrea (Hale 2001).

Sometimes, women in these states were able to mobilize slowly for change around a specific issue over a period of years. Literacy, health care, and violence against women—these topics necessitated targeted action, and women were able to develop

civil society groups around these issues. Rather than working in familiar coalitions from the liberation struggle that would garner attention from the authoritarian state, women felt "the need to protect their own interests . . . working in smaller enclaves in order to safeguard their resources" (Fallon 2008, pp. 68–69). They were often able to work toward these strategic needs without challenging the power and masculinity of the state. By carefully navigating their activities, women could argue that they were working for the interests of the state by assisting in the welfare of society and by supplementing the work of government. Over time, these civil society groups often developed into more confrontational associations and coalitions demanding both recognition from political leaders and transformation in the state. Women's organizations became increasingly bolder as the democratic openings continued to appear.

A process of political learning transpired between the earlier and later waves of democratization. Women learned from their predecessors in previous struggles that they had to act vigorously and early if they wanted to realize any lasting gains for women after the transition. Changes in the social sector and in the public sphere had to be seized quickly, or the parties and leaders would demand that women return to their place in the domestic sphere. Unlike other countries that saw a gradual march toward increasingly autonomous women's movements (Fallon 2008), the newly liberated countries often had women poised to act and to take large, quick strides toward women's advancement in the state and in political representation (Bauer and Britton 2006). Women's groups worked to secure constitutional protection, electoral patterns, and legislative advancements to ensure their seats at the table of national politics. These organizations recognized that changes in the economy and the social structure were also needed, but these groups worked quickly to ensure that insider strategies for change in the government were secure so that other sectors could follow (Britton et al. 2009).

In the 1990s and 2000s, a number of African countries followed suit. There was a cascading effect of national leaders and political parties adopting electoral quotas or reserved seats to increase women's representation in politics (Tripp and Kang 2008). Governments may have been motivated by a desire to appear more democratic than they actually were. Women often become the physical markers and visible symbols for government ideologies. As a government embraces fundamentalism, women are pressured to dress and behave in scripted "traditional" ways (Tamale 2006; Mohanty 2003; Enloe 2000). Similarly, within Africa, many states remained semiauthoritarian, and the act of putting women into positions of national prominence was a visible way to claim legitimacy for their governments. This wave of ostensible democratization corresponded with what is now commonly called the "Second African Independence" or "African Renaissance."

The momentum across the continent was reminiscent of the patterns of activism and revolution seen earlier in nationalist liberation struggles. Women's organizations often became fervent sites of feminist action, even if they never adopted the term feminism and found it divisive (Hendricks and Lewis 1994; Hassim 2005). Women's movements were often coalitions of community-based organizations that had "a genuine commitment to the cause . . . volunteered and sacrificed their time and

resources with the fervor of a guerilla freedom fighter" (Tamale 2006, p. 39). It seemed the time was ripe for a widespread realization of women's rights.

Contemporary Trends

Despite the energy of the postindependence period and the "African Renaissance," contemporary patterns of women's participation in civil society are increasingly more institutionalized and less revolutionary. As women across Africa have started to take their place in parliaments (witness the example of Rwanda) and to pursue insider strategies for change, the revolutionary fervor of grassroots politics has transformed into more pragmatic, less confrontational, and more regulated processes. Although this may be a useful strategy for sustaining more systematic change, many worry that this shift has depoliticized the movement and minimized the goals of advancing women's status. Instead of broad-based social movements, we see a new cadre of individual women operating as gender consultants and advocates within institutionalized organizations.

Two related patterns mark this phase of women's groups in contemporary African civil society. First, Africa is part of the global trend of women's organizations and movements converting themselves into NGOs. The NGOization (Alvarez 1999) of women's civil society groups is part of a global restructuring in response to neoliberal policies as well as the professionalization and privatization of activist movements. The second trend is the growing impact of international, transnational, and regional networks on the domestic agendas and strategies of women's organizations. Both of these trends clearly hold a promise for building sustainable change for women. Yet, both may also deemphasize the role of passionate, grassroots feminist activism.

NGOization of Women's Activism

The NGOization of women's organizations and feminist activism is a global pattern. First recognized by Alvarez (1999) in her work in Latin America, this trend corresponds to the surge of neoliberal economic policies that encouraged the downsizing of the state and the outsourcing of government programs to civil society. At the same time, Africa has seen the expansion of the international donor and development regime into the domain of the state. As the global economy is restructured along neoliberal policies, there is also a push to formalize community-based organizations and activist networks into NGOs that can be recognized by, registered with, and regulated by the government.

NGOization involves a transformation from movement politics, characterized by oppositional politics and volunteer staff, to professionalized NGOs with paid staff and access to donors and grants. It—NGOization—was also, in some ways, a recipe for

survival for overworked and under-resourced activists. As Tamale (2006) states, "the fact that most of us work double—or even triple-shifts (inside and outside the home), the fact that our work is under-resourced, we were forced to turn to the development industry" (p. 39). The promise of grant funding and international support was a key factor in the turn of African organizations to the NGO model.

NGOs have been a site of effective policy initiation and program implementation. They are ideally positioned to assist with the implementation of government policies because they often have strong relationships with local communities. They are an inexpensive option for governments because governments can just fund the programs and not the staff or overhead. The result is that governments across Africa are outsourcing key functions to feminist and women-centered NGOs. NGOs often provide legal advice, public health and community education, skills and job training, microfinance and economic development projects, rape and domestic violence support, and rights-based education.

This process has been necessary to continue to attract domestic and foreign funding, as donors have become more likely to fund institutionalized, formalized groups that can demonstrate an absorptive capacity to receive, administer, and distribute grants. Although the pattern of NGOization has taken away some of the activist nature of the organizations, most organizations continue to be the bedrock for creating an informed and self-sufficient civil society. In some instances, this NGO–state collaboration can be a positive strategy, creating a hybrid form of engagement and cooperation, where government programs are more targeted and where NGOs can shape the nature of implementation and policy creation.

There is very little research on how these structures and networks perform over time. Factors such as high turnover rates for staff members that "NGO hop," tensions inherent in state–civil society collaborations and the mission creep of NGOs make it difficult to assess their effectiveness and collaboration in the long term. There are significant concerns about the long-term effects of NGOization, especially among those working in activist networks. The process of formalizing a movement into an NGO structure often means that more radical strategies and viewpoints become sidelined or erased. Tamale (2006), in particular, has voiced the concern that the professionalization of the women's movement signals a shift from feminists and activists to femocrats and careerists who are more concerned with personal advancement than the movement itself. She argues that the "government's tight control of non-governmental organizations' work ... has depoliticized the women's movement" (p. 39).

Given the dependence on donors and governments, many fear that women's movements are being co-opted into government agendas (Lang et al. 1997; Silliman 1999; Sadoun 2006). Many fear that the movement and organizations may become merely bureaucratic handmaidens who lose their autonomy and critical edge (Britton 2006). However, there are also some useful and progressive changes that have resulted from the growing influence of the international development regime. Most donor agencies and international organizations stress women's rights as human rights (Tripp 2005). This is a powerful hook utilized by many local women's groups when they challenge their leaders and political parties to realize women's rights.

Transnational Organizing and Networks

A second key pattern in contemporary African society is the ever-increasing influence that transnational movements and regional networks have on women's organizations and mobilization. These border-crossing networks have been facilitated by a variety of changes in how women mobilize. New communication technologies and social media have made international mobilization and consultation much easier. Although computer ownership and Internet access are not widespread in most parts of Africa, many women's organizations have been able to access this technology with great regularity for the last decade or more. Mobile phone technology is becoming more affordable and available. As more women gain access to the Internet via mobile phones, transnational networking by individual women and community-based organizations has increased.

Economic liberalization and globalization have also made African borders more porous—but not always through decreasing trade barriers and monetary flows. Instead, Africa often sees increasing pressures of migration created by conflict, economic recession, and global climate change. Yet, even within these unstable spaces of cross-border migratory patterns, we see organizations forming among women.

International conferences, beginning especially with the Beijing conference, have established lasting networks of collaboration and exchange among women's groups at all levels. Conferences occurring within Africa have been even more effective at building transnational networks at the regional level. These regional networks are also becoming formalized into permanent regional or continent-wide organizations that are able to use their collective, cross-border coalitions to lobby for women's rights at the domestic level.

These coalitions create rich spaces from which women can pressure their individual leaders for change and make demands on regional bodies. One example of an effective regional women's civil society organization is the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance. This alliance was initially created to push the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region to adopt a binding protocol on gender and development. Initially, the alliance was composed of 16 regional and national NGOs that combined efforts to assist in the regional mobilization of support for the protocol (GenderLinks 2007). At a stakeholders' conference in April 2007, the 14 member states and representatives of civil society gathered to provide feedback and suggestions on the protocol, and the Gender Alliance was a vocal participant (Ruiters 2007, p. 1). As Michele Ruiters writes, "The process of drawing up the protocol has been consultative and inclusive of government, civil society, and intergovernmental groups, thus reflecting the general move towards democratic decision- and law-making in SADC" (2007, p. 1).

The protocol is expansive in its scope, and it has new, specific targets for achieving equitable land rights, increasing women's political participation, eradicating gender-based violence and human trafficking, improving reproductive rights, and stopping economic exploitation. It also calls on member states to orchestrate public awareness educational campaigns addressing each of the legislative changes: ending access

discrimination of land, water, and property rights by 2015; promoting equal access and rights to credit, capital, mortgages, and security; and working toward gender responsiveness in entrepreneurship and trade policies. Special provisions exist for widows and children, along with protections for citizens with disabilities.

While the full implementation of the protocol remains to be seen, the most promising aspect of the process is the solidification of the gender-based network in the alliance. Its first success is evident in its campaign to initiate, draft, affect, and pass the protocol. This example of transitional feminism in practice will have tangible, regional effects on women's lives, their access to strategic and practical needs, and their security in the public and private spheres. What is most promising is that the alliance has set up a parallel process to monitor, assist, and force the ratification and implementation of the protocol. The alliance meets at the same time as SADC and has established sectoral targets and timelines for each of the priorities in the protocol. Therefore, while enforcement issues exist within individual states, the alliance can draw on the transnational network for lobbying and public pressure to ensure implementation. The alliance is now fully institutionalized as a transnational coalition.

The new level of SADC collaboration is just one example of the interaction among women's groups in Africa. These networks provide the best testing ground for new strategies, policies, and programs that can be shared across borders, demonstrating the notion that there are African solutions to African problems. National initiatives no longer stop at the border's edge. These new patterns illustrate how important it is that transnational policy diffusion and civil society collaboration continue.

Conclusion

A persistent tension courses through the experiences of women in civil society across Africa. Although women have succeeded in altering constitutions, legislation, and patterns of representation, they still face several obstacles in realizing their political rights and rightful place in the public sphere. In several African countries with high levels of women's representation in political offices, women in civil society are now struggling to ensure that these voices are authentic and substantive—and not just window dressing for authoritarian leaders or political parties. New challenges of HIV/AIDS (see Chap. 21 by Richard Wamai for instance), constrictions of state support due to neoliberal restructuring, economic pressures of the global economic recession, migratory pressures caused by economics and the environment, and continued civil unrest and authoritarianism place significant burdens on women in civil society. Women must continue to develop new tools to sustain their families and their countries.

The new push for inclusionary feminism, in which women gain access to and influence on the state, continues to blur the arbitrarily rigid boundaries between the state and the civil society. This has been a conscious, pragmatic strategy on the part of women across Africa to harness the state as yet another tool to transform

women's lives in civil society (Britton and Fish 2009). This strategy is also one pursued with caution due to states' persistent threats to limit the power of women inside government (Mama 2000; Tamale 1999, 2000; Walsh 2009; Hassim 2005).

One key point of consistency across the history of women in Africa is their ability to employ civil society as a resource for mobilizing for collective action and as a resource for nurturing coalition building across differences and borders. As women continue to agitate for their needs and interests, this new level of cross-national collaboration ensures that women can share their models of good practices across borders.

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Chapter 19
NGOs, Civil Society, and Development

Badru Bukenya and Sam Hickey

Introduction

The development context in Africa has witnessed significant changes since the 1990s—changes driven by forces both from within and from without the respective countries. Nationally, following the third democratic wave that swept through the continent in the late 1980s and early 1990s, of which civil society organizations (CSOs) were among the key architects, African governments increasingly adopted political reforms to permit greater pluralism and competition, including but not limited to periodic elections, within the polity (Bratton and van de Walle 1992; Cheru 2012; Young 1996). This movement brought with it hopes for improved levels of governance, including around the effective and accountable delivery of development. Some critical commentators have observed, however, that this pro-democracy movement did not transform the old order in any significant measure (Cheru 2012). Indeed, in many African countries, the opposition is often harassed, regimes tolerate high levels of corruption involving senior government officials, there are still restrictions on the freedoms of speech and association, and elections are often marred by gross irregularities. Within this political context, CSOs, including NGOs, are encouraged to focus on "nonpolitical" issues, including through development as service delivery rather than development as a broader democratic project involving empowerment and accountability (Bukenya 2012). Some scholars have described most African governments as "hybrid" regimes featuring both authoritarian and democratic tendencies, but with the former being dominant (*The Economist* 2012; also see Tripp 2010, on Uganda).

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The international context has been significant here and has also tended to reinforce the developmental rather than political role of civil society in Africa. By the late 1990s and early 2000s, the "full-blooded" neo-liberal policies of the 1980s had been toned down within the new era of the post-Washington consensus (Hulme 2008), defined mainly in terms of its dual focus on "good governance" and poverty reduction (Hickey 2008). In contrast to the 1980s, where the focus of the key multilateral development agencies, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), was on trimming the state, by the close of the 1990s the importance of the state and its institutions had been reacknowledged (World Bank 1997). Development is touted to be more "pro-poor," with an increased focus on service delivery, fighting poverty, and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs; World Bank 2004). To guarantee this "pro-poor" stance, poor countries are implored by international donors to ensure that the citizens can participate in the formulation and implementation of development policies, as through the consultative processes established for writing and implementing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs; Booth 2005; Dijkstra 2010; Komivesa and Dijkstra 2011). Here, NGOs and CSOs are given access to large-scale funding to act as "partners" with governments in mutually developing and delivering development policies.

Scholars are currently divided on whether these developments should be celebrated by NGOs or should rather be treated as a cause for anxiety (see also Chap. 23). On the one hand, and in view of the increased push for partnership between NGOs and the state, increased availability of official funding, and the emphasis on service delivery, many have predicted a bleak future for NGOs, insisting that their room for maneuver at this point in time is greatly limited (Edwards 2008). In particular, many are questioning the continued ability of NGOs to function as incubators of alternative development ideas and/or as strengtheners of civil society amidst the current emphasis that the ideal mode of realizing progress in Southern countries is development by consensus (Banks and Hulme 2012; Bebbington et al. 2008; Edwards 2008; Fowler 2000a; Porter 2003).

In this chapter, we refer to this group of scholars as "skeptics." On the other hand, however, another group, which we call "optimists," insists that opportunities for pursuing development that contributes to progressive political outcomes still exist for NGOs (Brass 2011; Charlton and May 1995; Corbridge et al. 2005; Elbers and Arts 2011; Guijt 2008). To optimists, African state elites are accurately aware that they cannot meet the economic aspirations of their citizens; hence, they are compelled to allow CSOs that can supplement their own efforts to work (Brass 2010, 2011; Mercer 2002). Moreover, the political conditionalities that the international donor community requires of African governments before extending aid have changed African states, making them more receptive to their civil societies (Charlton and May 1995; Kasfir 1998b). Optimists are confident that even in their most totalitarian variant, most African states can never fully annihilate civil society—there will always be room for maneuver, even if this means civil society actors resorting to informal, unorganized, or rude forms of expression that Scott (1985) collectively termed as the "weapons of the weak" (see Obadare 2009 for examples from Nigeria). We explore these debates within the context of African countries and investigate the challenges

and opportunities for civil society, and NGOs in particular, within the current working environment.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows: The next section gives a historic overview of the concept of civil society, locating it within the European history of state formation and the development of capitalism. From here, it identifies the two dominant usages of civil society as a guide to international development policy and praxis. A history of its development in the African context is then discussed before the next section returns to the issues outlined earlier by identifying and discussing the main areas in which the current development context has constrained and/or opened opportunities for the operations of NGOs and civil society, with a specific focus on Africa. The last section argues that coping with the prevailing constraints will necessitate a reconceptualization of the position of NGOs within civil society vis-à-vis state/market/CSOs. It also provides recommendations on how this can be achieved.

What Does Civil Society Mean and Where Did It Come from?

In order to appreciate the repercussions of the above developments on NGOs, it is important to start by understanding what civil society means. According to Hyden (1997), the original application of civil society is linked to the ideas of the eighteenth and nineteenth century European philosophers, such as Alexis de Tocqueville, Thomas Paine, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and John Locke. Some believe that the ideas of these numerous philosophers can usefully be conceptualized as falling into two distinct traditions—the liberal and alternative traditions—which involve adopting different perspectives on how civil society emerged in relation to the state and processes of state formation and the market and processes of capitalist development and how relations among them should be organized (Bratton 1994; Lewis and Kanji 2009). We briefly elaborate on these two traditions as follows.

There are several versions of the liberal tradition of civil society. Locke, one of its forefathers, believed that states arise from the society and are necessary neutral arbiters in the conflicts between individuals. He observed, however, the need to limit the sovereignty of the state in order to preserve individual freedoms derived from natural law. This, Locke argued, necessitates a "social contract" between rulers and the ruled to (a) guarantee the natural rights of individuals and (b) allow the state to intervene and protect society from *destructive conflict* (Hyden 1997). In contrast, de Tocqueville saw the state as naturally oppressive, the bulwark to which would be self-governing associations. de Tocqueville's account of associationalism in the USA argued that voluntary associations nurture and uphold civic democratic values of voluntarism and community spirit—the virtues of civility—while at the same time help in scrutinizing state actions and holding it to account (Lewis and Kanji 2009).

Within the alternative tradition, civil society was initially viewed with suspicion. For instance, Hegel saw it as comprising of "self-aggrandising" groups that posed a danger of particularistic interests overwhelming the public good (Boyd 2004; Lewis

1992). Hegel, and Marx after him, observed that as a result of economic division of labor, class-based societal strata emerge, and it is these that shape the form and character of civil society. Civil society comprises of associations, corporations, and estates that emerge in each stratum. Hegel noted that each association represents the egoistic interests of its stratum, which could be in opposition to the interests of other associations. Hence, the state is needed to mediate the opposing groups to protect common interests as it defines them by intervening in the activities of civil society. It was only in the twentieth century that Antonio Gramsci extended this analysis to argue that civil society is a key site of contest between "hegemonic" and "counter hegemonic" forces (Bebbington and Hickey 2006). It is where the state seeks to persuade people of the legitimacy of its economic and social project. At the same time, civil society provides scope for counter-hegemonic movements: site of resistance, challenge to social structures, and articulation of alternative forms of economic and social projects. According to Gramsci, the same institutions of civil society, such as churches, political parties, movements, and media, can be either hegemonic or counter-hegemonic—they can support the state's position or articulate and spearhead popular struggles for alternatives (Bebbington and Hickey 2006).

Civil Society and Development Theory

Although civil society is an old concept whose emergence coincided with the rise of capitalism and the evolution of the modern state, its current popularity and usage in development is a recent phenomenon that can be traced from around the 1980s after the failure of state-based strategies to address societal problems between 1945 and 1970s, and market-based ones between the 1970s and 1980s (Edwards 2009). Its reappearance is also linked to the (re)emergence of democracy in Latin America and Southeast Asia and collapse of communism in Europe (Bratton 1994; Lewis and Kanji 2009). Here, two clear approaches to civil society—the mainstream and radical, closely related to liberal and alternative traditions discussed earlier—emerged to guide development policy and practice (Bebbington and Hickey 2006; Lewis and Kanji 2009).

Mainstream Approaches to Civil Society

Mainstream approaches are generally rooted within the liberal political tradition that views civil society as the realm of voluntary associations existing in the space between state, market, and the household. It gained prominence within the development mainstream in the context of neo-liberal critiques of the 1980s that attributed the failure of development policies to the inefficiencies of the state. The state, particularly in Africa, was characterized as a rent-seeker, bloated, bureaucratic, unaccountable to society, unresponsive to societal needs, and generally a major hindrance to economic

growth (Bratton 1989b). Initially, the policy recommendations from such analysis were that the role of the state needed to be trimmed to allow market forces and private sector initiatives to flourish in its place. It was soon discovered, however, that in most African countries the private sector existed only in small, profitable market niches—something that left the majority of people's needs not being met by this sector (Leonard 2002). It was at this point that development NGOs were singled out by donors as the favored representatives of civil society in the drive to privatize the provision of social services. Here, NGOs were to provide services among populations disadvantaged by poverty, who were unreached by the private-for-profit actors (Bratton 1989b). The assumed characteristics of NGOs, such as being grassroots-based harbingers of progressive development agendas like participation, gender, and empowerment and being close to poor people, made them particularly well-suited for this role (Lewis and Kanji 2009; Marcussen 1996). These claims led to increased direct funding to NGOs throughout the 1980s and, consequently, their numbers soared in most African countries (Therkildsen and Semboja 1995).

A convergence between popular demands for citizenship and democracy and neo-liberal efforts to restructure state–society relations had given rise to a preoccupation with the quality of governance and efforts to make the state more accountable to its citizens (Kabeer et al. 2012). In what came to be known as the policy agenda of "good governance," achieving social progress was seen as the product of the delicate relationship between government, the market, and civil society (Edwards 2009; Lewis and Kanji 2009). Several observers argue that the "neo-Tocquevillean" ideas of scholars like Putnam provided a strong theoretical rationale for the central place assigned to civil society within the agenda of good governance. For Putnam (1993), participation in the voluntary associations of civil society generated "social capital" in the form of trust, norms of reciprocity, and networks of civic engagement, which, when harnessed, could promote efficiently run and democratically accountable government as well as a productive economy in which economic transactions are based on trust, shared information, and values (Lewis and Kanji 2009). NGOs were touted as key political actors with potential for bolstering civil society and democratization more generally in the global South (Bratton 1989b). Although many have disputed its theoretical and empirical grounds (Fowler 1991; Howell 2000; Hulme and Edwards 1995; Mercer 2002), some insist that in their political role, NGOs help citizens not only to advance their interests (represent their voice in areas where the natural political representatives of the poor, such as political parties and trade unions, are weak or nonexistent) but also to protect their rights (as when NGOs act as watchdogs vis-à-vis the state) (Clarke 1998; Fatton 1995; Uphoff and Krishna 2004). According to Edwards, "especially where formal citizenship rights are not well entrenched, it is civil society that provides the channels through which most people can make their voices heard in government decision making, protect and promote their civic and political rights and strengthen their skills as future political leaders" (2009, p. 15). With the (flawed) belief that the "third sector" in most African countries is an emerging phenomenon, building and strengthening it through NGOs, in order to play the above service delivery and democratic strengthening roles, has been one of the major preoccupations for the donor community since the 1990s (Bebbington and Hickey 2006; Kasfir 1998a).

Alternative Approaches to Civil Society

The "alternative" approach, which is clearly linked to post-Marxist scholars like Gramsci, sees civil society both as an arena in which state power is legitimized and where other social groups can also organize in order to challenge state power and dominant ideas with their own alternatives. In other words, civil society is "the site of struggle between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces" (Lewis and Kanji 2009, p. 128). Within the "alternative" approach, development policy takes the form of building stable and socially inclusive public spheres. From this perspective, struggles over development are really struggles between different political projects concerning how society should be organized—hegemonies and counter-hegemonies. Put differently, ideas about development must continually be contested and reworked in society (Bebbington and Hickey 2006; Bebbington et al. 2008). This approach also places a strong emphasis on understanding the constraints of class, ethnicity, and gender on people's agency, to the tensions between the state and civil society and to those that exist within civil society itself (Howell 2000). Thus, as illustrated by the Africanist account further, civil society can incorporate clientelist relationships as well as the more progressive forms favored by Putnam and others in the mainstream approach (Fatton 1995). The alternative approach challenges the tripartite separation of society by emphasizing that the state, civil society, and the market not only have blurred boundaries, as observers of African societies have long noted (e.g., Chabal and Daloz 1999), but also that they are mutually constitutive, shaping each other's form and character through the struggles for power between them (Bebbington et al. 2009; Lewis and Kanji 2009).

Africa and Its Distinct Tradition of Civil Society

Although the mainstream emphasis on civil society strengthening programs in this region might give the impression that African societies possess few CSOs, on close inspection, one can discern a rich associational life in Africa dating as far back as the precolonial period (Bratton 1989a, 1994). However, as opposed to Western societies where membership of CSOs is voluntary and the groups themselves are bounded by crosscutting ties of solidarity, precolonial associational life in Africa thrived on the basis of *ascriptive/primordial* attachments of age-sets, clans, religion, and other such features (Ekeh 1975; Hyden et al. 2003; Kasfir 1998a, b). Most associations in Africa were (and many still are) driven by norms of *moral ethnicity* centering on reciprocal obligations between the rich and the poor, powerful and weak and obligation to the overall community well-being as the basis for one's being "a good member of the local community" (Orvis 2001, p. 23). Hence, according to some, such associations groomed Africans into *primordial citizens* whose rights are considered "not as inherent but as acquired through civic practice that upholds obligations to the community," as opposed to *liberal citizens* where "rights inhere in individuals, exist prior to community, and are guaranteed with minimal obligation to the community"

(Ndegwa 1997, p. 602). According to Fatton (1995, p. 73), the "autonomous agentic individual freed from communal, ethnic and class loyalties," which is the basis of liberal views on civil society, "is nowhere to be found in Africa."

Significantly, the commercialization and urbanization that accompanied colonial rule prompted Africans to create new forms of associations such as labor unions, cooperative societies, professional bodies, welfare associations, and agricultural work parties. Some argue that these new associations transcended the ascriptive character of precolonial African associations, not least because they consisted of people from different ethnic, regional, and sometimes religious backgrounds (Bratton 1995). However, others observe that some, like the "hometown associations" in Nigeria (Orvis 2001; Osaghae 2006a), Harambee associations in Kenya (Orvis 2001) and associations linked to the traditional kingdoms of Buganda, Tooro, Busoga, and Bunyoro in Uganda (Oloka-Onyango and Barya 1997) were merely updated expressions of long-standing informal solidarities (Bratton 1994). For proponents of liberal notions of civil society, such associations should not even be considered part of civil society given their allegedly "undemocratic" and "premodern" identities (e.g., Whaites 1996).

However, the line between ethnic and civil society in Africa is not so clear cut (cf. Ekeh 1975; Ndegwa 1997). For example, both types of CSOs have played pivotal roles in seeking to advance democratization, good governance, and development in Africa. For instance, both became political when they transformed into interest groups that challenged foreign rule, and some even became fully fledged political parties that agitated for African independence (Bratton 1989a; Oloka-Onyango and Barya 1997). In addition, according to Fatton (1995), it is the traditional CSOs that resisted the totalizing project of the postcolonial state and that went further to offer those public goods that governments were either unwilling or unable to provide (Honey and Okafo 1998). This is because they provided operating space for civil society actors at the time when the formal/modern CSOs were constrained by the predatory tendencies of the state. Moreover, and in a more realistic reading of African societies, Howell (2000) observes that the forces of class, ethnicity, gender, ideology, and religion are not limited to the traditional CSOs; rather, in a large measure, they also permeate the so-called "modern" CSOs in Africa. As such, we find it more useful to use a Gramscian rather than a liberal lens to understand the emergence of civil society in Africa, not only because this enables us to consider the ethnic dimension of associational life as potentially progressive, in line with recent findings (Hickey 2011; Orvis 2001; Page et al. 2009), but also because it enables a clearer focus on the politics and power relations that permeate both the civic and the political realms.

Appraising the Mainstream Approach to Civil Society in Africa

Despite offering a more realistic account of the workings of civil society, however, the post-Marxist approach to civil society has not attracted as much appeal in official development policy agendas as its mainstream counterpart. As observed earlier,

skeptics note that within the current development context, donors have focused on the version of civil society that exalts the primacy of associations (synonymous with NGOs) and consensual development while playing down or ignoring the more conflictual Gramscian version (Mohan 2002). In addition, the starting point for recent donor programs focusing on building civil society in Africa has been to promote the "modern" civil society that promotes new relationships between state and society, perhaps with a view to transforming Africans into liberal citizens (Hyden 1997; Kasfir 1998a). The ideal organizations in the eyes of donor agencies are NGOs (Mohan 2002). The development implications of such a stance on the operations of NGOs in Africa are the focus of the discussion further.

NGOs in Partnership-Driven Development

> It cannot be assumed, *a priori*, that a harmonic model with aligned interests between state, capital, labour and civic forces is appropriate or desirable at this moment in time for *all* societies. (Fowler 2000a, p. 642–643)

Guided by the hypothesis that it might be possible to elicit greater commitment to equitable and efficient development policies by obliging governments to debate their policies openly with other actors in their countries (Booth 2005), partnership-driven development approaches are now pervasive in most African countries since the late 1990s, with the backing of powerful international development agencies. On the ground, this is reflected in the new spaces for policy debate such as sector working groups, stakeholder consultations, and participatory poverty assessments that have sprung up in countries receiving official development aid (Driscoll and Evans 2005; Hickey and Mohan 2008; Lister and Nyamugasira 2003). According to Fowler (2000a), partnership, as articulated by donors, corresponds to the Lockean "social contracts" arrangement that is prevalent in the West. It implies that development policies are to be reached through consensus rather than conflict. However, the evolution of Northern societies, in Fowler's view, followed a conflictual path akin to the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic processes articulated by post-Marxist scholars. Therefore, he challenges the universal prescription of the consensual model to countries outside Europe, with arguments that successful development requires adaptations of policies and interventions to fit local contexts. Some argue that in contexts where poverty and inequality are pervasive to levels witnessed in Africa, progressive civil society is likely to be a site for the production of discourses that can be critical of the state (Mueller-Hirth 2009). Yet the current trend, according to Porter (2003), is that the partnership model has brought NGOs, donors, and government into relationships that even NGO sympathizers acknowledge could be, if we can borrow Hulme and Edwards' (1997) terminology, "too close for comfort." Arguably, this undermines the autonomy of NGOs to front alternative ideas that are contrary to those by donors and governments.

Critics argue that consenting to the development by consensus ideology has affected the relationship of NGOs with other civil society actors that use radical tactics.

In South Africa, for instance, there are reports of some NGOs that have delinked themselves from social movements because they do not want to be "tainted with the aura of radicalism" (Mueller-Hirth 2009). Within the partnership model, mass mobilization is portrayed as an outdated apartheid-era struggle tactic that is no longer acceptable in democratic South Africa (see also Chap. 17). Instead, NGOs prefer that social movements use formal channels such as institutionalized politics (parliament), the media, and litigation through courts as the legitimate means to pursue their grievances. Those NGOs that are still sympathetic to the role of social movements are reportedly trying to civilize these radical institutions to the effect that South Africa is witnessing what can be described as "NGO-ised movements" (Mueller-Hirth 2009).

Lister and Nyamugasira (2003), drawing on empirical evidence from Uganda, report on a dangerous trend in which donors distinguish between NGOs that engage in service delivery from those performing advocacy roles. Among the major problems with this categorization is that NGOs in the latter category are regarded by government functionaries as "opposition"; hence, many now feel pressured to avoid advocacy activities. Moreover, these scholars note that service-delivering NGOs are more akin to state contractors (because donors channel resources through government) and, therefore, may fail to "hold government to account" for they depend on it for their financial survival (Lister and Nyamugasira 2003; Wood 1997). For Wood (1997), when states "franchise" service provision responsibilities to NGOs, citizens lose basic political rights, especially when nonstate providers become accountable to the state rather than directly to those who receive the services.

However, optimistic analysts have watered down some of these criticisms by suggesting that working in close collaboration with official development institutions, especially the state, is not necessarily a bad thing. In some instances, it should rather be interpreted as part of the NGOs' political strategizing. For instance, having close relationships with the state could actually allow NGOs to gain access and influence things from inside the state itself (Batley 2011; Charlton and May 1995; Chhotray 2008; Clark 1997; Lavalle et al. 2005). Such relationships may be developed through shared experience of counter-hegemonic struggles, as between pro-democracy CSOs and left-wing parties in Brazil (Lavalle et al. 2005), or as a strategic way of CSOs forging alliances with progressive actors within the state in order to better hold it to account, as in some parts of India (Chhotray 2008). Batley (2011, p. 316) suggests that collaboration only affects "how" but not "whether" NGOs influence state policies and their implementation. Therefore, some forms of collaboration may offer more progressive possibilities than the liberal emphasis on autonomy tends to allow. In Uganda, Lister and Nyamugasira (2003) observe that NGOs that operate hospitals or related health facilities—locally known as facility-based NGOs—have more influence when it comes to health policy formulation as compared with their advocacy-oriented counterparts. Many NGOs now consider noncooperation with the government "as an outdated attitude that represents a politics of self-exclusion" (Miraftab 1997, p. 366). Moreover, other analysts have argued that in contexts where state agencies genuinely lack the capacity to respond to their citizens, as the case is in most African countries, political activism and other conflictual tactics yield limited positive outcomes other than driving the state on the defensive (Goetz and Gaventa

2001; Mitlin 2008; Posner 2004; Satterthwaite 2008). Even the advocates of NGO autonomy acknowledge the untenability of such a stance "in situations where those carrying the duty to provide entitlements—typically the state—do not have adequate resources to do so" (Fowler 2000b, p. 595). Such circumstances, it is argued, call for approaches that aim at (re)building the capacity of the state to function before demands could be made on it by citizens (Gaventa 2002, 2004; Golooba-Mutebi 2005; Posner 2004).

While critics insist that the dualism of supporting government in implementation while remaining in a critical watchdog role that holds government accountable is difficult to accomplish (Mueller-Hirth 2009), there are now several examples of where this has happened on the African continent (Brass 2010; Bukenya 2012) and other Southern countries (Chhotray 2008). In Kenya, Brass (2011) notes that since 2002, there has been an increased trend for the Government, through different line ministries and provincial administrations, to reach out to NGOs to encourage them to engage in the policymaking process and service delivery. She argues that although this trend can partially be explained by donors' insistence on state–civil society collaborations, the view of most commentators is that this is a deliberate strategy by the administration to improve the state's development record, which had declined under the authoritarian regime of President Moi. Regardless of the motivation, Brass observes that:

> NGOs now sit on government policymaking boards, development committees, and stake-holder forums; their strategies and policies are integrated into national planning documents; and their methods of decision-making have, over time, become embedded in government's own. NGOs have become institutionalized in the governing processes of public service provision. (2011, p. 218)

Rather than suggesting co-option, Brass argues that this should be seen as an il-lustration of progressive mutual influence of state and NGOs that has resulted in "democratizing" development processes within the Kenyan government agencies (2011, p. 217). She claims further that contrary to "hollowing out" the state (Wood 1997), the involvement of NGOs in Kenya has "begun to increase transparency, accountability, responsiveness, and participation within the public administration, opening the door to the development of a vibrant interest group democracy" (Brass 2011, p. 223). She, therefore, talks of the blurring boundaries between the state and the society, where people move back and forth within these sectors and coin-fluence each other in a Gramscian account of how civil society operates. However, other accounts of this process, as with ex-CSO leaders who joined government, such as the Commissioner of Kenya National Commission for Human Rights, note that changing how government works can be a very slow process (Okello 2010, p. 199).

From Grassroots Mobilization to Service Delivery?

Critics observe that there were significant pressures during the 1990s for NGOs to fo-cus their energies on service delivery rather than more political activities (Bebbington

2005; Hickey 2008). According to Brass (2011), over 90 % of the registered NGOs in Kenya are involved primarily in service delivery. The situation is the same with most NGOs that receive foreign funding in Uganda (Barr et al. 2003; Wallace et al. 2004). To many, this is a dangerous development because the increased focus on service delivery comes at the expense of grassroots mobilization of the poor, with the latter, allegedly, not only being a nobler role for NGOs but also the most reliable route for ensuring that pro-poor development benefits flow on a sustainable basis (Banks and Hulme 2012). For NGOs, service delivery represents what Korten (1987, p. 148) calls "first generation" activities that focus on meeting immediate needs, primarily during emergencies, but "[contribute] little or nothing to the ability of the poor, whether countries or individuals, to meet their own needs on a sustained basis." For some scholars, service provision is nothing more than a band-aid "solution" to problems that require fundamental reforms in government and other social structures that keep people in poverty (Banks and Hulme 2012; Bebbington et al. 2008; Dicklitch 1998). Therefore, service delivery and the "apolitical" development strategies of NGOs are more likely to undermine rather than support processes of state building and citizenship formation (cf. Gideon 1998, Manji and Coill 2002, Hearn 2007). From this perspective, NGOs have been urged to "return to the roots," by denouncing apolitical strategies in favor of political ones such as activism and demonstrations, if they are to reclaim their relevance (Banks and Hulme 2012; Obadare 2011).

In response, defenders of service delivery NGOs have argued that such criticisms are made without due consideration to the political contexts within which NGOs operate. They indicate that activities that critics regard as important, such as direct political activism, are either inappropriate or hampered by historical and structural factors in Africa. It is argued further that even after the opening of the political space to multiparty politics, in most African countries, political activities of registered NGOs and other civil society groups are still legally restricted by the state (Cornwall et al. 2011; Dicklitch and Lwanga 2003; Therkildsen and Semboja 1995). Most political regimes in Africa insist that voluntary organizations should be both nonprofit-making and nonpolitical. In Uganda, for instance, being outspoken triggers outright harassment from the government and could risk the very survival of NGOs through deregistration (Batsell 2005; Grebe and Nattrass 2009; Lister and Nyamugasira 2003). According to Grebe and Nattrass (2009, p. 12), "there are personal and professional risks to being perceived as critical [of the state]—ranging from exclusion from consultative forums, being cut off from sources of funding and even personal harassment and intimidation." Consequently, NGOs in most African countries strategically take quieter routes of political influence to lobby government officials "behind the scenes" (Batsell 2005). Such an approach takes into consideration the prohibitive social norms, such as the strongly ingrained respect for and deference to authority, leadership, and elders, which are pervasive in Africa (Ringold et al. 2012; Tembo 2012).

In such political settings, activities aiming at citizens' transformation, like grassroots mobilization, enlightening citizens about their rights, and encouraging them to demand for accountability and responsiveness from authorities, may not be carried out in the open. Some NGOs got cue from Fowler (1993), who suggests that

organizations working under such political constraints should engage in the "onion strategy" in which transformation is done by stealth. The onion strategy is characterized by political activities and methods that are camouflaged by welfare-oriented activities to cloud their actual intent. The "outer layer of welfare-oriented activity," Fowler argues, "protects inner layers of material service delivery that acts as nuclei for a core strategy dedicated to transformation" (1993, p. 335). Thus, optimists would argue that while NGOs outwardly appear engaged in Korten's "first generation" welfarist activities, which are allegedly politically neutral in the eyes of state functionaries, they are in fact implementing transformation-oriented activities (Bukenya 2012; Guijt 2008).

This optimistic position can be illustrated through the case of the AIDS Support Organisation Uganda Ltd. (TASO), a prominent Ugandan NGO that is engaged in HIV/AIDS services delivery (Bukenya 2012). TASO is the largest indigenous NGO in Uganda and has, from the start, been driven by the premise that cooperation with the state is the best way to achieve development outcomes. Founded by a public servant from within the medical profession, the good relations that TASO established with the state ensured that it received material support in the form of land, staff secondments, and other resources that enabled it to mature into an influential NGO. Having initially operated in apparent opposition to the state, the early 2000s saw TASO adopt a new approach. Rather than circumventing the inefficient bureaucracy in Uganda, or directly challenging it through advocacy techniques, TASO "partnered" with selected local governments in rural Uganda to implement a project dubbed the Mini TASO project (MTP). Batley observes, with examples from Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, that NGOs in similar circumstances as TASO would as much as possible avoid conflict or confrontation with the government—"not only because the NGO would lose business but also because it would sacrifice influence" (2011, p. 317).

It is interesting to note that the MTP sought to build the capacity of local governments in the area of HIV/AIDS management while also simultaneously empowering people with HIV/AIDS (PWAs) to make demands on the state for the proper functioning of these services. In this way, the MTP approach resembled what Gaventa (2002, 2004) calls working on "both sides of the equation," with the aim of providing a platform for the state and citizens to engage in an "unmediated encounter that offers each party an undistorted [and perhaps improved] sighting of the other" (Corbridge et al. 2005, p. 44). For the two case study sites investigated, there was evidence that the MTP positively contributed to state-building and citizenship formation. With regard to the former, the capacity of targeted facilities to deliver HIV/AIDS services was enhanced, health workers acquired technical skills, the state's capacity to embed in CSOs and within clients' communities was enhanced, and its legitimacy in the eyes of beneficiaries also received a big boost. With regard to citizenship formation, PWA beneficiaries, hitherto afraid of airing their grievances against health workers, started becoming vocal; they increasingly engaged in voluntarism, increased their associationalism and, for some, due to the confidence gained from participating in the project, contested in local council elections (Bukenya 2012). According to Bukenya (2012), contrary to criticisms that NGOs' closeness with government and donors automatically leads to co-option or diversion from pro-poor development agendas,

TASO's experience supports the view that development NGOs can register more impact through relationship management—cooperating and resisting depending on the situation (see Chhotray 2008; Lavalle et al. 2005).

Therefore, optimists insist that service delivery should not be marginalized as merely an "adjunct to activities . . . arbitrarily defined as 'more' political; nor should it be dismissed as a distraction from these more important 'political' missions" (Charlton and May 1995, p. 241; also, Guijt 2008, p. 165). This calls for two things: (a) a paradigm shift to acknowledge that what is political is not limited to institutions, actors, and behavior that directly engage the state or public policy (Wiktorowicz and Farouki 2000) and (b) going beyond the conventional measures of NGOs project impacts that fail to recognize the indirect qualitative effects that service delivery might be engendering (Charlton and May 1995; Guijt 2008).

The Bias Toward Western Forms of CSOs

As noted earlier, it is the mainstream approach to civil society that informs official development policy for most donor agencies in Africa. According to Bebbington and Hickey (2006), approaches that understand civil society in terms of organizations offer distinct interpretations of the forms such organizations take. Until recently, within donor circles, the vision of "proper" CSOs has been that of formal and at least partly professionalized organizations that are concerned in some way with development and relief activities. The "modern" organizations preferred by donors have been contrasted to the kin, ethnic, or age-based groups in that they are "deemed to transcend in purpose and action any primordial attachments, mobilise people around common interests of a professional, economic or welfare kind and draw people out of the private and into the public" (Howell 2000, p. 14).

Tripp (1998) notes that these tend to be urban based and controlled by middle-class male, thereby leaving most women and peasants in the rural areas out of the picture (also, Howell 2000). In addition, organizations based on ethnic, regional, religious, and other "traditional" groupings are rarely considered as part of civil society by the mainstream approach that is guided by liberal democratic values (Orvis 2001).

Most recently, some initiatives targeting the so-called nontraditional civil society have been fronted by donor agencies such as the UK's Department for International Development (DFID; Howell 2000; Tembo and Wells 2007). In this regard, donors claim that they have shifted from their narrow treatment of NGOs and voluntary associations as the main, if not the only, actors comprising civil society in Africa. Although donors' shift in this area is commendable, some observers have already identified challenges around it. Tembo and Wells (2007) observe that current approaches have not involved the more politicized traditional groups such as "hometown" associations, and traditional authorities or customary structures, although these are considered very influential in Africa (Ekeh 1975; Orvis 2001; Osaghae 2006a). Rather, these programs have only worked with trade unions, parliaments,

business associations, and faith-based groups, which, although previously left outside the ambit of "genuine" civil society in preference to NGOs, mostly represent those organizations with cross-cutting ties (Tembo and Wells 2007). The traditional groups are often derided for harboring undemocratic tendencies and sustaining inequality among citizens (Orvis 2001). They are also accused of being exclusionary in the sense that it is only those considered to be "indigenous" to an imaginary geographical community that are admitted, while "nonnatives" are excluded (Hickey 2011); yet, "genuine" CSOs should be representative of larger constituencies.

However, other scholars insist that traditional groupings such as hometown associations and traditional authorities also have progressive elements such as the potential for asserting "the collective interests of their communities" and that sometimes they do this more effectively and legitimately than "modern" civil society (Orvis 2001, p. 32). Here, ethnic claims are treated as legitimate claims for group rights (including the right to self-determination), equity, and justice (Osaghae 2006b). In what is regarded as "reasonable" demands, Osaghae (2006b) explains that traditional groupings can make claims on the state to address structural and historical inequalities among social groups competing for the benefits of modernization. He indicates that "reasonable" demands do not threaten the legitimacy and existence of the state and, hence, "can be managed through the use of appropriate (re)distributive policies and formulas such as quota system, affirmative action, income redistribution, equalization allocation to backward areas, [and] 'catch-up' development programmes" (Osaghae 2006b, p. 6).

This, perhaps, is better illustrated in Uganda, where the increasingly influential kingdom of Bunyoro is lobbying the central government to allocate to it a proportion of the revenue from oil exploration activities in its region. In areas where the capacity of the state to respond to local development needs is constrained, traditional authorities and associations have been instrumental in initiating and funding various local development projects such as schools and clinics, as well as articulate the interests of the local community vis-à-vis the state and local governments (Hickey 2011; Orvis 2001). When necessary, these authorities have also created NGO-like agencies to manage their development programs. In Uganda, the Buganda Kingdom has the Buganda Cultural and Development Foundation (BUCADEF) that was created in 1995 as a fully fledged NGO and, like NGOs, receives funding from officials donors such as USAID (Englebert 2002). Hickey (2002, 2011) reports a similar agency among the Mbororo Fulani of Cameroon, the Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCUDA). This shows that they have the capacity to imitate and/or enter into alliances, coalitions, and federations with other social groups that are considered to be genuinely operating in the public sphere (also, Page et al. 2009).

Therefore, given the fact that the salience of ethnic bonds and solidarities is not going to disappear in the foreseeable future, it makes no sense to relegate them to an "uncivil" and, therefore, unanalyzable domain (Fatton 1995; Karlström 1999). The task for donors and NGOs should be to try and understand the conditions under which traditional groups can perform constructively and the circumstances under which they become divisive and destructive. This will help in tailoring support that boosts their development potential while minimizing their regressive tendencies.

The Tyranny of Professionalized Development

Within the current development context, donors have adopted stringent funding criteria for NGOs characterized by the emphasis on "upward" accountability, more tightly defined programmatic policies that necessitate rational planning techniques, and a shift toward more contractual relationships, all of which place a heavy burden of expectations on organizations. To qualify for donor funding, CSOs need to adopt a formal organizational structure and professionalized approach to work (Green 2012; Mueller-Hirth 2009). However, Wallace et al. (2006) maintain that rational planning tools and other formalistic approaches favored by donors do not chime with people-centered approaches to development. The argument is that the emphasis on control and planning for predictable outcomes is difficult to reconcile with approaches that are characterized by a considerable degree of unpredictability, and emphasize process over product (Banks and Hulme 2012; Bebbington 2005; Elbers and Arts 2011). With the majority of development NGOs in Africa relying on official funding, these observations have far-reaching implications. In Kenya, for instance, over 90 % of the NGO revenues are from international sources (Brass 2011). A similar situation is reported in Uganda (Burger and Owens 2011; Fafchamps and Owens 2009), Senegal, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe (Michael 2004).

For some NGOs, professionalization is also problematic because it involves an increased reliance on contract/paid staff who gain employment due to their technical training and qualifications rather than as movement activists. Such professionals tend to emphasize organizational governance over radical politics and supporting local mobilization and social movements (Choudry and Shragge 2011; Mueller-Hirth 2009). As reported earlier, in South Africa, Mueller-Hirth (2009) found that NGOs have proven unwilling or unable to establish strong connections with social movements that are less formalized, although more embedded in the political processes essential to social change. Other drawbacks of "professionalization" include shifting NGOs' approach to work from an arrangement that Srinivas (2009) calls "doers" with their constituencies to "helpers," thereby turning beneficiaries into passive recipients of development assistance (Fowler 1993; Hickey 2002). This is because most professionalized organizations are said to devalue the input of ordinary citizens in favor of expert advice, and this, many have observed, dispossess communities of their agency (Choudry and Shragge 2011; Swidler and Watkins 2009). Moreover, as alluded to earlier, coupled with their desire to minimize conflict with their funders, these agencies have been criticized for teaching communities to become more compliant to "ways of the state" and requirements of donors (Robins et al. 2008; Swidler and Watkins 2009). Swidler and Watkins' (2009) research in Malawi illustrates this point, claiming that NGOs in this country encourage their communities to ask for funding for things that donors, both government and international agencies, would consider appropriate. The problem with this is that communities are indirectly taught to be subservient to the powerful and may foreclose the potential for "political agency, for protest, disruption and efficacy in getting the things people demand" (Robins et al. 2008, pp. 1083–1084).

Many scholars believe that donor requirements are unfavorable to smaller, less "professional" NGOs, and this in many countries such as Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe has resulted in channeling of funds to a small group of well-established, but now arguably overworked, NGOs that are well known to the donors (Barr et al. 2005; Michael 2004; Porter 2003). Donors' attempts to address this issue by tasking specialized NGOs to build the capacities of "young" CSOs or by creating funding arrangements that target small and medium grassroots agencies have not only failed to solve these challenges but have also created new problems. In Tanzania, Green (2012) illustrates that the kind of capacities given to the "young" CSOs, in areas such as strategic planning, proposal writing, registering with authorities, and creating formal governance structures with a board of trustees among others, are in line to helping them to become formal organizations. Although organizational and institutional development are part and parcel of the process for empowering organizations for sustainability (Michael 2004), the problem with the current approach is that its focus is on preparing these agencies to access official funding to be able to provide results-based management and adhere to complicated reporting systems of donors rather than constructing "their own abilities to advance dialogue and critique" (Mueller-Hirth 2009, p. 428). The vignette, from Smith (2010), will illustrate some of the problems that have arisen out of donors attempts to create funding programs that target local CSOs. But, before that and looking specifically at the issue of results-based management, skeptics observe that NGOs have been forced to prioritize *tracking* over *achieving* change (Bebbington 2005; Porter 2003). Bebbington (2005) observes that the pressure to demonstrate impacts has compelled NGOs to change focus from "transformation" activities to production-oriented interventions and on a reduced number of households that tend to be from the less-poor strata of the community.

There are now numerous accounts of how programs crafted by international financial institutions to ostensibly build the capacity of civil society to respond to local problems ended up with what Ferguson (1990) calls "instrument effects." Smith (2010) illustrates this with the World Bank initiative, which, in 2001, loaned US $ 90 million to the Nigeria government to boost its fight against HIV/AIDS. Rather than empowering the organizations of the poor, this program ended up entrenching the power of the already powerful state elites. Several analysts have observed similar developments in other African countries. In Tanzania, Green (2012) reports that unscrupulous elites now create "anticipatory" agencies that are only active when they make a successful bid for funding with the numerous initiatives funded by international agencies. "Shadowy" NGOs have also been reported in Uganda (Fafchamps and Owens 2009). Generally, and as suggested by Mueller-Hirth (2009, p. 428), currently the "ideal-typical CSO" in Africa is "a formal and streamlined NGO with cross-sectoral linkages." Although the absence of specialization that accompanies this precludes the development of power among African NGOs (Michael 2004), the arrangement is convenient for the directors of these agencies to apply for donor funding from across several sectors.

Conclusion: Strategic Implications for NGO in Africa—Operationalizing the Fourth Position?

In view of the discussion in this chapter, it is evident that the mainstream/liberal version of civil society promoted in Africa has faced great constraints, especially in relation to promoting higher levels of democracy, good governance, and pro-poor development on the continent. It has been argued that ideas around development by consensus, the over-emphasis on service delivery, promotion of Western-style CSOs, and professionalized development, which underpin the liberal civil society model embraced by the official donors and major development agencies, have greatly constrained the scope of civil society operations in Africa. In this final section, we explore various alternatives for NGOs at the center of these debates.

For some critical scholars, the only option available for NGOs, if they are to remain true to their goals and priorities and maintain commitment to the powerless and their partners in civil society, is to delink from official funding chains (Edwards 2008; Fowler 2000a). However, due to a confluence of factors, this option is unaffordable for most African NGOs. The majority of the population is poor, and this means that NGOs would struggle to locally raise enough revenue to sustain their activities (Michael 2004). As Burger and Owens' (2011) research in Uganda shows, NGOs that depend on local funding have a high mortality rate. Therefore, to pursue their agendas, most NGOs have little choice besides grants making. But, does this mean that NGOs have no room for maneuver within the current aid arrangement?

Optimists argue that even within their dependent position, Southern organizations do have a range of choices in response to their funders. Following institutional theorists, some have suggested that NGOs can draw on a number of strategies, including acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, influencing, and manipulation. According to Elbers and Arts (2011), most organizations deploy multiple tactics concurrently. At the country level, Wallace et al. (2006) report that Ugandan NGOs tend to be compliant with donor requirements while South African NGOs engage in more active strategies that include refusing funding from certain donors and renegotiating agreements to get favorable terms (cf. Chap. 6).

Yet, from the earlier discussion, there is a widespread impression that Southern NGOs have utilized only the first and last options. This is in the sense that, on the one hand, NGOs are depicted as passive agencies that conform to accepted standards and procedures and/or engage in activities considered to be relevant by the funders even when these are detrimental to their mission, values, and performance. At the other extreme, they are shown as unscrupulous agents who engage in forms of resistance commonly referred to as the destructive "weapons of the weak," such as misappropriation, foot dragging, obstructiveness, delayed approvals, and lack of commitment among others, to subvert donor intentions. More recently, studies illuminating compromise, avoidance, and influencing strategies, which when successfully adopted can help NGOs to create flexible working environments, have emerged (e.g., Elbers and Arts 2011; Rauh 2010). Elbers and Arts' (2011) study, for instance, indicates that in Ghana, before they apply for funding, some NGOs first review donors' mode

of operation, their ideology, where they get their money from, and whether their principles are compatible. This helps them to avoid donors with stringent conditions.

Influencing exists when NGOs proactively engage their donors to offer favorable grant conditions such as budget support, long-term grants, and funding that covers the overhead costs of NGOs among others. Although skeptics have played down the chances of success here (Fowler 2000b), the discussion in previous sections suggests that there are exceptions. NGOs that have earned a good reputation based on their demonstrable success and reliability stand high chances of enlisting donors' willingness to accept round table discussions (Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 1992; Bukenya 2012; Michael 2004). Drawing examples from NGOs in Senegal, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, Michael (2004) argues that one of the ways NGOs can gain a good reputation is through specialization in a particular sector that can give them a competitive edge over other organizations. She, therefore, decries the sectoral nomadism of NGOs which shift in response to changes in donor priorities. Of course, for donors to be influenced, there is also a need for proof or hard evidence to back-up positions that NGOs propose. This means that systematic research and documentation must be part of the core activities for NGOs (Bukenya 2012). Generally, "an inability to demonstrate impact and effectiveness in a reasonably rigorous manner," Edwards and Hulme (2009, p. 224) argue, is likely to push NGOs out of their niche sectors "into areas where they are not doing very much that is useful."

Some NGOs influence their donors by actively involving them in their activities, including field tours so that the latter can gain familiarity with the local context. It is noteworthy that in the case of TASO, which we introduced earlier (Bukenya 2012), the organization was able to negotiate a shift from project-based to basket funding with its donors, a move that enabled it greater latitude in allocating resources according to priorities in its strategic plan (Ssebbanja 2007). Basket funding was a key ingredient that encouraged creativeness, helped TASO to expand in the 1990s, and allowed it to experiment with the MTP, which was discussed earlier. The Dutch government also operated a similar system where selected NGOs, known as co-financing agencies, would receive funding from the state through a 4-year Program Funding Agreement (Bebbington 2005; Guijt 2008). On the part of donors, NGOs would need to lobby for funding conditions that allow the flexibility required to fulfill their obligations first to civil society and then in relation to the state and market. In addition, Michael (2004) makes a case for NGOs to create strong links with international development agencies, multinational corporations, international media agencies, and transnational movements and networks for solidarity, resources, and publicity. They can also be watchdogs vis-à-vis these international development agencies and corporations, as for example the case with the Bretton Woods Project that focuses on the World Bank and the IMF to challenge their power and open policy space and promote alternative approaches.

In view of the examples discussed above and following Fowler (2000b), it can also be argued that NGOs working in African contexts need to reposition themselves in such a way that rather than locating themselves within civil society, they instead occupy the space between the state, market, and civil society. For each of these sectors, NGOs would need to play different roles, depending on the context (see Fig. 19.1).
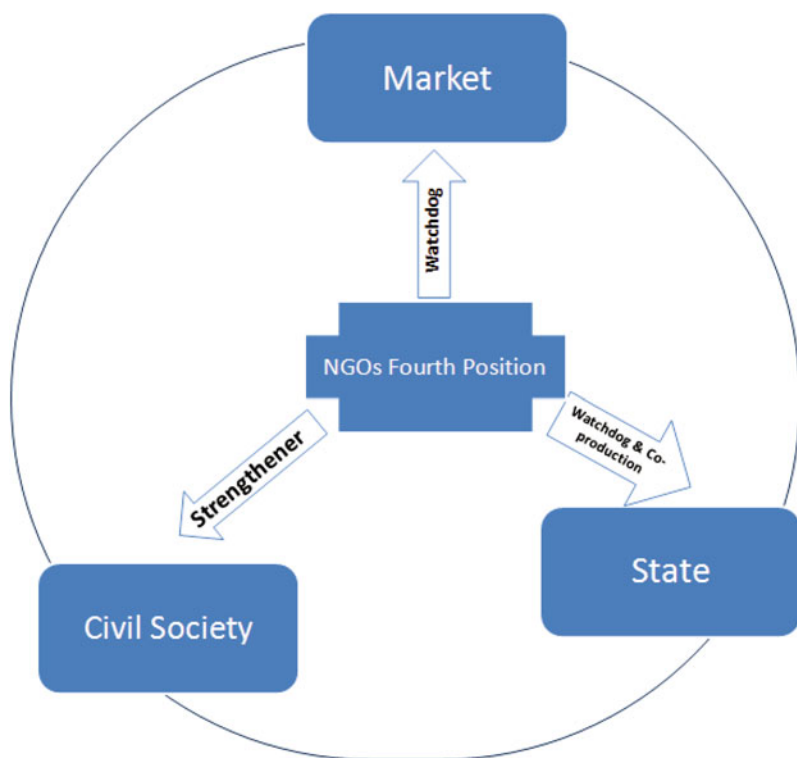
Fig. 19.1 The fourth position of NGOs

As some skeptics see it, the fourth position will enable NGOs to understand that they are not the most important civil society actors. Their role is mainly to act as catalysts for long-term processes of citizenship formation. Here, they would need to build relationships with actors within civil society, such as people's movements, political parties, and the "nontraditional" CSOs such as the media, traditional authorities, and hometown associations among others (Banks and Hulme 2012). The fourth position helps recognize that although many NGOs cannot be considered as constituent elements of local civil society in Africa, they can often play a critical role in enhancing both the technical capacities and the pro-poor orientation of more genuine civil society (see Mitlin and Bebbington 2006). Through their direct service delivery to the poor, marginalized, and powerless people within civil society, NGOs can work with them to build their capacity to act as claimants of entitlements toward duty bearers—the state and responsible market institutions.

In relation to the market, Fowler (2000b, pp. 594–595) observes that some businesses have already adopted codes of conduct and other social and environmental self-regulatory mechanisms. NGOs can support corporations that are yet to get these codes and, once developed, use them in their role as validatory "watchdogs." However, NGOs' interest in this sector is also justified from a resource-mobilization

angle. Some have suggested that as a way of reducing reliance on official funding, NGOs can lobby local and international enterprises. One advantage with funding from the business community is that they provide resources based on what agencies are already doing rather divert them into terribly different areas. In Northern Ghana, Mohan (2002) discusses the potential of NGOs linking up with corporate entities to implement social entrepreneurship projects. Alternatively, NGOs themselves can set up business ventures whose revenue would contribute funding for their development activities (Michael 2004).

Given that most states in Africa still lack the capacity to formulate and implement sound development policies and programs, NGOs need to work with the state in both areas. As the example of TASO illustrates, NGOs can partner with the government to innovate and scale up innovations. Of course, this is on top of their monitoring role aimed at ensuring that the state fulfills its commitments. Adopting a Gramscian rather than a liberal perspective on civil society enables us to draw a judgment on the progressive possibilities of such alliances between CSOs and the state. As we have previously argued, while some of these partnerships may involve damaging and apolitical forms of co-optation, which reinforce dominant modes of doing business, others may involve new coalitions that can underpin a counter-hegemonic movement toward more progressive forms of governance and development (Mitlin 2008).

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Chapter 20
Civil Society and Sexual Struggles in Africa

Ashley Currier and Joëlle M. Cruz

Introduction

Struggles for sexual diversity in different African contexts have involved lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) activists moving between public visibility and invisibility as they press for social acceptance, religious tolerance, and political recognition. In an internationally publicized episode of state-initiated harassment of LGBT activists, the Zimbabwean government attempted to prevent the Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), an LGBT movement organization, from advertising its services in 1995 (Epprecht 2004). This incident illustrates the hotly contested nature of African civil society organizations' (CSOs) defense of sexual diversity. GALZ applied for permission to operate a stand at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF), which had a theme of "Human Rights and Justice" (Goddard 2004, p. 76). GALZ members intended to distribute information about HIV/AIDS and counseling services for lesbians and gay men as GALZ had been unable to advertise the organization's counseling services in major newspapers. One week before the fair was due to open, Bornwell Chakaodza, Zimbabwe's Director of the Ministry of Information, ordered the ZIBF to rescind its admission of GALZ as a recognized contributor. Although ZIBF trustees prohibited GALZ members from distributing literature from an authorized Book Fair stand, members surreptitiously handed out literature in brown bags to those aware of the lesbian and gay activists' presence. President Robert Mugabe opened the Book Fair with a scathing attack on gays and lesbians. Mugabe stated, "I don't believe [homosexuals] should have any rights at all" (Murray 1998, p. 249), which elicited condemnation from varied sources, including Amnesty International and the United States Congress. Two weeks after

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his attack on homosexuality, Mugabe threatened sexual minorities with arrest. In a public speech, he maintained: "What we are being persuaded to accept is subanimal behaviour and we will never allow it here. If you see people parading themselves as lesbians and gays, arrest them and hand them over to the police" (Murray 1998, p. 249). Using tactics of intimidation, Mugabe and the Zimbabwean government forced GALZ members to withdraw publicly for a time (Aarmo 1999).

Although such political threats prompted GALZ activists to employ cautious tactics, activists did not abandon the Book Fair as a venue for reaching constituents. In 1996, GALZ applied again to exhibit at the Book Fair. Although the government filed an injunction to prevent GALZ from displaying their pamphlets, the Zimbabwean Supreme Court ruled that activists could have a stand at the Book Fair. However, antigay opponents coordinated an attack on the GALZ stand, and only a hasty warning allowed GALZ members to escape (Goddard 2004). Activists in other African nations emulate the tenacity displayed by GALZ to ensure that LGBT movements survive hostile sociopolitical conditions. Although African LGBT activists may disappear from view temporarily to revisit their strategies, social and political repression cannot always contain gender and sexual diversity activism.

Increasingly, scholarly research addresses how configurations of sexuality—sexual diversity in particular—and CSOs shape one another (Andrucki and Elder 2007; Joseph 2002; Lind 2009). Writing about the influence of sexual diversity politics on civil society in the United States, Chet Meeks (2001, p. 332) portrays civil society "not only as the realm of unified democratic action but also as the primary realm in society where meanings, identities, interests, and needs are circulated and contested." As defenders of gender and sexual dissidence, African LGBT movement organizations participate in the ongoing redefinition of genders and sexualities by contesting heteronormative sociopolitical arrangements. Heteronormativity refers to cultural, social, and political institutions that codify, privilege, and reward monogamous, marital heterosexuality and gender conformity, and vilify and punish nonheterosexualities and perceived gender transgression (Schilt and Westbrook 2009). The proliferation of LGBT movement organizations in sub-Saharan African nations confirms that sexual diversity is joining the list of issues that activists characterize as pressing and worthy of consideration in democratizing societies.

In this chapter, we discuss the contours and trajectories of African sexual diversity struggles. By "sexual diversity struggles," we mean African CSOs' strategic efforts to defend gender and sexual dissidence and to promote laws and policies that affirm gender and sexual diversity[1]. These efforts include promulgating gender and sexual minority rights as human rights, sheltering gender and sexual minorities from hostile opponents, and cultivating supportive local and transnational networks of bystanders, lawmakers, foreign donors, and diplomats. Not only do African struggles for gender

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[1] We include gender diversity in our discussions of sexual diversity organizing. However, transgender advocacy remains spotty continentally, although some autonomous transgender and intersex organizations have emerged in several African countries (Currier 2012b; Gross 2011; Morgan et al. 2009; Mbugua 2011; Swarr 2012b).

and sexual diversity have local and national manifestations, but they also extend beyond national boundaries.

Contextualizing Sexual Diversity Struggles in Sub-Saharan Africa

Although gender and sexual diversity struggles have only received international attention in the last few years, lesbian and gay activism in Africa dates at least to 1966, when White, middle-class South African lesbians and gay men mobilized to halt police harassment of gay men (Gevisser 1995). Beginning in the 1980s, White lesbian and gay activists resisted calls from Black and mixed-race South Africans and from international groups such as the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) to denounce apartheid (Rydström 2005). White activists cited the need to remain apolitical so that they could pursue lesbian and gay rights without eliciting a repressive response from the apartheid state (Smith 2005). Black and mixed-race South Africans launched multiracial organizations that combined lesbian, gay, and bisexual advocacy with antiapartheid agitation, challenging White activists' racism and reluctance to contest racial, gender, and sexual injustices produced by the apartheid regime (Fine and Nicol 1995; Nkoli 1995). Currently, South Africa enjoys a global reputation for a progressive constitution containing a sexual-orientation nondiscrimination clause, dubbed the "Equality Clause" (Cock 2003; Croucher 2002; Oswin 2007). The clause is even more impressive, considering how the ruling African National Congress worked to undo the country's history of racist apartheid laws and policies (Gevisser 1995, 2000). Since 1996, LGBT activists have successfully pressed for the decriminalization of sodomy and for marriage equality (Dirsuweit 2006; Thoreson 2008).

LGBT organizing emerged later in other African nations (Luirink 2000). In postindependence Zimbabwe, a vibrant lesbian and gay community generated social networks in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which resulted in the formation of GALZ (Goddard 2004). In the organization's formative years, White and mixed-race lesbians and gay men led GALZ, giving way to Black leadership later in the 1990s (Epprecht 2004). Political homophobia inspired the feminist movement organization, Sister Namibia, to defend LGBT rights and support the formation of The Rainbow Project (TRP) in Namibia in December 1996 (Currier 2010b; Frank and Khaxas 1996). Recruiting Black, mixed-race, and White LGBT Namibians from different class backgrounds, Sister Namibia and TRP collaborated with other human rights organizations and oppositional political parties to ensure that the ruling party, the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), did not intimidate gender and sexual dissidents (Currier 2012a, c; Lorway 2008).

With the exception of LGBT organizing in South Africa, activist organizations promoting LGBT identities, gender diversity, and same-sex sexualities joined national civil societies within the last 20 years. Although, as Patrick Awondo (2010) observes, there is a widespread perception that LGBT activism has emerged mostly

to contain HIV/AIDS in African gender and sexual minority communities, LGBT organizing in many contexts developed expressly to address institutionalized heterosexism, which encompassed HIV/AIDS activism. The recent materialization of LGBT activist organizations has provoked an antigay backlash in many African nations. The timing of activist organizations' emergence gives some organized antigay opponents pause; some opponents attribute the emergence of LGBT activism to the neocolonial interference of northern donor governments and organizations (Currier 2012c; Epprecht 2001; Hoad 2007). Such suspicion of African nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) is not confined only to LGBT movement organizations. Wariness and accusations dog other NGOs such as women's rights NGOs, which challenge existing social norms and advocate for more equitable arrangements for marginalized minority populations (Ranchod-Nilsson 2006). Kathleen Fallon (2008, p. 96) documents how groups opposing Ghanaian women's rights NGOs' support for domestic-violence legislation that criminalized marital rape claimed that those who endorsed this proposed bill "were instilling Western values that would ultimately lead to the deterioration of cultural values held in Ghana."

LGBT movement organizations join other CSOs that face local criticisms about their perceived racial, cultural, and national inauthenticity because of their close ties to western donors and diplomats. According to Jim Igoe and Tim Kelsall (2005, pp. 9–10), NGOs negotiate with "western donors on whom they depend for support and whose agendas frequently do not match their own. ... [T]hey must deal with government officials who feel threatened by their activities and who may be competing with them for legitimacy and/or funding. It also includes other NGO leaders, some legitimate and some not, who are competing with them for the same limited pot of money." Opponents' concerns about the cultural and political legitimacy of African LGBT movement organizations stem from the politicization of gender and sexual diversity, which has saturated public spheres in different African nations in the last few years (Posel 2005).

The politicization of sexuality has several features. First, politicization involves public discussions, debates, and disputes about sexuality. Coming under public scrutiny, diverse sexualities gain cultural and political intelligibility for ordinary people and acquire hypervisibility, a form of public visibility that sexually variant people cannot necessarily control (Currier 2012c). Second, politicization generates new meanings for gender and sexual diversity or reactivates older interpretations of nonnormative gender and sexual formations that have existed for some time. These meanings make diverse sexualities culturally and politically legible for those unfamiliar with nonheteronormative sexualities. Typically, negative meanings attach to nonheterosexualities, meanings that become entrenched and immobile in cultural and political discourses. In turn, activists have difficulty dislodging what gender and sexual minorities experience as hurtful associations from public discussions about gender and sexual diversity. Third, politicization emboldens conservative antigay groups to mobilize against homosexuality and gender nonconformity. Gender and sexual diversity activists battle both negative ideologies and antigay movements simultaneously; in some contexts, LGBT activists become locked in an antagonistic movement–countermovement dynamic (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996).

The charge that homosexuality is un-African has been made frequently in countries as varied as Cameroon, Gambia, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe (Reddy 2002). Antigay opponents assert that homosexuality is a foreign import that arrived with European colonialism. In other words, before colonization, Africans did not engage in same-sex sexual practices or relationships (Epprecht 2008). Antigay speakers often cite the lack of historical evidence proving that African societies accepted or tolerated same-sex sexualities or relationships. Contrary to such antigay assertions, anthropological and historical research documents a variety of culturally sanctioned and situationally specific forms of same-sex sexualities (Amory 1997; Epprecht 2004; Morgan and Wieringa 2005; Roscoe and Murray 1998) such as prison sexual relationships (Achmat 1993) and "mine marriages" practiced by older African men who formed domestic partnerships with younger African men while working in mines (Moodie 1988).

Culturally sanctioned same-sex sexualities encompassed sexual practices that channeled youths' desires away from potentially reproductive sex into nonprocreative sexual recreation (Kendall 1999). Nevertheless, what counts as "sex" in western societies may not count as "sex" in different African cultures (Tamale 2008). Kendall's (1999) research in Lesotho shows how female–female sexual behavior continued undetected and were subsumed under the aegis of women's friendships; in Basotho society, "sex" involved penile–vaginal penetration. While women's same-sex intimacies escaped notice, men's sexual contact with other men garnered religious and state attention, especially when these acts involved penile penetration (Achmat 1993). Lesbian activists throughout Africa collaborated with Dutch and South African social scientists to document the lived realities of women who are sexually intimate with women in countries such as Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, and Uganda (Morgan and Wieringa 2005). The South African organization, Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action, recuperates lost histories of gender and sexual dissidence throughout Africa.

The newness of visible LGBT and other gender/sexual minority identities confirms the foreignness of gender and sexual dissidence for some antigay opponents. In many African countries, the public unveiling of gender and sexual minority identities occurred only after independence, the official end of colonialism, and/or the emergence of democratic self-determination. SWAPO liberated Namibia from South African apartheid rule and took umbrage at the postindependence appearance of LGBT activism. Before independence, no lesbians or gay men demanded recognition within the Namibian national liberation movement as sexual minorities (Currier 2012a). Some SWAPO leaders bristled when activists began making claims for LGBT rights in the mid-1990s after independence. To them, this move seemed inauthentic and timed to take advantage of the sacrifices freedom fighters made to liberate the nation. In response, some SWAPO leaders declared that they did not liberate the nation so that homosexuals could lodge demands for equality and state recognition in the new democracy; this was simply too much for members of the ruling party. In one sense, SWAPO leaders were reacting to this new "identity strategy" of sexual minorities publicly announcing their sexual identities (Bernstein 2008), which ran counter to some African cultural prohibitions.

Recent research in Uganda points to the disclosure of nonnormative sexual identities as partially fueling opposition to sexual diversity organizing (Sadgrove et al. 2012). According to some who claim to defend African cultural traditions, the practice of disclosing one's lesbian, gay, or bisexual identity unsettles African cultural practices that discourage frank, open discussion of sexual intimacy. Such claims contribute to the hardening of heteronormative African cultural traditions that acquire greater public visibility in relation to LGBT organizing. While antigay opposition to African LGBT activists' public visibility strategies takes repressive forms in particular places, activists' strategies introduce alternatives to heteronormative arrangements. In this way, LGBT movement organizing is productive in that it names sexual desires, educates movement constituents about gender and sexual possibilities, and disseminates gender and sexual minority identities.

Politicization is linked to the criminalization of same-sex sexualities, particularly in the form of antisodomy laws. Same-sex sexual behavior remains criminalized in many African nations that inherited laws criminalizing same-sex sexual behavior from European colonizers. While South Africa in 1998 and Cape Verde in 2004 decriminalized same-sex sex (Epprecht 2012; Frank et al. 2009), lawmakers in other African nations have increased or proposed augmented penalties for same-sex sex. Dubbed the "Kill the Gays" bill (Nyong'o 2012, p. 50), the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda introduces increased penalties such as life imprisonment and the death penalty for different same-sex sex acts and jail time for those believed to promote same-sex sexualities—LGBT activists (Rao 2010). The bill was first introduced by MP David Bahati in 2009 and reemerged in 2012 (Kaoma 2012).

Although antisodomy legislation historically affected only men who have sex with men (MSM) and rendered sex between women legally invisible, lawmakers in some nations have recently amended legislation to criminalize female–female sex. In January 2011, Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika authorized an amendment to the penal code criminalizing sex between women ("African NGOs" 2011; "Malawi refuses" 2011). Employing a perverse logic that affirmed gender equality while attacking sexual rights, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, George Chaponda, stated that lawmakers amended the antisodomy law to guarantee the law's gender neutrality. The original antisodomy law applied only to men, and the "government wanted to include women to ensure that homosexuality is criminalized without discrimination" ("Malawi refuses" 2011). LGBT activists in Malawi perceived this legislation as lawmakers' frustration over President Mutharika's exoneration of Tiwonge Chimbalanga, a transgender woman, and Steven Monjeza, a man, who were convicted of sodomy in May 2010, at the behest of the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, who was visiting Malawi at the time (Bearak 2010). However, in a move welcomed by LGBT activists in Malawi and around the world, Minister of Justice, Ralph Kasambara, announced in November 2012 that the government would suspend antihomosexuality laws (Mphande 2012), a position he subsequently abandoned (Maganga 2012).

In addition to punitive antihomosexuality legislation, lawmakers in some African nations have mobilized against same-sex marriage, which South African lawmakers legalized in 2006 (Currier 2012c). This legal mobilization has entailed preemptively

banning same-sex marriage even before LGBT activists initiate a marriage-equality campaign. In 2005, Ugandan lawmakers banned same-sex marriage, a move that a Ugandan lesbian activist viewed as arrogant.

> [Uganda] became the second country in the world to ban same-sex marriages. How can you ban same-sex marriages even before you give us [LGBT persons] the freedom of just being who we are? . . . We don't want extraordinary rights. We don't want special rights. We just want the same rights as any Ugandan has—equal rights, equality—that's what we want.[2]

In Liberia, Christian leaders organized in November 2012 to press for legislation outlawing same-sex marriage and punishing same-sex couples who celebrate their relationships with a marriage ceremony with jail time (Paye-Layleh 2012). In 2011, lawmakers in the Nigerian Senate passed a bill criminalizing same-sex marriage and banning LGBT movement organizations from registering with the state or advocating for sexual diversity (Ibukun 2011). If the Nigerian House of Representatives were to pass this bill, it would disqualify a range of NGOs that defended gender and sexual diversity from receiving funding from foreign donors that typically require NGOs to register with the state. Laws prohibiting LGBT movement organizations' registration with the state prevent northern donors from diverting funds to African organizations. Lack of funding can halt LGBT movement organizations' activities, a vulnerability that other NGOs face (Makumbe 1998). In some places, NGO registration laws reflect state leaders' attempts to restrict the activities of NGOs that they believe are siphoning funds away from government programs (Gugerty 2010). Such laws severely curtail the public struggles that CSOs can wage around issues of gender and sexual diversity.

African NGOs Involved in Sexual Struggles

Different CSOs—LGBT movement organizations, HIV/AIDS NGOs, women's rights NGOs, and faith-based NGOs—in African nations participate in sexual diversity struggles in distinct ways. The organizations most commonly associated with sexual struggles are LGBT movement organizations. LGBT movement organizations represent and advance the interests of African gender and sexual dissidents. LGBT activism often entails defending gender and sexual dissidents from homophobic threats and actions at the individual and institutional levels. In South Africa, the Forum for the Empowerment of Women, a Black lesbian movement organization, has collaborated with other LGBT and feminist organizations on a campaign to stop violence against Black lesbian and bisexual women and transgender men (Currier 2012c; Matebeni 2009). In Cameroon, the Association for the Defense of Gay Rights (*Association pour la Défense des Droits des Homosexuels* (ADEFHO)) provides legal assistance to individuals who have been arrested because they are lesbian, gay, or bisexual. In 2006, Alice Nkom, a trained lawyer and president of ADEFHO,

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[2] Interview conducted by Ashley Currier with a Ugandan lesbian activist, 2 February 2006, Johannesburg, South Africa.

defended ten people detained in prison for several months on charges of homosexuality. The police had arrested these people at a bar perceived to be a gay meeting place and detained them without cause (Nkom 2010). In countries with fledgling LGBT movements, a single movement organization may serve as an incubator for groups that eventually splinter into specialized LGBT movement organizations. In South Africa, a country with a number of LGBT movement organizations, some organizations specialize in particular strategies such as delivering mental and physical health services to constituents, providing legal advice, engaging in legislative advocacy, or monitoring LGBT rights violations and movement developments throughout the continent (Currier 2012c).

Caution guides the activities of many African LGBT movement organizations. Recognizing the danger of operating in a hostile sociopolitical environment, activists often opt to give organizations names that do not associate organizations explicitly with LGBT rights advocacy. Burundian activists removed the term "homosexual" from the name of an organization so that they could register the NGO with the government; including the term "homosexual" in the organization's name would have stoked antigay opponents' ire, potentially obstructing the organization's efforts (Epprecht 2012). Some LGBT movement organizations, such as TRP in Namibia, style themselves as human rights NGOs in particular venues, downplaying their gender and sexual minority rights advocacy and emphasizing their broad commitment to minority rights (Currier 2012c). Alternatives-Cameroun, an LGBT movement organization in Cameroon, purposefully constituted itself as a human rights NGO to escape state scrutiny. In an interview, the organization's leader stated: "the advantage of human rights as a motive is that it covers a wide range of things and enables you not to be disturbed by the authorities or watched by the administration" (Awondo 2010, p. 321).

Following a strategy of caution can, however, produce situations in which activists endlessly defer initiating LGBT rights campaigns. Activists affiliated with TRP in Namibia debated the merits of pursuing a public campaign to decriminalize sodomy for several years in the mid-1990s and early 2000s (Currier 2012c). As activists probed the campaign's feasibility at a time when SWAPO leaders continued issuing bellicose antigay threats, activists maintained their public invisibility and ultimately let the campaign subside. To date, activists in Namibia have not launched a public campaign to decriminalize sodomy. In contrast, LGBT movement organizations in Nigeria and Uganda have mobilized against proposed draconian legislation that would criminalize LGBT advocacy and increase penalties for those convicted of sodomy.

In countries with laws that do not permit LGBT movement organizations to register with the state, LGBT organizations operate informally or clandestinely. In 2006, the Ivorian Association for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transsexuals (*Association Ivoirienne des Lesbiennes, Gays, Bisexuels, et Transexuels* (AIC)) attempted to register with the state, a request that the Minister of the Interior denied (Kouassi 2009). State refusal to register LGBT movement organizations can mean that foreign donors are unable to direct funds to organizations because donor mandates require organizations to be state-recognized NGOs. In spite of palpable antipathy toward

LGBT organizing, African LGBT activists dare to challenge laws that criminalize homosexuality and organizing on behalf of LGBT persons. In 2008, Victor Mukasa and Oyo Yvonne won a lawsuit against the Ugandan government, alleging mistreatment and illegal detention when police raided Mukasa's home looking for illicit materials associated with his LGBT rights advocacy (Tamale and Bennett 2011).

Organizing in an environment that requires LGBT activists to operate in secret to avoid state and public scrutiny means that activists in one part of the country may not know what activists elsewhere are doing. Richard Ssebaggala (2011) suggests that LGBT movement organizations in Uganda proliferated rapidly because activists had to organize clandestinely in an inhospitable environment. As a result, activists were not communicating across organizations, and some may not have even known about the launch of other LGBT movement organizations. Many organizations

> were created under the cover of darkness. . . . It is entirely understandable why these groups would have initially been established with utmost caution and, therefore, secrecy. But what has now happened is a ballooning of activist groups which are no longer a secret, but whose operations are even more opaque than they were at their inception (Ssebaggala 2011, p. B-53).

As a result of organizations' historic invisibility, few LGBT constituents are able to explain what distinguishes one movement organization from another, according to Ssebaggala. As the number of LGBT movement organizations continues to increase, organizations may compete for foreign donor funding, lawmakers' support, and constituents' identification with a specific organization.

Some African movement organizations have adopted public-health approaches to gender and sexual diversity advocacy as a way to avoid sociopolitical antagonism (Seckinelgin 2009). Their work contests the heterosexist bias in national HIV/AIDS programs that assume that the only sexual mode of HIV transmission is through male–female sexual contact (Lorway 2008). Public-health approaches to gender and sexual diversity activism, particularly to male same-sex sexualities, eschews western sexual identity terminology, emphasizing instead same-sex sexual behaviors that increase African men's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. Yet the MSM public-health advocacy approach marginalizes lesbians who go unnoticed in HIV/AIDS models that concentrate on heterosexual and male–male sexual behaviors. In addition, the lack of northern donor funding for health initiatives for women who have sex with women (WSW) sidelines lesbian and bisexual women, generating invisibility for them. Antilesbian violence specifically, and antiwoman violence more generally, exacerbates all women's risks for contracting HIV, as feminist and lesbian antiviolence organizations in South Africa argue in their campaigns to end antilesbian rape (Anguita 2012; Currier 2012c; Swarr 2009, 2012a). In response to male-led organizations, gender and sexual minority women have launched their own organizations. Freedom and Roam Uganda and Minority Women in Action in Kenya clearly define their constituencies as lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (LBT) women, partially in response to the reality that gay men dominate national LGBT movements (Ocholla 2010).

LGBT movement organizations educate constituents, state and religious leaders, civil society, and the public about gender and sexual diversity. The continuing

dominance of western languages such as English requires African LGBT activists to package their claims in ways that ensure their cultural intelligibility with audiences in the global North. Using "LGBT" identity terminology allows African LGBT activists to attain this desired cultural intelligibility. Organizations often sponsor identity workshops for constituents that introduce them to gender and sexual identity terminology such as "lesbian," "gay," "bisexual," and "transgender." Workshops intended to teach newcomers about western gender and sexual identity nomenclature may disenchant the very people LGBT movement adherents want to recruit because these workshops operate in a disciplining manner. By encouraging newcomers to adopt identities that seem foreign, activists promote a narrow conception of lived gender and sexual diversity.

In one vivid example, Lorway (2008) chronicles how a gender-variant person in Namibia rejected the "transgender" label that workshop leaders exhorted her to embrace. Although LGBT activists do not intend to tell constituents how they should identify, constituents may experience identity workshops in a disempowering way. On the other hand, if more people identify as "LGBT," movement organizations can count their outreach as successful in that it results in a larger LGBT movement constituency (Currier 2012c). In Cameroon, two organizations, ADEFHO and Alternatives-Cameroun, used LGBT identity categories differently (Awondo 2010). Whereas ADEFHO favored less-restrictive membership criteria, allowing a heterosexual woman, Alice Nkom, to lead the organization, Alternatives-Cameroun recruited gay-identified men as members, permitting the organization to tap into transnational LGBT networks and to gain resources and support abroad. The fact that a heterosexual woman led ADEFHO was viewed less positively outside of Cameroon, isolating the organization from transnational LGBT circuits (Awondo 2010).

LGBT activists have also launched research projects that document the experiences of African gender and sexual dissidents. Such projects include documenting violence against LGBT South Africans, particularly antilesbian rape (Muholi 2004). A project of the Coalition of African Lesbians, a pan-African lesbian advocacy organization, is dedicated to enhancing the visibility of African lesbians by recording the contemporary experiences of lesbians. In conjunction with the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), Malawian LGBT activists collected narratives from gay and bisexual men who reported being the victims of blackmail or extortion; in exchange for keeping their silence about men's sexual minority identities, blackmailers receive cash or gifts from victims (Chibwezo 2011).

Particular HIV/AIDS NGOs serve gender and sexual minority communities vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. In sociopolitical contexts hostile to same-sex sexualities, HIV/AIDS NGOs facilitate LGBT advocacy by providing activists with a cover more conducive to serving gender and sexual minority populations. The Malawi Network of Religious Leaders Living or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (MANERELA+) has openly defended LGBT Malawians for the last couple of years (Mlenga 2012), and the Malawi Network for People Living with HIV/AIDS (MANET+) called for the decriminalization of same-sex sex in 2012 as a way to curb HIV transmission among MSM (Matonga 2012). Sometimes, it is difficult to discern whether HIV/AIDS NGOs predate LGBT movement organizations,

but certainly, in many places, HIV/AIDS advocacy nurtures gay rights activism. In Cameroon, both the Cameroonian Foundation for AIDS (CAMFAIDS) and Alternatives-Cameroun target MSM with their HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. In 2010, CAMFAIDS conducted more than 100 one-on-one discussions with men and 32 educational talks in informal meeting places. Discussion topics included the sexual practices of MSM and the importance of knowing one's HIV status (Lembembe 2012). Alternatives-Cameroun created an access center that serves the health needs of MSM (AMFAR).

HIV/AIDS NGOs provide MSM who often experience stigma and rejection with an opportunity to socialize safely (Niang et al. 2003). Such safe spaces foster sexual subjectivities as men explore their common experiences of sexual desire and oppression. Nguyen (2005) relates how an HIV/AIDS NGO in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, provided MSM with a homosocial environment in which they could share experiences of same-sex sexual desire. Positive Nation, an HIV/AIDS NGO, implemented western methods that encouraged HIV-positive constituents to "come out about their diagnosis" publicly; these methods included teaching constituents to marshal western gender and sexual identity terminology and narrative techniques that created "standardized forms of 'telling the self,' and, through them, fashioning the self" (Nguyen 2005, p. 264). Some groups serving LGBT constituents present themselves publicly as HIV/AIDS NGOs because funding for AIDS service provision is more plentiful than funding for LGBT advocacy (Seckinelgin 2009).

In Senegal, AIDES Senegal serves MSM. It distributes condoms and antiretroviral drugs and also offers sanctuary to MSM who experience severe stigma in everyday life. In 2008, the police arrested nine male members of AIDES Senegal on homosexuality charges because these men possessed HIV educational materials. Similar to some African LGBT movement organizations (Clark 1997), HIV/AIDS NGOs are sometimes targets of police raids on the pretense that staff are storing and distributing illicit pornographic materials. The subsequent detention and highly publicized trial of these Senegalese AIDS workers illustrates the difficulties that activists encounter when performing HIV/AIDS prevention work with MSM (Human Rights Watch 2010).

African women's rights organizations have complex relationships with LGBT movement organizations. Some women's movement organizations collaborate with LGBT activists on gender and sexual equality projects, as LGBT and feminist organizations in South Africa together work to stop violence against women, transgender persons, and sexual minorities (Swarr 2012a). Even in South Africa, a nation with a vibrant feminist movement, feminists report difficulty persuading movement colleagues to work on LGBT rights (Hames 2003). Several leading African feminist scholars and activists have publicly endorsed LGBT rights, but have experienced negative consequences from showing their support. Patricia McFadden (2003) reported that the Zimbabwean ruling party issued her with an order of deportation and alleged that she was a lesbian, an example of "lesbian baiting" (Farley 2002, p. 31), "on the grounds that I wrote about women's rights to choose their intimate partners, and because I defended the rights of gays and lesbians." Within women's movement circles, McFadden states that she found little support for her predicament. Sylvia Tamale (2007), a Ugandan feminist scholar and activist, became a target of

suspicion when she defended LGBT Ugandans vilified by the press and politicians. She received a text message on her mobile telephone that read, "[O]n your way to becoming a millionaire!," and suggested that she supported LGBT rights only as a way to get funding from donors in the global North (Tamale 2007, p. 17).

Women's rights organizations may seem similar to natural allies for LGBT movement organizations, given their common interest in challenging heteropatriarchy (Elder 2003). However, their positions on gender and sexual diversity may depend on their relationship with the state and ruling party. Other African women's movement organizations oppose LGBT rights. Sister Namibia, a radical feminist organization in Namibia, began publicly defending sexual minorities in 1995 from scathing attacks by ruling party leaders (Currier 2012c). When the organization framed lesbian rights as women's rights in 1999 in the Namibian Women's Manifesto, a document that outlined a comprehensive agenda for empowering women politically, women's rights activists and women in the ruling party took offense and portrayed the organization as derailing the Namibian women's movement (Geisler 2004; Rothschild 2005). Netumbo Ndaitwah, the Minister of Women's Affairs, claimed that the manifesto would teach children "how to become gays and lesbians" ("Manifesto gets the tag" 1999, p. 12). Ultimately, several women's rights groups withdrew their support for the manifesto, much to the chagrin of Sister Namibia activists.

Although some African women's movement organizations have registered their objections to LGBT organizing, in other contexts, activists have expressed little interest in gender and sexual diversity. This does not mean that women's rights activists necessarily support LGBT rights, but, instead, may want to avoid controversy by steering clear of these issues. For example, African women's rights activists attending the Beijing + 10 regional conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2004 did not want "to adopt language that would unequivocally reject the discrimination of African women on grounds of lesbianism" (Tamale 2008, p. 52). This position unnerved Tamale (2008, p. 52), who notes that this conference took place not long after "the brutal sexual assault and violent murder of a Sierra Leonean woman [Fannyann Eddy] who had been actively engaged in the struggle of the rights of lesbians and other sexual minorities locally and regionally."

Human rights NGOs sometimes act as proxy agents of gender and sexual diversity activists in the face of intense social and political hostility. In many countries, LGBT movement organizations depend on human rights NGOs to serve as allies when anti-gay opponents attack homosexuality. Similar to heterosexual allies of LGBT activists in western contexts, human rights activists can become LGBT activist "allies" because they "are not direct beneficiaries of the movements they support and do not have expectations of such benefits" (Myers 2008, p. 168).

Not all human rights NGOs defend LGBT rights. Writing in 2005, Sophia Musa Mohamed asserts that "no single NGO" in Tanzania defends LGBT rights and that "existing human rights organisations do not take up the issue of discrimination against LGBT people" (p. 54). In some cases, leaders of human rights NGOs bond with state leaders in their common disgust with homosexuality. Nonetheless, human rights discourse has influenced the direction of LGBT organizing. Some African state and civil society leaders use homosexuality to redraw the boundaries of human rights rhetoric. In Namibia and elsewhere, ruling party leaders have denounced homosexuality as a human "wrong" (Weidlich 1998, p. 8). In Cameroon, Sismondi Barlev

Bidjocka, leader of the Cameroonian Youth Rally (*Rassemblement de la Jeunesse Camerounaise* (RJC)), has referred to homosexuality as a crime against humanity. He has also argued that homosexuality aims to extinguish humanity because same-sex sexualities thwart procreation between men and women (Bidjocka 2012).

Faith-based NGOs can similarly act as allies of LGBT movement organizations. Influential religious leaders throughout Africa—from former Archbishop Desmond Tutu (2011) in South Africa to retired Anglican Bishop Christopher Ssenyonjo in Uganda—support destigmatizing homosexuality (Hassett 2007). Faith-based organizations advocating for gender and sexual minorities have emerged in different places. In South Africa, the Inner Circle ministers to LGBT Muslims and addresses misconceptions about gender and sexual diversity in Islam (Hendricks 2009). Well-meaning heterosexual Anglican Ugandans launched an organization for LGBT Anglicans in 2000 called Integrity-Uganda, a "sibling organization" of Integrity-USA (Hassett 2007, p. 208).

Conversely, some faith-based organizations actively persecute African gender and sexual minorities. Religious leaders, such as Christian and Muslim clerics, overcome theological differences to unite against the commonly despised target of homosexuality. In South Africa, traditional leaders and Christian clerics formed an "unholy alliance" and mobilized against marriage equality in 2005 and 2006 (Stacey 2011, p. 97). In spite of their efforts, lawmakers followed the South African Constitutional Court's 2005 directive to amend existing marriage laws to accommodate same-sex marriage, and, in November 2006, marriage equality became law (Judge et al. 2008). In 2011, the Christian Council of Ghana referred to homosexuality as an "unnatural and ungodly act" and urged Ghanaians not to vote for politicians who endorsed gay rights (Ghana News Agency 2011). African LGBT activists may confront antigay hostility from multiple directions: from the state, from other CSOs, from traditional leaders, and from faith-based organizations.

Transnational Dimensions of African Sexual Diversity Struggles

Although many gender and sexual diversity struggles tend to unfold locally or nationally, developments in sexual politics elsewhere in the world increasingly affect African LGBT activism. Thus, African sexual diversity struggles are undergoing transnationalization, driven by local LGBT activists' agency and by economic exigency, a result of neoliberal globalization. In hostile sociopolitical environments, LGBT activists may turn to foreign audiences for several reasons.

First, activists cannot access funding to support LGBT rights projects due to the paucity of indigenous philanthropic and government funding sources and to individual government officials' opposition to gender and sexual diversity. Obtaining external funding and material support is critical to the LGBT movement's continuity in such circumstances. Similar to African activists involved with other social movements (Britton 2006), LGBT activists seek funding from northern donors (Currier 2012c).

Second, activists tap into transnational advocacy networks (TANs) for material and nonmaterial assistance. TANs refer to assemblages of actors "bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services" that pressure for change in state laws and policies or in international organizations (Keck and Sikkink 1998, p. 2). TANs often coalesce "around issues involving threats to bodily integrity and equality of opportunity" (Bob 2005, p. 29). To elicit TAN and northern donor interest, LGBT activists often frame their grievances and demands using stark, two-dimensional images of peril and salvation and clearly identify enemies such as state and religious leaders.

Third, LGBT activists turn to other African LGBT movement organizations for support and guidance. Older or more established LGBT organizations mentor younger or troubled organizations, sharing information, expertise, and resources in a continental advocacy network. Namibian, South African, and Zimbabwean LGBT movement organizations have advised activists in other African regions on what strategies might be most effective for their local environments (Currier 2012c). For example, the Coalition of African Lesbians, which is based in South Africa, acts as continental lesbian rights observer and works with organizations advocating for gender and sexual minority women's rights. Behind the Mask, an LGBT activist organization based in Johannesburg, South Africa, served as an information clearinghouse for African activists and nonAfrican allies until early in 2012 when the organization closed due to lack of external funds (Currier 2010a).

Although African LGBT activists derive great benefits from transnational connections, they can experience significant disadvantages, particularly in the form of threats and accusations from local antigay opponents. Ordinary citizens in Cameroon and Gabon have accused ruling elites of being homosexuals because they view elites as hoarding money and power, a connection linking homosexuality with corruption (Aterianus-Owanga 2012; Awondo 2010). This allegation actually implicates heterosexual persons who rally around LGBT rights, threatening to besmirch their personal reputations and question their dedication to gender and sexual minority equality. In West African contexts, local expressions associate homosexuality with White gay male tourists who convince young African men to have sex with them for money, a form of commercial same-sex work (Broqua 2009). Some antigay activists allege that lesbian and gay activists are "gay for pay"; this contention questions activists' integrity by insinuating that activists greedily and disingenuously portray themselves as representing LGBT Africans only to acquire funding and other material support from foreign donors (Currier 2012c, p. 124). In other words, antigay opponents accuse LGBT activists of selling out their heterosexual African authenticity. A Black Namibian gay activist interviewed by Currier (2012c, p. 124) explained that his organization tries to convince audiences of the compatibility of African and LGBT identities: "[W]e're Africans, and we're also gay as well. And we've never been to Europe to be, you know, manipulated to become gay, but it's something in us."

Anticolonial sentiment motivates antigay accusations that African LGBT activism is evidence of western meddling in African politics. For instance, antigay opponents criticized the support of foreign donors and diplomats for Zambian LGBT organizing, which first surfaced in 1998 (Hoad 2007; Luirink 2000; Ungar 2000). Zambians

formed the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Association (LEGATRA) and publicized their intention to register the organization with the state, which Zambian ruling party officials promised to block (Hoad 2007; Ungar 2000). A leader of a human rights organization, the Zambian Independent Monitoring Team, which supported LEGATRA, stated that representatives from Dutch and American LGBT movement organizations had visited his organization and "expressed desire to sponsor the protection of gay rights in Zambia and lobby for the removal" of antisodomy laws (Hoad 2007, p. 83). After ruling party leaders issued antigay statements, the Norwegian ambassador to Zambia donated US\$ 1,000 to the Zambian Independent Monitoring Team, which provoked "a fresh round of anti-lgbt threats" (Ungar 2000, p. 75). According to Hoad (2007, p. 84), the Zambian LGBT movement was "more likely . . . an effect of transnational organizing rather than an indigenous grassroots movement." The LGBT movement's potential racial and national inauthenticity—in that it was not a homegrown response generated by Zambians without the interference of northern activists and diplomats—supported antigay opponents' point that homosexuality was un-African; in their view, northern intervention, funding, and ideas initiated an "African" LGBT movement.

In some cases, African LGBT activists have to respond to transnational conservative actors that prop up local antigay movements. Uganda has received much international media attention for the role US Christian evangelicals played in inspiring lawmakers to draft the "Anti-Homosexuality Bill," a bill proposed in the Parliament on October 2009 and that reemerged in 2012. Ugandan political homophobia coincided with pressure from US politicians over Ugandan HIV/AIDS programs (Sharlet 2010). Before overt evangelical involvement in HIV/AIDS prevention efforts, Uganda was lauded worldwide in the 1990s for seemingly successful efforts to lower HIV-infection rates (Thornton 2008). Enamored by Ugandan efforts to corral the HIV/AIDS epidemic, US policymakers courted Ugandan politicians. As a condition of receiving US funding, Ugandan officials implemented HIV-prevention programs that touted sexual abstinence over condom use (Sharlet 2010). In this way, Uganda served as a "laboratory" for US evangelical plans for regulating heteronormativity (Sharlet 2010, p. 32). The Ugandan state's endorsement of abstinence-only programs mandated marital heterosexuality following this US intervention. "In addition to adopting, without critique, [U.S. President George W.] Bush's policy guidelines for HIV and AIDS, [President Yoweri] Museveni frequently deploys homophobic rhetoric, and the Ugandan police systematically prey on persons whose sexuality does not conform to dominant norms" (Corrêa et al. 2008, p. 41).

Ugandan members of "The Family," an American-originated transnational religious and political group profiled by Jeff Sharlet (2010), borrowed US religious homophobia and escalated the campaign to eradicate same-sex sexualities. Ugandan Minister of Ethics and Integrity, James Nsaba Buturo, promised those attending a 2009 conference sponsored by Exodus International, an organization that promotes the idea that homosexuals can become heterosexuals through reparative therapy (Barton 2012; Erzen 2006), that he would draft a bill that would increase the penalties for same-sex sex "because the penal code criminalizing homosexuality is too weak" (Spivey and Robinson 2010, p. 77). The connection between US conservative evangelical activists and Ugandan Christian politicians constitutes just one

of the latest examples of transnational conservative movement mobilization (Bob 2012), evidence that "First World and Third World homophobia are good bedfellows" (Hartmann 1998, p. 164).

Questions of ethics, authenticity, and sincerity emerge in queer critiques of the involvement of western activists, donors, and diplomats in African LGBT organizing. This critique materializes in Massad's (2002, p. 362) interrogation of the "Gay International" a group of northern donors and international NGOs such as Human Rights Watch, IGLHRC, and ILGA, which promote LGBT rights throughout the world. Massad and other scholars suggest that such organizations based in the global North uncritically export models of western gay liberation to the sheltered global South (Hoad 2007; Manalansan 1995; Puar 2007). Western gay liberation models may not work well in contexts in the global South, particularly in African contexts that discourage open expression of sexual variance. For instance, in Senegal, discretion, also known as "sutura," governs sexual formations and expressions (Broqua 2010). Discretion dictates that individuals remain quiet about their intimate lives, rendering public celebrations of gay pride or coming out culturally discordant and strange. Activists have registered their own version of this queer critique, identifying instances in which western activists' commentary or involvement in African LGBT activism is unwelcome or culturally dissonant or heightens activists' risk for homophobic or transphobic violence ("African LGBTI" 2007).

A final criticism worth considering is the possibility that "NGO-ization" presages the depoliticization and demobilization of African LGBT organizing. NGO-ization involves activists procuring external funding for movement activities and undergoing particular forms of professionalization such as managing budgets and writing accurate reports for external funders (Alvarez 1998; Thayer 2009). Much research documents how susceptible NGOs can be to the bureaucratic demands of northern donors who insist that staff exhibit technocratic competency (Britton 2006; Michael 2004). Such demands can weaken the effectiveness of NGO service provision, as organizations direct energy and resources toward building their infrastructure. As a result, NGO workers become distracted from their commitments to promoting freedom and democracy in different sectors and ultimately become less visible and accountable to their constituents (Englund 2006). These critiques are equally applicable to African LGBT movement organizations, many of which rely on external funding for their activities. NGO-ization can result in demobilization of LGBT movements when leaders become preoccupied with satisfying donors' demands at the expense of their planned advocacy campaigns (Currier 2012c).

African Sexual Diversity Struggles Continue

The politicization of sexual diversity in many African nations affects an array of CSOs. In particular, LGBT movement organizations experience constraints operating in a sociopolitical environment inimical to homosexuality and gender variance. Activists face state-sanctioned threats of bodily harm; lawmakers' promises to pass

legislation criminalizing homosexuality and LGBT advocacy; police harassment, arrest, and detention; vigilante violence; destruction of organizational property; blackmail and extortion; and loss of employment. In light of the severe consequences potentially awaiting public LGBT rights advocacy, some LGBT movement organizations shrink from public view, creating elaborate processes that manage their visibility and insulate them from harm (Currier 2012c). Different types of CSOs such as HIV/AIDS, women's rights, and faith-based NGOs can also face negative sanctions, if they publicly support LGBT rights. Conversely, some CSOs participate in the repression of organizations that champion LGBT rights, ostracizing them in the process.

Although politicization can produce profoundly negative consequences for LGBT activist organizations, this process can generate cultural and political possibilities for gender and sexual dissidents. Within public discussions about gender and sexual diversity, dissidents articulate their visions of a democratic government and society that include LGBT persons. LGBT activists also introduce constituents to new modes of self-identification, which constituents may view as appealing alternatives to local insults (Blackwood 2004). Some African constituents experience gender and sexual minority identification as empowering. In addition, LGBT movement organizations' visibility strategies may spill over into other struggles over sexuality. LGBT activists' insistence on talking about gender and sexual diversity challenges local prohibitions on open discussion of sexuality, potentially inspiring CSOs that work on related issues to experiment with similar visibility strategies. For instance, CSOs that defend sex workers' rights currently discuss sexuality, contesting proscriptions on public discussion of sexuality (Tamale 2011). As a form of tactical diffusion, cross-fertilization can introduce new tactics to CSOs (Taylor and Van Dyke 2004). Whether and how other African CSOs draw inspiration from LGBT movement organizations is not well understood. In fact, only within the last few years have researchers begun treating African LGBT movement organizations as worthy of scholarly attention (Awondo 2010; Currier 2012c; Dirsuweit 2006; Lorway 2008; Tucker 2009).

In the rest of this chapter, we identify and discuss a few promising areas for future research on African civil society and sexual diversity struggles. These areas of future research include: (1) contextualizing the emergence, duration, and denouement of African sexual diversity struggles, (2) analyzing the consequences of the politicization of sexual diversity for African civil society, and (3) documenting and assessing the transnationalization of African sexual diversity struggles.

First, case studies and cross-national comparisons can help account for the rise and trajectory of African LGBT movements. How, when, and why do LGBT movements emerge in African contexts? Do LGBT movements emerge to contest local political homophobia? Should scholars consider LGBT activism as a movement that "spin[s] off" from other local movements, such as HIV/AIDS organizing (McAdam 1995, p. 219), or that "spill[s] over" from LGBT organizing in neighboring African countries (Meyer and Whittier 1994, p. 277)? Documenting the emergence of LGBT activist organizations is very important, as recent research demonstrates that in the early phases of activist groups, participants consider multiple political possibilities before settling on one pathway (Blee 2012). Researchers could also explore LGBT

activist organizations' stature in national civil society, examine ties between LGBT organizations and other African CSOs, and assess the degree to which LGBT activist organizations are integrated into or isolated from a civil society sector. Under what circumstances do LGBT movement organizations demobilize and disband? It is tempting to attribute LGBT movement demobilization to social and political repression, but this explanation may be incomplete. Instead, scholars can investigate the relationship of state and nonstate repression to LGBT movement decline.

Second, the politicization of sexual diversity may produce direct and indirect consequences for African CSOs. Ostensibly, the politicization of sexual diversity polarizes civil society, pitting pro-LGBT CSOs against anti-LGBT CSOs. CSOs that have little to do with LGBT rights could be forced to take a public position on this issue. LGBT rights could act as a "wedge issue" within African civil societies, providing certain CSOs with an opportunity to strengthen their ties to state officials by endorsing leaders' homophobic positions (Franke 2004, p. 64). More indirect consequences accompanying the public visibility of African LGBT organization may include the liberalization of civil society positions on sexual rights, which could facilitate a range of HIV/AIDS, human rights, and women's rights campaigns. Similarly, government surveillance and elaborate registration mechanisms intended to thwart LGBT organizing could ensnare non-LGBT CSOs and impede their ability to procure funding from foreign sources. More research is needed to grasp how the politicization of sexual diversity affects and transforms African civil society.

Finally, future African LGBT organizing efforts will likely continue to have transnational dimensions, as foreign donors, northern governments and diplomats, and international NGOs weigh in on African sexual diversity struggles. Yet the contours, sources, and directions of this transnationalization remain unclear. Who instigates the transnationalization of African sexual diversity struggles? On one hand, African LGBT movement organizations can benefit materially from close ties with northern donors, NGOs, and governments. On the other hand, these ties can quickly devolve into images of LGBT activists doing the bidding of unscrupulous foreigners trying to export sexual practices and rights frameworks to independent African nations. In some cases, LGBT activists may actually reject the advances of foreign actors too keen on helping African movements, preferring instead to develop continental African resources. Recent research shows that conservative anti-LGBT TANs are gaining steam throughout Africa (Bob 2012). Analyzing how conservative foreign activists forge ties with receptive African audiences is important to understanding the complex transnationalization of African sexual diversity struggles.

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Chapter 21
Civil Society's Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis in Africa

Richard G. Wamai

Introduction

In many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, civil society organizations (CSOs) or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were the first providers of acutely needed health services following the end of colonialism (MacPherson 1982; Mburu 1989; Vogel and Stephens 1989) and later with the advent of HIV/AIDS (Mercer et al. 1991; UNAIDS 2006). Although it was largely unexpected, their participation and legitimization unfolded within the context of the NGOization of healthcare and HIV/AIDS services (Allison and Macinko 1993; Gellert 1996; Hearn 1998; Akukwe 1998; Leonard 2002; UNAIDS 2006; PEPFAR 2006; Görgens-Albino et al. 2007). This NGOization is rooted largely in external global institutions that have heavily influenced health and development policy in Africa, in particular the World Bank (MacPherson 1982; Akin et al. 1987; Sen and Koivusalo 1998; Ruger 2005; Obeng-Odoom 2012) and the World Health Organization (WHO) (Brown et al. 2006).

As HIV was quietly hatching unnoticed in parts of the continent (Denis and Becker 2006; Sousa et al. 2010; Timberg and Halperin 2012), state failure in meeting demand for basic social services (Fine and Stoneman 1996; World Bank 1997) led to NGOs being regarded as Africa's "hidden resource," while the 1980s were labeled the "NGO decade" (Bratton 1988). Through the 1990s, political and economic liberalization frameworks requiring state minimization and a strategic shift in foreign aid that allowed NGOs to organize effectively and coordinate their resources resulted in a tremendous growth in the number of health NGOs (Hyden 1995; Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Ndegwa 1996; INTRAC 1998; Mohan et al. 2000; Njoku 2006; Lee 2010). Popularly known as Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) in the mid-1980s, these had catastrophic effects on government budgets (Easterly 2006; Mohan et al. 2000; Rossetti and Bossert 1999; Naiman and Watkins 1999; International Monetary Fund 1998; Peabody 1996; World Federation of Public Health Associations

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1996; Loewenson 1993; Diop et al. 1998; Cornia et al. 1987). Governments scaled back on financing essential health services, real wages of public health sector workers declined, and healthcare services became a function of the private sector. At the same time, health services became less accessible for the poor, and quality drastically fell, leading to major shortage of drugs (Botchwey et al. 1998; Pongou et al. 2006; UNICEF 1999). In a context of deteriorating health indicators (Mwabu 1998), the rapid growth of NGOs working in the social sectors in the continent would coincide with the emergence and eventual explosion of HIV/AIDS (Latham 1993; Mercer et al. 1991) which would subsequently bring about the rise of specialist AIDS NGOs.

Entrenching this NGOization process was the WHO, the primary player in health policy development globally in its early decades (Brown et al. 2006), through its push for reform of health approaches toward primary healthcare in the 1970s. Critical to this was the Declaration of Alma Ata on "Health for All by the Year 2000" which added greater emphasis on the role of communities (Owino 1999; Dror et al. 2002; Brown et al. 2006). Subsequently, the 1987 report of the World Bank titled *Financing Health Services in Developing Countries: An Agenda for Reform* gave a particular impetus to four key reforms (Akin et al. 1987). These were the introduction of user charges, the development of the insurance system, increased use and development of the NGO sector, and decentralization of health services (Koivusalo and Ollila 1996, p. 149; Wamai 2004, p. 136, 137). This agenda was further emphasized in the 1993 World Development Report titled *Investing in Health* (World Bank 1993). With that the stage was set for the World Bank to overtake the WHO as the leading player in global health (Institute of Medicine 1997; Ruger 2005) and the first to initiate an AIDS response in Africa at the end of that decade (Görgens-Albino et al. 2007).

At the same time, efforts to tackle debt and improve aid effectiveness in heavily indebted poor countries resulted in the need for more transparent and participatory processes in development planning through conditional poverty reduction strategies (Craig and Porter 2003; Dodd 2002), a new governance framework supported by northern and southern NGOs (Fraser 2005). With these reform agendas orchestrated by the World Bank and other donors, aid appropriations increased systematically for nonstate entities (Development Assistance Committee 1996; Overseas Development Institute 1995; Hulme and Edwards 1997). Thus, ensued the community participatory primary healthcare model emphasizing top-down decentralization and public–private and north–south partnerships, marking a radical shift in the planning and organization of development and healthcare services (Koivusalo and Ollila 1996; WHO 2000; Akin et al. 1985; Korten 1987; Bennett et al. 1997; Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Harding and Preker 2003; Palmer 2000; Fowler 2000) which were highly NGOized (Allison and Macinko 1993; Gellert 1996; Hearn 1998; Akukwe 1998; Leonard 2002). At the dawn of the new decade in 2000, the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), an unprecedented visionary global framework for human development, was born by consensus with critical buy-in from NGOs (UNDP 2003; Manning 2009).

The overall result of this process is the notable prominence of NGOs working within the development arena at the international level. A 2008 estimate indicated that of over 3,500 NGOs with official links to the UN system, 700 were working in the health sector, and over 480 had direct partnerships with the WHO, including

about half having a role in its governance (Perez 2008). The nature of these relationships means NGOs can influence critical policy development where, for instance, they are included in the consultative processes as in the case of the current 10-year health strategy of the World Bank (World Bank 2007). The entry of NGOs in tackling the HIV/AIDS crisis in Africa owes to their embeddedness in the decades-old development discourse (Bratton 1989; Appleton et al. 1996; Hulme and Edwards 1997). Notably, this came on the heels of the confusion and state of unpreparedness governments, affected communities, and donors found themselves in as well as the challenging complexity the pandemic posed.

As documented in literature tracing the emergence of transnational cooperative structures in response to AIDS (Gordenker et al. 1995), there were deliberate efforts to create and navigate links between the emerging international infrastructure in the AIDS response and the various forms of CSOs (Jönsson and Söderholm 1995). Subsequently, local NGOs, faith-based organizations (FBOs), and community-based organizations (CBOs) have been at the forefront of the response to the pandemic (ICASO, AfriCASO, and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance 2007; UNAIDS 2006; PEPFAR 2012). Throughout Africa, these groups have been responsible for transferring significant amount of resources to needy persons affected by HIV/AIDS, and have played a leading role in developing and implementing policies, strategies, and programs to mitigate the impact and prevent and treat HIV/AIDS. Importantly, the specific national histories and political economy, as well as, the local, national, and international political context have influenced the different responses (Dickinson 2006; Iqbal 2009). Against this background, this chapter discusses the role of CSOs in responding to the HIV/AIDS crisis in sub-Saharan Africa. To appreciate this role, it is invaluable to understand the background to their participation in the health arena in general, the HIV/AIDS crisis in Africa, and the global HIV/AIDS "industry". To this end, the chapter is organized as follows. This introduction has addressed the discourse of the NGOization of healthcare services in Africa, emphasizing the emergence of the NGO sector to fill gaps in the provision of public health and HIV/AIDS services. In the second section, we describe the state of the HIV/AIDS crises in the subcontinent, highlighting the latest epidemiological data and trends in prevalence and incidence of new infections and mortality. In addition, the section highlights the prevention approaches and the socioeconomic impacts of the diseases on the continent. The third part of the chapter focuses on the response to the crisis including the state of programmatic financing. Part four examines the role CSOs have played and are playing in providing services, managing resources, and governance with examples at the international, national, and local levels. A concluding section closes with ideas for the CSO sector in Africa.

HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa

There are about as many persons living with HIV/AIDS in Africa as the entire population of the Nordic countries. Of the more than 34 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, 68 % (22.5 million) are in sub-Saharan Africa and 60 % are

women (UNAIDS 2011). Globally, of the nearly 17 million children who have lost at least one parent to AIDS, about 90 % are in sub-Saharan Africa (UNICEF et al. 2009; UNAIDS 2010a). The figure below shows comprehensive 2009 data for all sub-Saharan African countries published in the 2010 UNAIDS. Current scientific evidence indicates that HIV originated in western Africa (Lemey et al. 2003; Keele et al. 2006), travelled along trading routes to central Africa before spreading out of the continent and to the rest of the world (Gilbert et al. 2007; Pepin 2011; Timberg and Halperin 2012). The emergence and spread of HIV/AIDS in the subcontinent were as rapid and devastating as to defy belief (Cameron 2005; Buvé et al. 2002; Merson et al. 2008; Timberg and Halperin 2012) (Table 21.1).

However, Africa is not a homogenous continent. Vast differences occur in the prevalence of HIV/AIDs, though not in modes of transmission: heterosexual intercourse is the established predominant mode of HIV transmission in the continent (Wamai et al. 2011). Comparing central, eastern, southern, and western regions of the continent, epidemiological data has shown that at the start of the 1990s, prevalence was highest in eastern Africa and lowest in the western region (Asamoah-Odei et al. 2004; Denis and Becker 2006). Through the decade, prevalence remained below 5 % in central and western, and started to decline in eastern Africa. Dramatic declines not seen anywhere else since the start of the epidemic to date were observed in Uganda (Kinsman 2010) while, on the other hand, prevalence skyrocketed in southern Africa, rising in South Africa alone from barely 1 % in 1990 to 23 % in 1998 (Walker et al. 2004, p. 106).

Why did HIV spread so rapidly in Africa? While poverty is postulated to play a role, (Butler 2000), it is hardly the primal contextual factor. Bearing in mind the differential spread across the continent, in fact, studies have shown no correlation between a low gross national product (GNP) and HIV prevalence (O'Farrell 2001). Botswana, South Africa, and Namibia are middle-income countries (World Bank 2011) but have higher HIV prevalence than low-income countries in western Africa, such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Cameroon (UNAIDS 2011). In fact, HIV incidence is higher among educated and high income population groups across the majority of countries (Piot et al. 2007). As pointed out, the main driver of HIV transmission in Africa is heterosexual intercourse. Simply put, people with increased opportunity for sexual intercourse have an increased risk of infection. For example, epidemiological data from nine western African countries indicate that prevalence is higher in married or previously married couples, particularly women, than those who are single (UNAIDS and WHO 2009). In Kenya, married women also have a higher risk of infection than unmarried women (Ministry of Health and National AIDS and STI Control Program 2008).

Nevertheless, the effect of sexual transmission is complicated by context-specific factors affecting host and agent alike as, for instance, the four-city studies investigating the differential distribution found (Auvert et al. 2001). These include viral load and other individual-level and host biological factors, stage of the disease, and the socioeconomic and policy context (Wamai et al. 2011). For example, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as genital ulcer disease (GUD), syphilis, and herpes simplex virus (HSV) are known to increase vulnerability to infection (Sousa et al. 2010;

Table 21.1 HIV/AIDS Statistics for all 41 sub-Saharan African Countries, 2009. (Sources: UNAIDS (2010), *UNAIDS report on the global AIDS epidemic 2010*, http://www.unaids.org/globalreport/documents/20101123_GlobalReport_full_en.pdf; data for "Estimated ARV coverage based on 2010 WHO guidelines (2010, %)" is from WHO/UNAIDS/UNICEF (2011), http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789241502986_eng.pdf)

Country	People living with HIV/AIDS	Adult (15–49) prevalence %	Women with HIV/AIDS	Children with HIV/AIDS	AIDS deaths	Orphans due to AIDS	Estimated ARV coverage based on 2010 WHO guidelines (2010, %)
Angola	200,000	2	110,000	22,000	11,000	140,000	33
Benin	60,000	1.2	32,000	5,400	2,700	30,000	58
Botswana	320,000	24.8	170,000	16,000	5,800	93,000	93
Burkina Faso	110,000	1.2	56,000	17,000	7,100	140,000	49
Burundi	180,000	3.3	90,000	28,000	15,000	200,000	34
Cameroon	610,000	5.3	320,000	54,000	37,000	330,000	38
Central African Republic	130,000	4.7	67000	17,000	11,000	140,000	24
Chad	210,000	3.4	110,000	23,000	11,000	120,000	39
Comoros	< 500	0.1	<100	–	<100	<100	> 95
Congo	77,000	3.4	40,000	7,900	5,100	51,000	42
Côte d'Ivoire	450,000	3.4	220,000	63,000	36,000	440,000	37
Dem. Republic of Congo	(430,000–560,000)	(1.2–1.6)	(220,000–300,000)	(33,000–86,000)	(26,000–40,000)	(350,000–510,000)	14
Equatorial Guinea	20,000	5	11,000	1,600	<1,000	4,100	24
Eritrea	25,000	0.8	13,000	3,100	1,700	19,000	42
Gabon	46,000	5.2	25,000	3,200	2,400	18,000	53
Gambia	18,000	2	9,700	–	<1,000	2,800	35
Ghana	260,000	1.8	140,000	27,000	18,000	160,000	35
Guinea	79,000	1.3	41,000	9,000	4,700	59,000	57

Table 21.1 (continued)

Country	People living with HIV/AIDS	Adult (15–49) prevalence %	Women with HIV/AIDS	Children with HIV/AIDS	AIDS deaths	Orphans due to AIDS	Estimated ARV coverage based on 2010 WHO guidelines (2010, %)
Guinea-Bissau	22,000	2.5	12,000	2,100	1,200	9,700	48
Kenya	1,500,000	6.3	760,000	180,000	80,000	1,200,000	61
Lesotho	290,000	23.6	160,000	28,000	14,000	130,000	57
Liberia	37,000	1.5	19,000	6,100	3,600	52,000	27
Madagascar	24,000	0.2	7,300	–	1,700	11,000	1
Malawi	920,000	11	470,000	120,000	51,000	650,000	[49–57]
Mali	76,000	1	40,000	–	4,400	59,000	46
Mauritania	14,000	0.7	4,000	–	<1,000	3,600	22
Mauritius	8,800	1	2,500	–	<500	<1,000	16
Mozambique	1,400,000	11.5	760,000	130,000	74,000	670,000	40
Namibia	180,000	13.1	95,000	16,000	6,700	70,000	90
Niger	61,000	0.8	28,000	–	4,300	57,000	29
Nigeria	3,300,000	3.6	1,700,000	360,000	220,000	2,500,000	26
Rwanda	170,000	2.9	88,000	22,000	4,100	130,000	88
Senegal	59,000	0.9	32,000	–	2,600	19,000	50
Sierra Leone	49,000	1.6	28,000	2,900	2,800	15,000	31
South Africa	5,600,000	17.8	3,300,000	330,000	310,000	1,900,000	55
Swaziland	180,000	25.9	100,000	14,000	7,000	69,000	72
Togo	120,000	3.2	67,000	11,000	7,700	66,000	50
Uganda	1,200,000	6.5	610,000	150,000	64,000	1,200,000	47
United Rep. of Tanzania	1,400,000	5.6	730,000	160,000	86,000	1,100,000	42
Zambia	980,000	13.5	490,000	120,000	45,000	690,000	72
Zimbabwe	1,200,000	14.3	620,000	150,000	83,000	1,000,000	59
TOTAL 41 COUNTRIES	22,500,000	5	12,100,000	2,300,000	1,300,000	14,800,000	49

As per UNAIDS classification used for reporting data for sub-Saharan African countries only Ethiopia is missing in this list; this data was not reported. For the last column on ART coverage for 2010 Ethiopia had reported coverage of 222,723 persons; the number needing the drugs was not known hence a percentage could not be computed (WHO/UNAIDS/UNICEF 2011)

UNAIDS and WHO 2009; Sobngwi-Tambekou et al. 2009). In addition, lack of circumcision in men has been solidly demonstrated in three clinical trials and numerous observational studies to reduce the risk of infection in men during heterosexual intercourse by 65 % (Siegfried et al. 2009; Weiss et al. 2008), and in women by 46 % (Hallett et al. 2011). A critical factor in the sexual behavior is concurrent and multiple partnerships in unstructured casual sex and polygyny common in many parts of Africa (One Love 2008; Wamai et al. 2011; Poulin and Muula 2011; Allais and Venter 2012). The distribution of these conditions and practices explains the varying prevalence of HIV/AIDS across the African regions (Denis and Becker 2006; Orroth et al. 2011).

Understanding these aspects of the risk factors predisposing to HIV, the prevalence and incidence trends, as well as populations affected is vital to development of an effective response strategy. The good news in the story of HIV/AIDS in Africa is that the new infections are declining, with 25 % decline in 22 countries during 1990–2009 (UNAIDS 2011). Still, 70 % of 2.6 million new HIV infections in 2010 and half of 1.7 million global deaths are in this region (UNAIDS 2011), and long-term projections for Africa remain gloomy. The Institute of Medicine (2010) calculates that the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Africa by 2050 could reach 70 million. Such a scenario could continue to cost the continent enormously economically and socially and undermine its development for decades to come. As the World Bank observed a decade ago, the impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa has been "simply staggering," posing the "foremost threat to development in the region" (World Bank 2000), and the "single greatest reversal in human development" (UNDP 2005, p. 3). According to some estimates, the impact of HIV/AIDS on African economies ranges between 2 and 4 % of the GDP annually, besides the toll it takes through direct and indirect impacts to households, national healthcare budgets (Bloom 1998; Dixon et al. 2001; Poku 2002; Cornia et al. 2002; Economic Commission for Africa n.d.; Quinn and Serwadda 2011; Lule and Haacker 2012), and weakening health systems due to health worker shortage (Doyle and Patel 2008; WHO 2006; Yu et al. 2008). In one of the biggest impacts, the pandemic has reduced life expectancy (LE) dramatically, with many countries in eastern and southern Africa realizing lower LE in the 1990s than in the 1960s (Merson et al. 2008; Medecins Sans Frontieres 2010; Buvé et al. 2002).

The Response to HIV/AIDS and the Rise of Civil Society Organizations

> Almost universally, the first response to the AIDS epidemic came from HIV-positive individuals, their families and communities, by organizing themselves to care for those in need (UNAIDS 2006, p. 202).

Cast as "a threat to human civilization as a whole" by the former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan (Fleshman 2000, p. 25), and by the first Joint UN Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) director Peter Piot as "one of the most serious crises facing

human development," (Piot et al. 2001: 410) and "one of the make-or-break forces of this century" (Piot 2006: 368), HIV/AIDS was to become the first disease for which the UN Security Council held a meeting in 2000 under the auspices of the theme: "The situation in Africa: The impact of AIDS on peace and security in Africa" (United Nations 2000). HIV/AIDS was seen as a human security challenge (Elbe 2006). Almost a decade earlier, in 1992, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had adopted the "Declaration on the AIDS Epidemic in Africa" with an action plan noting the role of CSOs. This was later reiterated in Algiers in 1999 where a new framework—the "International Partnership against AIDS in Africa"—was approved in the context of the UN global efforts, including the earlier establishment in 1996 of the UNAIDS, to urgently mobilize governments, civil society, and development partners to commit unprecedented resources to combating the pandemic (Fleshman 2000; United Nations 2001).

The 2000 UN Summit introduced the Millennium Declaration that included a central focus on HIV/AIDS as one of three health MDGs and an emphasis on global partnerships (Hecht et al. 2006). A year later, the UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV/AIDS was convened resulting in an urgent "call to action" (http://www.un.org/ga/aids/conference.html). This "Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS" at such high UN levels acted as a critical trigger for action on an unprecedented scale. The declaration stated that "leadership by governments in combating HIV/AIDS is essential and their efforts should be complemented by the full and active participation of civil society, the business community and the private sector." As an example of an early partnership, in Botswana, the government and pharmaceutical company Merck together with the Gates Foundation established an unprecedented public–private partnership, the African Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnership (ACHAP) (Ramiah and Reich 2006).

Even before the enormity of the epidemic started to be recognized, civil society groups, often the result of grassroots community-led HIV/AIDS initiatives (CHAIs), formed mainly by people living with HIV/AIDS, were the first actors across the globe to challenge government apathy and neglect and mobilize support for state action in HIV/AIDS programming (Mercer et al. 1991; UNAIDS 2006). Notable were groups such as the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) in the USA (Crimp 1990; Kramer 1994). In South Africa, the NGO Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) lobbied hard and eventually took the South African government to court to demand that it provide antiretrovirals (ARVs) as a constitutional state responsibility (Grebe 2009). In Uganda, the AIDS Support Organization (TASO) pioneered the promotion of voluntary counseling and testing (VCT), and the use of ARVs as well as translating and implementing government policies (TASO and WHO 1995). With Uganda receiving the largest funding for HIV of any country in the early 1990s, the AIDS CSOs grew dramatically (de Coninck 2004; Parkhurst 2001). Many of these CSOs across the sub-Saharan region were religious organizations, both Christian and Muslim (Putzel 2006; Rasmussen 2011; for more on FBOs, see Chap. 3).

Through such groups, HIV/AIDS brought a new sense of solidarity among people living with the disease and fueled an unprecedented level of activism from individuals and groups drawn by a common cause. Webb (2004) argues that "no other single issue has galvanized civil society cooperation in so many different contexts on such

a scale before" (p. 19)" and notes that the rise and role of CSOs stemmed from three factors, namely state inaction in establishing programs, limited state credibility, and the subsequent encouragement they received from governments. Elsewhere, in countries like Malawi, Kelly and Birdsall (2010, p. 1582) argue that "responses to the epidemic have been a major driving force behind the growth" of CSOs owing to vast donor funding. Notwithstanding, differential CSO activism led to differing outcomes in countries such as South Africa, (Iqbal 2009), Senegal, and Uganda (Barnett and Whiteside 2006). Later, strong state leadership elsewhere in Uganda and Senegal was instrumental in rallying the nation behind the fight against HIV/AIDS with significant results in countries that had very different epidemics (Putzel 2006; Barnett and Whiteside 2006; Parkhurst 2011; Gauri and Lieberman 2004).

Such government support and leadership took much longer to materialize in other countries, notably South Africa, where, significantly, the entry of NGOs in the HIV/AIDS arena began as a conflictual relationship with the government (Grebe 2009; Walker et al. 2004; Nattrass 2008; Lasry et al. 2010). Here, antagonistic relations were pronounced not only on policy actions but also in the process of distributing resources, such as between FBOs and NGOs, and between them and the government (Lasry et al. 2010). In their edited volume, *The Political Economy of AIDS in Africa*, Poku and Whiteside (2004) highlight the critical national contexts that characterized the early response in the continent. The organizational, policy, and structural context across countries in the sub-Sahara has been seen to be a key determinant in the differential outcomes in HIV response (Robinson 2011). For instance, wrong policy choices or inaction in the HIV/AIDS response by the donor community and African leaders and governments resulted in needless death for hundreds of thousands of persons (Chigwedere et al. 2008; Potts et al. 2008; Timberg and Halperin 2012; Gauri and Lieberman 2004; Obadare and Okeke 2011).

Financing HIV/AIDS Programming—A Global Response

Before the adoption in 2001 of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS by the UN General Assembly, funding for HIV/AIDS programming was limited (United Nations 2001). The World Bank and Gates Foundation had entered the field with some commitments in 1999 and 2000, respectively, but following the declaration, major global health initiatives (GHIs) emerged (Cohen 2008). The GHIs comprise multilateral and bilateral intergovernmental and nongovernmental institutions among the key players being: the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (GFATM, also known simply as the "Global Fund") a private–public partnership started in 2002; the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) initiated in 2003; and the World Bank's Multicountry HIV/AIDS Program for Africa (MAP) launched in 1999 (Cohen 2008; Biesma et al. 2009; Hayden 2009). Together these three GHIs have been responsible for over 70 % of resources in resource-limited countries (Biesma et al. 2009). The GHIs finance AIDS interventions through grant and trust-funded projects to governments and NGOs.

	2001	2002	2003		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
PEPFAR					$1,67	$2,27	$2,65	$3,69	$5,02	$5,50	$5,57
MAP	$12.9	$42.1	$110.		$288.	$519.	$805				
GFATM		$326	$487	$362	$469	$315	$453	$537	$1,16	$1,19	$732
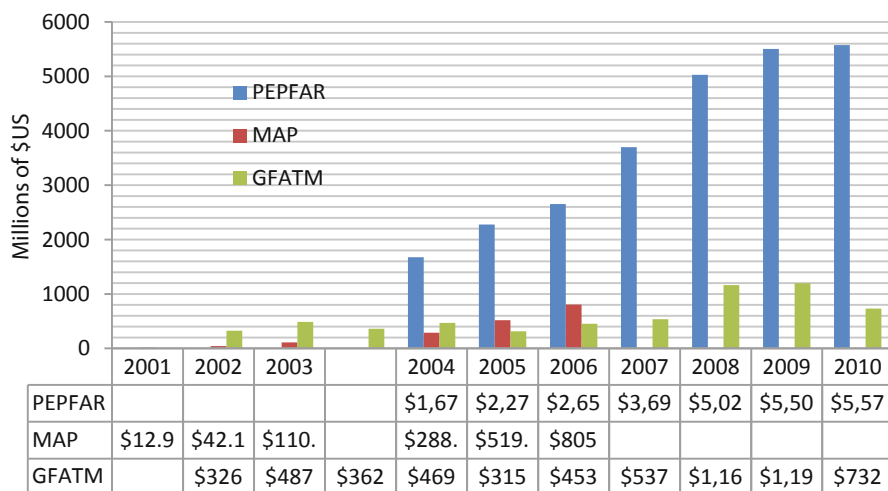
Fig. 21.1 Trends in funding for global HIV response from three GHIs, 2001–2010 (millions of US$). *PEPFAR* US president's emergency plan for AIDS relief, *MAP* World Bank's multi-country HIV/AIDS program for Africa, *GFATM* global fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. (Sources: PEPFAR: Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF), "The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Fact Sheet, June, 2012". http://www.kff.org/globalhealth/upload/8002-04. pdf; MAP: Görgens-Albino et al (2007); GFATM: "Funding Decisions", available at http://www. theglobalfund.org/en/fundingdecisions/#rcc8 (September 20, 2012))

Trends show a dramatic growth in HIV/AIDS funding during most of the 2000s (see Fig. 21.1). While spending in low- and mid-income countries (LMICs) was just about $ 1.4 billion in 2000, it stood at $ 13.7 billion in 2008 (Cohen 2008; Hecht et al. 2010). Since inauguration, PEPFAR has provided around US$ 32 billion (Quinn and Serwadda 2011) with $ 1.8 billion contribution to Africa during the first 3 years (Görgens-Albino et al. 2007, p. 18). In 2008, PEPFAR was reauthorized by the US Congress for $ 48 billion for another 5 years (Hayden 2009; Goosby et al. 2012). On the other hand, MAP has provided over $ 2 billion to 35 countries in Africa (World Bank 2008) while the Global Fund has contributed over $ 12 billion in its first decade (Global Fund 2011a, b) with $ 1.2 billion going to Africa during the first 4 years (Görgens-Albino et al. 2007, p. 18) and remaining 55 % or higher through all years to 2012 (Global Fund 2012a) (http://www.aidspan.org/page/global-fund-overview). Figure 21.1 shows that although MAP set out first, it was overtaken by GFATM in the early 2000s and both of these have been consistently shadowed by PEPFAR (Global Fund 2012d; KFF 2012; Görgens-Albino et al. 2007). A key feature of these three GHIs is that they especially provide direct support to CSOs and the private sector for local HIV/AIDS initiatives (see next section).

This financing has led to major breakthroughs both in understanding the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS and in its prevention and treatment (Buchbinder 2011; Karim and Karim 2011). For example, the 2010 UNAIDS Update Report observes that "expanding access to treatment has contributed to a 19 % decline in deaths among

people living with HIV between 2004 and 2009" (UNAIDS 2010a, p. 10). There has been a dramatic rise in the number of people receiving treatment with over 5 million in sub-Saharan Africa in 2010 from just 50,000 in 2002 (UNAIDS 2012a) though with major differences in coverage across countries. The vast majority of ARV recipients are covered by PEPFAR funding (Goosby et al. 2012). In 12 African countries supported by PEPFAR, deaths from AIDS fell by 10 % (saving 1.1 million deaths) during 2004–2007 at a cost of $ 2,700 per life saved (Bendavid and Bhattacharya 2009). At the same time the cost of treating one patient has decreased dramatically from as much as $ 10,000 in 2002 to just $ 200 in 2011 in countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, and Zambia as per reports of the largest study of its kind conducted by the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) (2012). In South Africa, a price decline of 53 % during 2008–2010 resulted in a cost-saving of $ 685 million allowing the government to significantly raise coverage to those who need it in the coming years from 55 % (WHO/UNAIDS/UNICEF 2011, p. 93). CHAI agreements with drug manufacturers have primarily been responsible for this decline allowing almost 4 million people to benefit from the drugs, especially the generics (Wirtz et al. n.d.). Despite these developments, a lot more needs to be done to control the epidemic by investing more in prevention, given that new infections outstrip by two times the new uptake in treatment, in part because of problems in effective distribution and delivery systems (United Nations 2010; Coovadia and Hadingham 2006).

Although almost half of all people needing treatment per WHO guidelines in sub-Saharan Africa (73 % of global total) are still without the life-saving ARVs (WHO/UNAIDS/UNICEF 2011), it is clear that the battle line has to be on prevention. Increased demand due to more people living with HIV/AIDS will mean a need to increase funding even more dramatically, as estimates indicate a need of $ 397– $ 722 billion in LMICs for the period 2009–2031 (Hecht et al. 2010). Yet, as of 2008, prevention allocations amounted to only 21 % of the resources in 69 LMICs compared to 53 % that went to treatment (Amico et al. 2012). Furthermore, with nearly 90 % of all HIV/AIDS expenditure in Africa coming from donors, the situation remains precarious (UNAIDS 2012a; Amico et al. 2012). And while World Bank projections in 2007 were that Africa alone needed $ 41 billion during 2007–2011 to achieve universal access (World Bank 2007), global funding for HIV/AIDS actually declined by 13 % during 2009–2010 from US$ 8.7 billion to US$ 7.6 billion (UNAIDS 2012a). In this scenario, the $ 28–50 billion resource needs estimated by UNAIDS for meeting universal access during the next period (2010–2015) (Global Fund 2010) is unlikely to be met.

The future of AIDS programming in Africa has to be a shared responsibility (Institute of Medicine 2010; Quinn and Serwadda 2011). Importantly, African leaders recognize that, as indicated in the African Union's (AU) "Roadmap on Shared Responsibility" (African Union 2012). Medecins Sans Frontieres (2010) report *No Time to Quit: HIV/AIDS Treatment Widening in Africa* flags the retreat from the center of the epidemic citing, "acute" funding needs. Sub-Saharan Africa is by far the largest recipient of overseas development assistance to health by the donor countries with 41 % of all donor aid to health in 2009 going to HIV/AIDS that finance up to 80 % of all activities (OECD 2011). As UNAIDS notes, the "African dependency on external sources is destabilizing the AIDS response" (UNAIDS 2012a, p. 1). Thus, more

future resources for fighting AIDS will have to come from the continent and CSOs can play a significant role in mobilizing these, as well as in being more effective in combating the scourge. In addition, the imperative for controlling the epidemic raises the importance of making critical policy choices on what works in prevention (Potts et al. 2008; Karim and Karim 2011; Wamai et al. 2011) and on cost-effective interventions per country's epidemic profile and income levels (Hecht et al. 2009; Hecht et al. 2010; Galarraga et al. 2009; Forsythe et al. 2009).

Civil Society Organizations and HIV/AIDS in the African Context

The 2006 global AIDS report of UNAIDS dedicated a chapter to the "essential role of civil society" in response to AIDS, praising them for their roles in facilitating community mobilization, enabling accountability of government programs, advocacy and policy dialogue, and capacity building (UNAIDS 2006). Multiple justifications for the involvement of CSOs included their role in enhancing democracy and their advantage in delivering services (Doyle and Patel 2008). Although the early response to HIV/AIDS arose as an emergency with little understanding of the disease, determinants, and control measures, now into three decades of the epidemic, the field is clearer as to what needs to be done and what works (Potts et al. 2008; Karim and Karim 2011). During this period, HIV/AIDS CSOs have undergone transformations and now range along a broad spectrum of agencies—both local/national and international—providing care and treatment to people and communities affected by the disease (Lewis 2005; UNAIDS 2006; Rodriguez-García et al. 2011; Aloo-Obunga 2003).

   Research on CSOs uses an analytical framework that distinguishes areas of their operations across multiple activities (Salamon and Sokolowski 2004). A broader typological framework in CSO HIV response has recently been advanced by the World Bank (Rodriguez-García et al. 2011). Among six typologies, critical areas include roles in financing, service provision, and governance. A brief discussion of each of these with illustrative examples as pertaining to sub-Saharan Africa follows.

Providing HIV/AIDS Services to Affected Populations

HIV/AIDS programming features three types of interventions: behavioral, biomedical, and structural (Rotheram-Borus et al. 2009; Galarraga et al. 2009). Behavioral interventions target behavior change in groups and populations and include awareness through communication. Biomedical approaches focus on the individual-level such as the provision of male circumcision and ARVs. For their part, structural interventions are general population measures such as economic incentives and condom distribution. CSOs play a role in all these interventions in sub-Saharan Africa as seen through several studies assessing the extent of their activities. One large study conducted in 2004 in 45 countries among 274 CBOs serving a population of over

210,000 found that 182 were providing treatment (with 68 doing the prescription) (Sidaction, UNAIDS/WHO 2005). Over half provided medical and psychosocial follow-up, treatment for opportunistic infections including tuberculosis, and education on ARVs. In another survey, Kelly and Birdsall (2010) assessed activities, funding requirements, organizational characteristics, and relationships with government among 439 CSOs in six countries in East and Southern Africa during 1996–2004. They document a tremendous growth in CSO involvement in HIV/AIDS activities, finding that "75 % of all funding awards received by the CSOs in 2005 were for program implementation or service delivery" (Kelly and Birdsall 2010, p. 1583).

Another study assessing the distribution and impacts of HIV/AIDS NGOs in sub-Saharan Africa found vast differences in the number of HIV/AIDS NGOs across countries (Robinson 2009). Most countries such as Lesotho, Namibia, and Gambia had more than 100 NGOs per 10 million people. In addition, countries with HIV prevalence exceeding 10 % had more than 15, and Botswana and Swaziland had more than 60. However, low-prevalence countries like Cameroon and Cape Verde had more than 60 HIV NGOs (Robinson 2009). Correlating HIV prevalence and number of HIV/AIDS NGOs, this report finds no simple pattern. For instance, the report shows that Botswana and Swaziland had the highest HIV prevalence, as well as highest number of NGOs. On the other hand, countries like Cameroon and Benin had higher numbers of NGOs and lower HIV prevalence whereas, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Namibia had lower numbers of NGOs but higher HIV prevalence (Robinson 2009). Nevertheless, overall analysis indicated that countries having more HIV/AIDS NGOs had higher HIV prevalence and that these countries had realized significant reduction in prevalence than countries with fewer HIV/AIDS NGOs. This would indicate a significant role for NGOs in distributing ARVs and other HIV prevention commodities. At the national level, examples from several countries reveal this impact.

Starting in 2008, and following strong evidence in randomized controlled trials of its protective effect (Siegfried et al. 2009; Weiss et al. 2008) and subsequent endorsement by the WHO and UNAIDS (UNAIDS 2008; WHO and UNAIDS 2007), 14 countries in the subregion with generalized HIV prevalence have been pursuing voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC) for HIV prevention (Wamai et al. 2011). The appeal to VMMC across these countries is because it has been shown to be more cost-effective than existing interventions (Galarraga et al. 2009) with a potential to save 4 million new adult HIV infections at a cost of US$ 2.5 billion (USAID Health Policy Initiative 2009). Notably, implementation of these programs is being led by international and domestic NGOs with recent data indicating over half a million circumcisions (WHO and UNAIDS 2011; Wamai et al. 2011). In the first country to commence implementing VMMC in 2008, two CSOs in the Nyanza region of western Kenya (the Nyanza Reproductive Health Society, with US links, and the Tuungane Impact Research and Development Organization) are leading the campaign and have been responsible for over 70 % of the circumcisions to date (Wamai et al. 2011; Herman-Roloff et al. 2011). Elsewhere, in Ethiopia, the US-based NGO, Jhpiego, is almost singularly spearheading the VMMC program in the Gambella region (Wamai et al. 2011).

In a study of 952 CSOs in three slums in Nairobi, Kenya, 47 % were working on HIV/AIDS as their core focus (Akaco et al. 2010). In fact, most slum dwellers in Kibera report receiving services from CSOs (NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs) than from government (Odindo and Mwanthi 2008). Another survey of a group of about a 100 FBOs in South Africa found that over half of them provided, in order of decreasing magnitude, awareness, care and support, testing and counseling, and other behavior change programming (Ninan and Delion 2009, p. 299). Many also provided food and programs for orphans, but condoms were provided the least. In a 2005 survey of community home-based care (HBC) services in five of Tanzania's regions, Pathfinder, one of the major international NGOs providing services in sub-Saharan Africa, found varied distribution of these with some indication of variation by HIV prevalence (Pathfinder 2006). With the country's reported highest HIV prevalence of 10.9 %, Dar es Salaam had 24 HBC organizations while Kilimanjaro with 7.3 % prevalence had the most at 35. Arusha and Morogoro had 30 and 22 with 5.3 and 5.4 % HIV prevalence, respectively (Pathfinder 2006). In Zambia, the number of AIDS-focused CSOs grew 10 times in the 1990s. 75 % of these were local and were central to the country's national program, Strengthening the AIDS Response Zambia (STARZ) which ran between 2004 and 2009 (McIntyre and Carey 2009; Collins et al. 2009).

As of December 2010, only three countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Botswana, Namibia, and Rwanda) had achieved what is known as "universal coverage" of ARVs, defined as reaching coverage levels of 80 % for those needing treatment (WHO/UNAIDS/UNICEF 2011). According to this source, three others have achieved similar levels of coverage for prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) (Lesotho, South Africa, and Swaziland). Domestic and international CSOs have been instrumental in reaching these hugely important results across all these countries. For example, in Botswana, the country with the second highest HIV prevalence in Africa (after Swaziland), CSOs are active in all the eight service areas identified by the UNAIDS National AIDS Spending Assessment (NASA) framework (see next section) (UNAIDS 2009). As indicated in Table 21.2 nearly half (45.5 %) of prevention services, most (62.8 %) of human resource activities, and 100 % of social protection services in 2008 were provided by CSOs (NGOs and FBOs) (Botswana National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA) and UNAIDS 2009, p. 59). *Tebelopele*, a local NGO, runs the largest VCT program and delivers services throughout the country with significant impact (Creek et al. 2006; Botswana NACA and UNAIDS 2009). Based on the NASA framework elsewhere on the continent, even in the most populous country in Africa, Nigeria, CSOs accounted for 48.5 % of all services for HIV/AIDS in 2008 (Federal Republic of Nigeria 2010).

Managing HIV/AIDS Spending

Owing to the large sums of money allocated to HIV/AIDS programming, NGOs working in this arena can mobilize significant resources for their activities. The CSOs access the funds mainly through tendering in-country principal agents and

Table 21.2 Spending categories by service providers, Botswana, 2008 (%). (Source: Botswana National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA) and UNAIDS (2009: 59; Appendix III (a)))

ASC categories	Public	Private	Multilateral/ Bilateral/Other	NGOs	Total
ASC.01 prevention	49.6	3.57	1.3	45.5	8.91
ASC.02 care and treatment	93.7	3.29	0.1	2.9	49.29
ASC.03 orphans and vulnerable children (OVC)	99.1	0.00	0.0	0.9	23.28
ASC.04 program management and administration	20.7	1.19	58.5	19.6	14.41
ASC.05 human resources	37.1	0.08	0.0	62.8	2.67
ASC.06 social protection and social services (excluding OVC)	0.0	0.00	0.0	100.0	0.02
ASC.07 enabling environment	1.1	7.01	0.0	91.8	0.54
ASC.08 HIV and AIDS-related research (excluding operations research)	85.2	0.00	0.0	14.8	0.87
Total	78.4	2.15	8.6	10.9	100

Spending is for Jan-Dec, 2008. "ASC" stands for "AIDS spending categories" identified by NASA. The column "NGOs" is aggregated data for "Non-profit non-faith-based providers" and "Non-profit faith-based"; "private" stands for "for profit private sector providers"; "public" is "Public Sector Providers". "Other Providers" is not identified in this report but their contribution is just 1.4 % of overall total and in only two areas (ASC.01 and ASC.02)

direct funding from donors whose disbursements are made on monthly or quarterly cycles based on agreed terms and cash flow projections. The main in-country principal agents from which local CSOs draw funds are the national AIDS commissions (NACs) established to provide leadership and coordination of the multisectoral response (see next section) (Mukotsanjera 2008). Assessing the amount of funds managed by local, national, and international CSOs in Africa can be challenging. A World Bank study indicates that in recent years CSOs have channeled about $ 500 million annually from four main donors (PEPFAR, GFTAM, MAP, and the UK's Department For International Development, DFID) (Rodriguez-García et al. 2011). Another study exploring the resources and needs of NGOs in 75 low-income countries found that in over 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, on average, NGOs spent $ 64,000 on HIV-prevention programs (Kelly et al. 2006). Such data are indicative of the size of resources managed by CSOs, but more specificity can help us understand the picture better.

One approach at the national level has attempted to capture this data through an AIDS subaccount within the National Health Accounts (NHA). The NHA was developed by the WHO as a framework for measuring and tracking spending across

the health system (WHO 2003). More recently the NASA model has been developed to track AIDS-specific funding (UNAIDS 2009). Although some countries in Africa have completed an NHA multiple times, few have developed either the AIDS subaccounts in these NHAs or conducted the NASA. In addition, these two reports differ in the data results. For instance, in Namibia the NHA reports HIV/AIDS spending of $ 156 million while NASA reports $ 194 million during the same year 2008/2009 (Government of Namibia, Health Systems 20/20 Project, WHO, and UNAIDS 2010). It is noteworthy that NASAs report both health and nonhealth expenditures on HIV/AIDS while NHAs only report HIV/AIDS health spending. Despite such differences, these are the "best tools in the field" and provide valuable data for understanding flows and spending by CSOs. A look at data from NHAs of a few countries in eastern and southern Africa indicates that NGOs play multiple roles as both sources and financing agents and providers.

In the NHA framework (WHO 2003), *sources* represent the originators of the funds whereas *financing agents* refers to institutions that channel funds to providers of services; for instance NACs are financing agents who receive funds from donor agencies such as PEPFAR and then channel the funds to CSOs who provide services. A recent attempt to understand funding patterns utilizing NHAs and NASAs in six countries in eastern and southern Africa found varied patterns of the general picture while encountering many problems including in both data completeness and disaggregation (Mukotsanjera 2008). In Table 21.3, donors and CSOs in Kenya were the main sources of HIV/AIDS funding, as well as the main providers of services in years 2005/2006 and 2009/2010 representing, respectively, 56 and 48 % and 55.5 and 47.3 %. In every country, donors are the predominant source of HIV funding. Malawi with the most number of NHA reports available appears to have a significant size of international and local NGOs providing services and resources. The NAC was the main financing agent channeling 43 %, while international NGOs channeled 24.6 % (Ministry of Health 2012).

Only 22 countries in sub-Saharan Africa have conducted NASA (http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/knowyourresponse/nasacountryreports/). These reports indicate that donor agencies are the principal sources of financing HIV/AIDS services in the vast majority of countries, highlighting the critical donor dependency (UNAIDS 2012a) (Table 21.4 shows donor funding in 10 countries). For instance, even Nigeria with a fairly large economy is dependent for 92 % of overall funding with CSOs accounting for the implementation of 48.5 % of HIV/AIDS services in 2008 (Federal Republic of Nigeria 2010). Only Botswana and Namibia (two middle-income countries) raised over half of the funds domestically. The 2008 Zambia NASA indicates a slight shift in donor funding where the share of external sources of total spending decreased from 96 % in 2005 to 86 % in 2005 (Ministry of Health and National HIV/AIDS, STI, TB Council 2008). Some of the NASA reports disaggregate the financing data by activity area and service provider by sector. In this regard, for example, the Botswana 2006–2008 NASA indicates that in 2008 CSOs outspent all other service providers in three areas (human resources, social protection, and creating an enabling environment) (Botswana NACA and UNAIDS 2009, p. 59). Notably,

Table 21.3 HIV/AIDS subaccounts from NHAs: Findings from seven countries (%).[a] (Sources: Latest NHAs from each represented country)

Kenya			2001/2002	2005/2006	2009/2010
	Financing agent	Public	60	22	27
		Private	25	22	25
		Donor and NGO	15	56	48
	Provider distribution	CHWs	N/A	N/A	21
		NGOs and donors	15.6	55.5	47.3
Tanzania			2002/2003	2005/2006	
	Sources	Donors	45.8	66.8	
	Financing agents	NGOs	4.7	27.8	
Rwanda			2000	2002	2006
	Sources	Donors/NGOs	49	75	94
	Financing agents	Donors	32	57	7
Ethiopia			2007/2008		
	Source	Rest of the world	84		
	Financing	Rest of the world	39.7		
	Providers	Rest of the world	0.5		
Namibia			2007/2008	2008/2009	
	Sources	Donors	48.4	51.0	
	Financing agents	Donors and NGOs	21.9	26.5	
Zambia			2003	2005	2006
	Sources	Global fund	4.9	23.2	9.2
		USAID	26	27.6	36.7
		All rest of the world	39.2	23.5	28.1
	Financing agents	NGOs	5	14.2	15.6
		All donors	48	34.2	39.9
		USAID	26	27.6	36.7
Malawi			2002/03	2005/06	
	Sources	Donors	42	38	
		Global fund	–	30	
	Providers	CHAM	6	2	
		Other local NGOs	5	5	
		Rest of the world	19	40	
	Disbursement	CHAM	24	10	
		Other NGOs	17	25	
			2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
	Sources	International NGOs and foundations	13.6	12	10.6
	Financing agents	International NGOs and foundations	18.5	28.9	24.6

The table uses original categories and language exactly as used in the NHAs. *CHWs* community health workers, *CHAM* Christian Health Association of Malawi, *NGOs* nongovernmental organizations; *NHA* National Health Accounts, *Rest of the world* the donor community, *USAID* United States Agency for International Development

Table 21.4 HIV/AIDS financing: Findings from NASA in 10 sub-Saharan African countries. (Source: UNAIDS, National AIDS Spending Assessment (NASA), http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/knowyourresponse/nasacountryreports/. Accessed September 20, 2012)

Country	Data year	Amount, million US$	% donor funding
Botswana	2008	304	32
Ghana	2009	54	75
Kenya	2007/2008	361	81
Lesotho	2006/2007	28	55
Malawi	2007/2008	104	98
Namibia	2008/2009	194	48
Nigeria	2008	394	92
Swaziland	2009/2010	75	57
Tanzania	2005/2006	280	68
Zambia	2006	207	86

NASA stands for "National AIDS Spending Assessment"

CSOs spent nearly the same amount as government on prevention and 100 % of social protection programs (Table 21.2). Absorption capacity in CSOs was regarded as high in Kenya where FBOs spent 22 % of the $ 316 million HIV/AIDS expenditure for 2007/2008 (National AIDS Control Council (NACC) 2009).

The Global Health Initiatives and Civil Society Organizations

As noted earlier, three donor agencies—PEPFAR, GFATM, and MAP—are responsible for two thirds of financing for HIVAIDS programming globally (Biesma et al. 2009). For instance, in one country, Zambia, the three were responsible for 90 % of total funding for HIV/AIDS programming in 2006 (Ministry of Health and National HIV/AIDS, STI, TB Council 2008). Although numerous others such as DFID, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the CHAI play an important role, here a brief highlight is made of the CSOs unique relationships with the three key GHIs (Doyle and Patel 2008).

Multicountry HIV/AIDS Program and Civil Society Organizations Following the report *Intensifying Action Against HIV/AIDS in Africa: Responding to a Development Crisis* (World Bank 2000), the World Bank developed the first large investment by a GHI, the Multicountry HIV/AIDS Program for Africa (MAP). The 15-year commitment by the Bank is being implemented in three phases (World Bank 2008). First was an "emergency response" during 2000–2006 that supported essential implementation structures, policies, and capacities for services delivery. Stage two is outlined in *The World Bank's Commitment to HIV/AIDS in Africa: Our Agenda for Action, 2007–2011* and will focus on scaling up and mainstreaming services for prevention, treatment, and care while the last stage would focus on targeting areas or populations with continued spread (World Bank 2008).

Since the start of operations in 2001, MAP has provided support to more than 50,000 CSOs including NGOs, FBOs, and CBOs at the grassroots level (World Bank

2012). A report evaluating the first six years of MAP showed that the program mobilized over 66,000 CSOs (Görgens-Albino et al. 2007, p. 44). Furthermore, the CSOs implemented a larger share of the $ 1 billion MAP budget than the ministries of health and all line ministries combined MAP allocations with 85 % of the half-a-million staff trained, being in the CSOs (Görgens-Albino et al. 2007, p. 36, 37). For example, in Zambia, CBOs implemented 35 % of total commitments to Zambia during 2003–2008 (Walsh et al. 2012). In 2008, the World Bank reiterated its commitment to tackling HIV/AIDS in Africa by releasing an Agenda for Action 2007–2011 (World Bank 2008). According to projections made, the impact of this plan would be on one level to increase the number of new HIV infections averted from under 1 million in 2007 to nearly 2.5 million in 2011 (World Bank 2011).

Global Fund and Civil Society Organizations Although governments are the only ones that participate in the GFATM rounds of applications, the GHI requires countries to have Country Coordinated Mechanisms (CCM) submitting a Country-Coordinated Proposal which CSOs are to be a part of. A key to partnerships in the Fund's programs is the principle of "equal stakeholder involvement from every sector" where programs "reflect national ownership and respect country-led formulation and implementation processes" (Sherry et al. 2009). In this framework, the Fund encourages CSOs to play a "leading role" in the implementation of grants. This is done, for instance, through the "dual track" mechanism that CCMs use whereby principal recipients in government and CSOs are nominated for direct funding, and in 2010 through innovative regional CCM proposals, regional collaborative frameworks with CSOs as well as the Community Systems Strengthening Framework (CSSF) (Global Fund 2011a). Of its over $ 12 billion largesse in its first decade, one-third has been implemented through CSOs in 41 sub-Saharan African countries (Global Fund 2011a). Overall, during 2002–2010, GFATM-funded community-based prevention activities reached 63 million people in the region.

Historically, a larger share of the Fund's financing for HIV/AIDS has targeted prevention through behavior change communications and condom social marketing. Trend data from 2004 to 2012 clearly show an increase in the utilization of CSOs (Global Fund 2012a). As per current disbursement data as of September 2012, CSOs have acted as principal recipients with a varied rate from 1 % in Zimbabwe to 52 % in Togo (Table 21.5). Overall, the Fund has distributed 28 grants for HIV/AIDS in southern Africa many of which are for CSOs (Global Fund 2012b). The comprehensive funding data indicates numerous disbursements to CSOs including direct funding to CSOs such as the Civil Society for HIV/AIDS in Nigeria with an award of $ 12 million (Global Fund 2012c). In Nigeria CSOs have been the principal recipients of most funds during 2004–2010 as indicated by the summary tables in the 2011 results report (Global Fund 2011a p. 112–113) and have received 25.8 % of the latest (Table 21.5). The scenario in Zanzibar is the same where though GFATM's agreement is with the government CSOs receive by far the most funds, for instance in 2004/2005 (Mukotsanjera 2008, p. 46). And in Zambia, 86 % of $ 26 million GFATM funding in 2006 went to two principal CSO agents: Churches Association of Zambia (CHAZ) and Zambia National AIDS Network (ZNAN) (Ministry of

Table 21.5 Percentage of total Global Fund Disbursement in 23 SSA countries showing CSOs as the 'Principal Recipient', Latest Disbursement Year (2011). (Source: GFATM: "Funding Decisions", available at http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/fundingdecisions/#rcc8. September 20, 2012)

Country	% of CS/PS	Most recent disbursement date
East Africa		
Burundi	12.3	15-Dec-11
Comoros	47.5	19-Dec-11
Congo (Democratic Republic)	6.9	31-Mar-11
Ethiopia	4.3	19-Aug-11
Kenya	17.0	18-Nov-11
Madagascar	44.2	16-Dec-11
Mauritius	38.6	8-Nov-11
Tanzania	21.5	16-Dec-11
Southern Africa		
Lesotho	2.3	6-Oct-11
Mozambique	2.4	14-Oct-11
Namibia	5.1	1-Dec-11
South Africa	9.5	18-Nov-11
Zambia	47.1	13-Dec-11
Zimbabwe	0.9	26-Oct-11
West and Central Africa		
Benin	14.2	1-Nov-11
Cameroon	17.0	20-Dec-11
Cape Verde	35.2	6-Sep-11
Cote d'Ivoire	51.7	18-Oct-11
Gambia	15.3	7-Oct-11
Ghana	12.0	20-Dec-11
Nigeria	25.8	17-Nov-11
Senegal	27.1	15-Dec-11
Togo	52.4	18-Aug-11

Private sector in the Global Fund categorization of 'Principal Recipient' CS and PS are reported together whenever this is the case, which does not make it possible to distinguish between CS and PS*CS* civil society, *PS* Private Sector

Health and National HIV/AIDS, STI, TB Council 2008). Ratings done by the Fund indicate that CSOs' grants performed better than governments' (Global Fund 2011a). Despite these structures, a report by a coalition of NGOs in 2004 raised concerns that involvement was inadequate (International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO) 2004).

President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief and Civil Society Organizations
Of the 15-country PEPFAR focus, 12 are in sub-Saharan Africa. According to the rules set out in the PEPFAR program, allocations are distributed across these specific agencies: country governments, NGOs, FBOs, universities, and private contractors. While acknowledging the indispensable nature of international NGOs PEPFAR has since 2006 emphasized the importance of building and strengthening local capacities for implementation (PEPFAR 2006). In 2005, the share of allocations was, respectively, 13, 38, 10, 13, and 12 % (Oomman et al. 2008, p. 9). Taken together CSOs are the largest recipient of PEPFAR dollars. PEPFAR's New Partners

Initiative (NPI) announced in 2005, for instance, a $ 200 million competitive grant only eligible to CSOs to serve the dual purpose of diversifying partners and strengthening the indigenous community efforts (PEPFAR 2006). Since then, 56 agreements have been made across PEPFAR countries predominately in sub-Saharan Africa (USAID 2012). Nevertheless, as per one report by the Center for Global Development, international NGOs received most of PEPFAR dollars during 2004–2006 whereas local CBOs received only 11 % on average (Oomman et al. 2008). And even in the NPI, CSOs based outside Africa still receive funding to then channel to, or work with, local Africa-based CSOs (USAID 2012).

PEPFAR's commitment to work with NGOs is demonstrated in the financial allocations it makes. In South Africa alone, the number of NGOs supported has grown from 114 to 708 during 2005–2009 and they reach 43,577 persons with ARVs compared to 501,089 reached at government-supported facilities (Larson et al. 2012). In fact, Larson et al. (2012) also establish that although they have smaller capacities, their NGO facilities are supported more by PEPFAR than those of the government, 708 versus 546. In Rwanda, PEPFAR has 44 main partners but less than 5 % of nearly $ 120 million dollars for 2008 were channeled through official governmental institutions, the rest going through mainly large American NGOs, private contractors, and universities as is demonstrated in the case of Rwanda (Shepard et al. 2012). Such a North America-based NGO partnership with African countries can be large as is the case with the Academic Model Providing Access to Healthcare (AMPATH) program in Kenya (Einterz et al. 2007) that provides treatment to over 150,000 HIV+ persons and in summer 2012 was awarded a 5-year grant of $ 65 million by USAID-PEPFAR to strengthen its programs (http://www.ampathkenya.org/).

PEPFAR's allocations to CSOs across countries have varied widely. For instance those to FBOs in 2005 data ranged between about 30 % in Kenya and 0.2 % in Botswana (Oomman et al. 2008). Notwithstanding the fact that NGOs were found to be receiving more funding than FBOs (Oomman et al. 2008), the involvement of FBOs drew mixed reactions with questions on the possible encumbrances of mixing religion with a largely sexually-driven healthcare service. In reality—and in a majority of countries—over 88 % of prevention funding in 2005 went to abstinence and be-faithful approaches (Oomman et al. 2008, p. 10). PEPFAR has defended the use of FBOs because of the fact that these have deep roots in, and are proximal to, the community and already provide significant health services to the population, and therefore requires that most funding go to local FBOs. A forum in May 2012 under the Sustaining Community and Country Leadership in the Response to HIV/AIDS program bringing together 98 leaders from 58 different FBOs in eastern Africa reiterated the central role these institutions play (PEPFAR and Interfaith Health Program 2012).

Governance, Leadership, and Advocacy

More than anything else, the response to HIV/AIDS during late 1990s and early 2000s spurred a new global aid governance mechanism predicated by public–private partnerships that upholds the inclusion of CSOs at international and national level as

sacrosanct (Brugha 2008; UNDP 2003; Manning 2009). At the top of this global HIV/AIDS system, the UN AIDS agency (UNAIDS) is responsible for setting global policy and priorities. It is the first UN agency to have formal participation by NGOs on its governing body through the Program Coordinating Board (PCB) (http://unaidspcbngo.org/). The NGO members in the PCB come from all world regions and current representatives in 2012 from Africa are from South Africa and Morocco. Although NGOs do not have voting rights, they can provide important proposals to the governance of the global UN agency dedicated to HIV/AIDS and input into its policies through reporting from the grassroots and in the regular Board meetings. An independent review in 2007 observes these mechanisms while highlighting the need for further strengthening and institutionalizing NGO participation (UNAIDS 2007a). Among the GHIs, CSOs have formal voting rights in GFATM. The GFATM Board operates a unique multistakeholder model with current (2012) NGO representatives from eastern, southern, and western Africa (http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/board/constituencies/).

Acknowledging the global HIV/AIDS crisis and recognizing the importance of coordination for an effective response, UNAIDS developed in 2005 the "Three Ones" approach, namely the creation within countries at national level of one strategic action framework, one HIV-coordinating agency, and one monitoring and evaluation system (UNAIDS 2005). Crucial to this approach is the realization that the AIDS response cannot succeed without including community-based initiatives. The principle of ownership and capacitated national/local delivery structures laid out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was influential in the inclusion of CSOs and NGOs in the formulation of the national coordinating mechanism (Kelly and Birdsall 2010). At the same time, the NACs were legitimized by the need for multisectoral coordination that is more able to work with nonstate actors, which were seen to be more effective (England 2006). These structures provide the arenas for CSO contribution to governance and advocacy at the national level especially in regards to funding formulation and utilization (Kelly and Birdsall 2010).

Both PEPFAR and MAP have contributed significantly to building these single national coordinating authorities in their support countries (PEPFAR 2006; Görgens-Albino et al. 2007). One survey of 66 countries (28 or 42 % in sub-Saharan Africa) by UNAIDS (2005) showed that 95 % had established the NACs while 79 % had common monitoring and evaluation platforms. Of these, 92 % had participatory processes allowing contribution by CSOs. Key to the effectiveness of these structures in the HIV response and in inclusion of CSOs is the authority under which they fall. Ideally, and as per UNGASS recommendation, they should be placed in the Office of the President (such as Kenya and Malawi) or of the Prime Minister (Ethiopia, Tanzania) (Mukotsanjera 2008, p. 28). In some countries, CSOs have developed frameworks to guide and strengthen these formal relations with NACs. An example is the guidelines on CSO representation in the national structures (Collins et al. 2009) and the "Handbook for Provincial & District AIDS Task Forces" in Zambia to support implementation of the STARZ program (Siamwiza and Collins 2009). The Zambia National AIDS Council model for engaging with CSOs uniquely recognizes the different levels and modes of their inclusion namely consultation, participation, and involvement (Collins et al. 2009; Walsh et al. 2012).

Advocacy intertwined with the promotion of human rights agenda is a long-held tenet and action area of CSOs (Edwards 2000; Nelson and Dorsey 2003; UNAIDS 2006). Although the notion of health as a human right has existed since the establishment of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the establishment of the WHO in 1946 (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 2008), more than any other disease, HIV/AIDS has brought the human rights agenda into the domain of public health (Gruskin et al. 1996). CSOs play an especially important role in championing and defending the rights of persons living with HIV/AIDS and affected communities as noted in the early establishment of such groups (Mercer et al. 1991; TASO and WHO 1995).

Within the UNAIDS, the principle of human rights in HIV/AIDS policy and programming was entrenched under the framework of Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV (GIPA) whose context is the 1994 Paris AIDS Summit (UNAIDS 2007b). This is yet another formal platform for HIV/AIDS NGOs to lobby and advocate the AIDS regime which now has extensive guidelines and assessment score cards (International HIV/AIDS Alliance and the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+ 2010). One of the few countries to include GIPA in national AIDS strategic plans is Kenya. A GIPA score card indicates that persons reporting to have been meaningfully involved in national HIV/AIDS planning in Kenya, Nigeria, and Zambia were 33, 60, and 66 %, respectively (UNAIDS 2009). Recognizing the role of CSOs in outstanding advocacy and programming work, the UNAIDS awarded the Red Ribbon Award—"the worlds award for innovative and outstanding community work in the response to the AIDS epidemic"—to 10 CBOs from Kenya and Uganda among other countries during the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) (UNAIDS 2012b).

At another level UNAIDS consults CSOs on important global reporting such as in the UNGASS country reports and in the annual global AIDS report. For instance, in reporting on the legal and policy environment through the National Composite Policy Index (NCPI), and on the human rights treatment and experiences of people with HIV such as through the People Living with HIV Stigma Index (UNAIDS and WHO 2009). In 2010, the Global Fund has also developed a joint collaboration framework with regional CSOs to allow for greater advocacy (Global Fund 2011a, b). While HIV/AIDS NGOs are involved in the global and African regional governance of programming at these levels, they have also developed codes of conduct as well as guidelines governing their activities (ICASO, AfriCASO, and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance 2007; The NGO HIV/AIDS Code of Good Practice Project 2004). The "Code of Good Practice for NGOs Responding to HIV/AIDS" ("the Code") is now supported by nearly 500 organizations (http://www.hivcode.org/).

Discussion and Conclusion

CSOs of all strands (NGOs, FBOs, and CBOs) provide critical health and HIV/AIDS services in sub-Saharan Africa and it would be impossible to contemplate the successes achieved thus far in the HIV response without their participation in providing

services, managing resources, and advocating for the rights of affected communities. Thus, in essence, a strong civil society is necessary for advancing an aggressive AIDS policy and programming agenda. Nevertheless, even with thriving CSOs, aggressive government response is critical especially through formulation of better policies and establishment of an enabling environment for CSOs and persons living with HIV/AIDS. Broader policies for health also produce positive outcomes for CSOs and HIV/AIDS; the early involvement of NGOs within broader population control policies in the subregion later influenced HIV control outcomes (Robinson 2011).

This chapter has outlined the emergence, growth, and participation of CSOs in the HIV response in sub-Saharan Africa. The narrative is embedded within the broader development discourse of NGOization of health services wherein HIV/AIDS has served to legitimize their inevitability in society. HIV/AIDS posed an unprecedented threat to the welfare of many African societies and the economic development of the region. HIV/AIDS challenged taboos about sexuality, identities, and community values often bringing profound changes in efforts to stem the tide (Epstein et al. 2004; Airhihenbuwa and Webster 2004; Timberg and Halperin 2012). Community responses to HIV/AIDS have often determined the fate of internationally driven interventions, especially those targeting behavior change since these affect traditional customs (Airhihenbuwa and Webster 2004; Odutolu 2005). Although behavior change interventions such as reduction of sexual partners and use of condoms show mixed results (Bertrand et al. 2006; Potts et al. 2008), others such as male circumcision have received wide acceptance (Westercamp and Bailey 2007) with current implementation of VMMC in 14 countries led by CSOs (Wamai et al. 2011).

The current context of the HIV response characterized by the urgent imperative to prevent new infections, to reach everyone in need with life-saving ARVs, and to implement evidence-based programs will shape the future roles of CSOs. As one of the interventions now prioritized by PEPFAR (Reed et al. 2012), adoption of VMMC is a hallmark of the intersection between the best scientific evidence, good government policy, and CSO and community participation. Reaching the 4.7 million males targeted with this intervention by 2014 with PEPFAR dollars will require the continued role of CSOs in service provision and in community mobilization and demand creation, as well as in reaching the goals of the 2012–2016 VMMC strategy (WHO and UNAIDS 2012).

The chapter has also documented significant utilization of resources by CSOs in response to HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. As vast amounts of money for HIV/AIDS started to flow in, it became the norm almost everywhere for NGOs to take up new program areas to absorb these funds. The three GHIs (PEPFAR, GFATM, and MAP) have contributed vast amounts of resources to CSOs. However, though good absorption capacity was reported from Kenya (NACC 2009), little is known about the impact of the financing on capacity of the recipients to utilize them efficiently (Oomman et al. 2007) and classification of CSO providers often remains a challenge (Mukotsanjera 2008). There is also the problem of phantom CSOs. In Malawi, an audit report in 2011 revealed that majority of CBOs benefiting from funding from the National AIDS Council was nonexistent (Ministry of Health 2012).

CSOs face many critical challenges and deficiencies, some inherent in their nature, and others due to external constraints. Some of these are the internal impact that HIV/AIDS has had on the CSOs, particularly effects on staff such as loss and absenteeism thus, weakening their performance (Manning 2002). In the studies on services provision reviewed, when reported, the greatest challenge facing the CSOs has been inadequate resources, meaning there is a far greater demand for their services than they can meet. Other challenges include management capacity and other structural constrains that limit the scope of their services and collaborations (Uwimana et al. 2012) as well as donor restrictions, especially PEPFAR "ABC" requirements wherein funds cannot be shifted across the interventions (Botswana NACA and UNAIDS 2009, p. 39).

An important challenge often cited is that while having positive effects in helping sub-Saharan African countries rapidly scale up HIV/AIDS services, CSOs have often undermined the national health systems. The legacy of verticality in programming wrought by a singular focus on HIV/AIDS has been flagged for the potential to undermine health systems. As Doyle and Patel (2008, p. 1935) observe "channeling of funds through NGOs to support primary health care can destabilize a fragile health infrastructure and undermine local control of health programs." This has happened due to the distortionary effects of GHIs in recipient countries' national health policies (Biesma et al. 2009) and health-worker migration from the public health system to better paying jobs in HIV/AIDS NGOs, for instance, in countries like Mozambique, Rwanda, and Uganda (Doyle and Patel 2008; WHO 2006; Yu et al. 2008).

Funding for HIV/AIDS in some countries in southern Africa shadow health system resources in per capita spending (Martin 2003; Sridhar and Batniji 2008; Shiffman et al. 2009). Although the health systems' effect of HIV funding was recently shown to be tending positive in Rwanda (Shepard et al. 2012), during 1998–2007 overall global funding from all donors for health systems financing increased by 8 % but that for HIV/AIDs grew by 2,333 % (Shiffman et al. 2009). To mitigate weakening health systems the GHIs have begun multiple initiatives such as the Global Fund's CSSF that resonates the WHO's primary healthcare agenda (Global Fund 2010; Feachem and Sabot 2006). It is also commendable that the leading agency in global health, the World Bank, has recognized the importance of health system strengthening and made it a center piece of its current 10-year strategy (World Bank 2007). The call, therefore, for donor institutions and CSOs to reestablish themselves in a new track for strengthening—and where they are not in place, building—health systems is timely, especially in a bid to meet the MDG timeline (Waage et al. 2010).

Kelly and Birdsall (2010, p. 1580) also present a strong case that current GHI funding modalities pose a "strong threat to the development of sustainable civil-society economies as well as to CSOs' diversity and responsiveness." The problem arises to the dependency that the HIV/AIDS CSOs have on donor funding, as well as the umbilical lifeline with donor-country international NGOs without which their survival would be difficult (Kelly and Birdsall 2010; UNAIDS 2012a; Walsh et al. 2012). On the other hand, large, mainly North-American NGOs and universities consortia channeling large amounts of funding from GHIs to the African subregion, such as AMPATH (http://www.ampathkenya.org/) and JHPIEGO (http://www.jhpiego.org/) depend on local CSOs to implement their programs. Despite the challenges, Kelly

and Birdsall (2010) highlight, under current resource needs donor funding for AIDS programming in Africa is essential (Nature 2009; Global Fund 2010; Hecht et al. 2010; Quinn and Serwadda 2011). Nevertheless, in the context of massive dependence on donor financing, sub-Saharan African countries and their partners in CSOs need to pursue alternative strategies that may include national and community-based social health insurance (Schneider and Garrett 2009; Medecins Sans Frontieres 2010; UNAIDS 2012a).

African countries need to adopt the broad vision for defeating AIDS, touted as the new frontier of an AIDS-free generation (Fauci and Folkers 2012). The frontier is a new rallying call, "getting to zero," outlining an ambitious vision/goal of eliminating new infections, discrimination, and AIDS-related deaths by 2015 (UNAIDS 2010a, 2011). Getting there will require both accelerated, and perhaps even unprecedented, efforts on the part of Africa to take leadership and ownership in crafting not only solutions but also synergistic partnerships. The recently signed memorandum of understanding between UNAIDS and the African Union's development arm, New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), can help toward this goal and the implementation of the AU's "Roadmap on Shared Responsibility" (African Union 2012). For Botswana, the country's 2016 vision for an AIDS-free generation is poised to support the continuation of efforts for universal coverage and preventing new infections. The world has a new Global Health Sector Strategy for HIV/AIDS (2011–2015), a guide developed by the WHO to spearhead the campaign into the next years (WHO 2011).

Getting to Zero means turning the tide against the HIV crisis in sub-Saharan Africa, which will require the deployment of combination prevention (VMMC, ARVs, and behavior change applications) (Goosby et al. 2012; Shattock et al. 2011; Kurth et al. 2011; Wamai et al. 2011; UNAIDS 2010a) and an implementation infrastructure in which CSOs form a strong pillar for success. Addressing the challenges in effective programming for CSOs and government alike will undoubtedly accelerate the race to zero new infections, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS-related deaths whether in 2015 or sometime in the coming decades as a post-MDG agenda. Fortunately, these factors make it possible, for the first time in the HIV response, to envision this as a very realistic outcome (Goosby 2012; Goosby et al. 2012).

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Chapter 22
Orature as a Site for Civil Contestation: Film and the Decolonization of Space and Place in Tsisti Dangarembga's *Kare Kare Zvako* (*Mother's Day*) 2005

Bunmi Oyinsan

Introduction

The challenges facing former colonized countries are myriad and complex. In the African context, postindependence challenges can result in the inability of the state to live up to the promises of liberation especially with regard to women. *Kare Kare Zvako*, a film by Zimbabwean writer and director Tsitsi Dangarembga is a sustained reflection on this dilemma. It is a short but multilayered film, based on the adaptation of a folktale, which I read against the background of the Shona belief in the traditional philosophical concept, *hunhu.* Congruent with traditional oral philosophical concepts, which are prevalent in other parts of Africa, *hunhu* is expected to direct fundamental principles, esthetics and belief systems amongst the Shona of Zimbabwe. I argue that the film demonstrates how orature works as a site of struggle over power in contemporary Zimbabwe because the knowledge contained within it permits debates around gender, cultural values, and the adoption of *hunhu* as a model for collective consciousness.

Dangarembga was born in 1959, in Mutoko, a town in Zimbabwe (which was still known as Rhodesia at the time of her birth) but moved with her parents to Britain at the age of two. She began her education in Britain and lived there till she was six when the family returned to Rhodesia. After completing her A-levels in a missionary school in the city of Mutare, she went back to the United Kingdom to study medicine at Cambridge University. Dangarembga abandoned the program because she felt alienated and homesick. She returned to Rhodesia in 1980 just before it became Zimbabwe under black majority rule and enrolled for a course of study in psychology at the University of Harare. She started writing while at the university (Buck 1992). In 1988, her novel *Nervous Conditions* was published by the Women's Press. It was the first novel to be published in English by a black Zimbabwean woman and it won the African section of the Commonwealth Writers Prize in 1989.

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Dangarembga then moved to Germany where she took a course on film production at the Deutsche Film und Fernseh Akademie in Berlin. She was the script writer of *Neria* (1992), which became the highest-grossing film in Zimbabwean history. She moved back to Zimbabwe in 2000 (Veit-Wild 2005) where she has since written and directed several films.

Synopsis

Kare Kare Zvako is one of the films that Dangarembga wrote and directed after her return from Germany. It was adapted from a Zimbabwean folktale about a family during a severe drought and was written in Shona[1] with English and French subtitles. While the mother is prepared to make sacrifices to provide food for the children, the father is preoccupied with his own survival even at the expense of his young children. The film opens with the mother trying to console a wailing baby. The husband soon joins her and she tells him that the baby is inconsolable because she/he is starving and she has no breast milk. The husband then waits for the wife to go off in search of food before stealthily going to a hidden spot beside the hut to greedily scoop live termites into his mouth.

Meanwhile, the woman goes to a termite hill, which is quite some distance away from the homestead. There, she appeals to the spirits of the termite hill to help her as her children are hungry. She gets very little from the hill but takes what she gets home to cook for her three older children. She keeps none of the food for herself. Lying to the children that she has already eaten, she urges the older daughter who tries to persuade her to have some, to finish up her meager portion. She starts to entertain them with a story as the children are worried that they might die from the drought. As she commences the story which is about a time similar to the one they are living in, the father comes in to ask if she found any food. The older girl offers him her meager share which he readily accepts but the woman stops him, accusing him of taking food from the children. She also criticizes his unwillingness to strive to provide food. He storms off in anger, after announcing that he is going for a walk in the forest.

Here, the supernatural takes over as we see spirits of the termite hill coming out to dance to contemporary music. Shots of the family sleeping are intercut with those of the spirits dancing, and those of the man preparing a manhole. After concealing the hole, he goes back to wake-up and lure his wife to it. He succeeds in leading her there and she falls and is impaled by staves which he had placed in the hole to kill her. After ensuring that she is dead, he rushes off to get the children and the sprits come out again. They lift the woman's body with blood on it out of the pit. They then

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[1] Shona, a Bantu language is the language of the Shona people who are the largest ethnic group in Zimbabwe and they constitute about 70 % of the population of the country, which is located in the Southern African region. The Shona mostly occupy the northern and eastern parts of the country which attained independence in 1980 after a long-drawn-out struggle.

start dancing around her and she gets up and joins them but at the end of the dance the woman's body goes limp again and they carry her back into the pit.

When the man returns to the pit with the children (we are not privy to how he explained the cause of their mother's death) he tries to get them to help him lift her body out but at first they all refuse. However, after he appeals to them by asking if they must all die, the younger girl steps forward to help. When her brother tries to stop her, the father flogs him and they are all forced to help him by singing and appealing to their mother's corpse to do their father's "will." The woman's spirit is roused by the voices of the children and we see the blood on her body disappear and her figure rises, singing and agreeing to go home with the man. Her songs remind the man of happier times and soon, he and the children join her in the macabre dancing and singing. This gives the man the opportunity to lift the woman's body onto his shoulder. The body becomes lifeless as soon as she lands on his shoulder and he quickly heads home followed by the children.

Halfway home, the corpse drops and unable to lift her again, the man gets the children to recommence singing. Soon the spirit is roused again, this time she is resplendent as she is more gorgeously tattooed, wearing a head dress and beads. She sings even more cheerfully, dancing and reminding him of their pledge to each other. Once again, he is able to move her and the pattern is repeated when they get home and he tries to dismember, cook and eat her. For each step of the process, he has to get the children to help him by rousing her spirit with their singing as a result of which her body is further desecrated. By the time he is actually trying to break up her head, her song takes a more morose tone, lamenting his betrayal of her trust even as she recalls her unfulfilled dreams. The man succeeds in cooking and eating her as the children sit away from him watching, clapping and looking morose. Sated after devouring her, he reclines but thereafter, the shot closes in on his stomach which looks bloated with a fly perched on it when suddenly the woman's spirit materializes and her children rush to embrace her.

Orature as a Site for Civil Contestation

In order to fully appreciate the role of orature as a site for civil contestation it is necessary to recognize it as a repository of knowledge and a space which transcends rigid notions about what constitutes orality, oral culture or oral traditions. It is pertinent to approach it as a body of knowledge and as a way of knowing which engages the formal, as well as the everyday and which facilitates appraising, challenging, questioning, constructing, and reconstructing ways of knowing and being. While the principal generic components of orature such as stories, poems, drama, dance, proverbs, riddles, and songs are creative attempts to decipher the world (Wa Thiong'o 2007), as a site for civil contestation, orature covers a broad spectrum such as satire, humor, and other uncelebrated instruments for resistance. Commenting on the relationship between philosophy and orality, Wiredu (2009) describes philosophy as a category of thought which is an axiological means of conceptualizing experiences.

This argument buttresses the notion that because the syntax and semantics of languages are embedded with various beliefs about reality and human experience, scribal expressions cannot be perceived as completely independent of orality. In the same vein, films when viewed as texts are speech acts, and like other scribal languages they cannot also be completely independent of the influence of orature.

In Zimbabwe, one of the ways in which colonialism played out was that the demand for political control was conflated with a struggle for cultural emancipation, which was, in turn, driven by the centrality of orality (Hadebe 2001). Furthermore, the porous boundaries of orality and cultural identities accommodate resistance and ambivalent attitudes towards modernity (Vambe 2001). Other scholars also confirm the centrality of orality in Zimbabwe by identifying it as a means through which civil groups of Africans framed their militant nationalist aspirations during the liberation struggle (see Ncube 2001; Pfukwa 2001). It is, therefore, unsurprising that Dangarembga signifies on orature extensively in this film.

However, there is evidence to show that quite apart from the fact that traditionally, women identify orature as a site for struggle, resistance groups in Zimbabwe did not stop at interrogating colonialist representations of Africans but continue to draw on orature to challenge postindependence officialdom's attempts at confining Zimbabwean identity for their own advantage (Nyathi 2001). One of the approaches has been to draw attention to the relevance of the concept of *hunhu*.

Hunhu (*Ubuntu*) as Collective Consciousness

According to Tarisayi Chimuka (2008), the concept of *hunhu* (in some dialects *unhu*) represents for the Shona people a dominant instantiation of African humanity. She further explains that *hunhu* encompasses the physical form of existence and the whole assortment of values such as the moral, legal, esthetic, and all other norms which are pegged in the collective consciousness and passed on to the progeny through socialization. *Hunhu* has its variations in other Bantu languages, and Ramose (1999) equates it to *ubuntu* which he asserts is the elemental ontological and epistemological category of thought amongst Bantu-speaking people.

Traditionally, *hunhu* anchors all human interactions and is assumed to impact all conducts. Principally, it underscores the appreciation of the humanity of others. *Hunhu*'s influence permeates individual as well as communal levels and presupposes that efforts directed at the advancement of the self are commensurate to those directed at communal progress. This is because at the individual level, virtues which promote integrity are vital and in due course result in the realization of *munhu ane hunhu*, which is the integrated moral entity. This moral entity is perceived as the moral quintessence of *ubuntu* or the collective (see Chimuka 2008). In recent times, postcolonial African scholars have proposed the recognition of *hunhu* as a viable philosophical basis for the understanding of humanity (Chimuka 2001; Ramose 1999). Chimuka (2001) provides a list of attributes, which are believed to be pivotal

to communality. These include mutual understanding (*kunzwanana*), peaceful coexistence (*kungarisana*), fellowship (*Kuwadzana*), friendship (*hushamwari*), mutual hospitality (*kuyidzana*), and cooperation (*mushandirapamwe*).

Read as an allegory against a backdrop of the values of *hunhu*, the film, *Kare Kare* enunciates the tragedy of struggles that rely on mythically exclusive narratives, which ignore the plights of women. It highlights the futility of trying to forge a path to fulfillment (national or private) based on sacrificing women, be it materially, psychologically, or spiritually. Explaining her motivation for the film, Dangarembga admits that:

> there are a host of contextual factors that need to be put into the equation, and these contextual factors also include our own Zimbabwean pre-colonial, colonial, and neo-colonial idiosyncrasies. These contextual factors determine a lot of people's behaviours, including those behaviours that perpetrate abusive and repressive systems. (Interview with Kotzin 2008)

Negotiating the Cultural Unconscious through Allegory

Ismail Xavier (1997) who examines the role of Cinema Novo (New Cinema) in Brazil argues that it was a movement in the 1960s and early 1970s which captured a nation undergoing a political and social transformation into modernity. He identifies allegory as a central theme in analyzing Brazilian films of this era. He notes that in:

> allegory, the narrative texture places the spectator in an analytical posture while he or she is facing a coded message that is referred to an 'other scene' and not directly given on the diegetic level. The spectator's willingness to decode finds anchorage when this 'other scene' is signalized as being the national context as a whole. (Xavier 1997, p. 16)

Kare Kare works as a national allegory which juxtaposes traditional modes of social cohesion inherent in *hunhu* against the allegorization of gender relations conceived around the paradigm of hunger and cannibalism. Operating within the framework of a nation that is a predominantly oral culture, this approach works in a number of ways. First, by engaging the cultural unconscious which Dangarembga models on the significant experience of hunger (occasioned by the famine which started in Zimbabwe before the film was made), and reinforced by the attitude toward food as explicated by *hunhu* worldviews, she highlights the power of discourse as social negotiation. It is a discourse in which the survival of the physical body epitomizes the struggle of the body politic (Yue 1999).

Dangarembga's film works as a social and cultural intervention in the manner of oral narratives. In an interview with Miriam Kotzin in 2008, she admits her intention to challenge misconceptions "that Zimbabweans are victims of one diabolical plot or another." She intended the film to show that "Zimbabweans are responsible for the current deterioration in the country due to crude egoism and materialism, and an inability to conceptualise and work towards a common national good" (Kotzin 2008). To achieve this, she reworks a folktale to end in cannibalism. This manner of using narratives is not without precedence and Rappaport's (1995) analysis of communal narratives suggests that people who seek personal or community change

do so through the impetus of a collectivity that affords a new communal narrative. This is because stories affect human behavior by telling us how we are, who we were and can be. Stories affect meaning, emotion, memory and identity construction.

Relatedly, discourses about cannibalism are derived from the originary instances of international movements and cartography (Yue 1999). Therefore, the personal might be constituted in the political as they are often the result of pervasive patterns of colonial travel dating back to the Great Voyage, when the misnomer *canibales* was coined in Columbus's accidental misreading of the area that has since been called the 'Caribbean' in his search for old Cathay. By making the man in the film devour his wife because he believes it is the only way to survive, Dangarembga parodies this colonial misconception about non-Europeans. She does this by linking "cannibalism" to the metaphoric devouring of women, enunciating the sacrifices which women are called to make as part of Zimbabwe's postindependence national narrative.

Furthermore, though aware of "the very rigid and conventionalized" structure of films, Dangarembga admits that she experimented with the structure of her film by applying "the original way of Shona story telling." She also hints at the motivation for working within the framework of a fairy tale when she says that it "can be very brutal and Zimbabweans tend to shy away from openly talking about nasty things" (interview in Nordic African Institute (NAI) 2003). By restructuring the tale so that the woman is devoured, she illustrates Yue's (1999) submission which emphasizes the dialectics between alimentary representation and imagination, theorized as double orality because eating and speaking are intertwined in a dual expression of the concupiscence for connection and fulfillment.

Not Quite *Uhuru*: *Hunhu* and Gender Relations

Furthermore, there is evidence that Zimbabwean women's economic position declined due to colonial incursion and this is highlighted by Elizabeth Schmidt (1992) who notes that European political and religious institutions failed to recognize modes of authority which were traditionally exercised by Shona women in precolonial times. This meant that women's traditional ways of gaining social status and recognition were rendered dysfunctional. However, other studies show that despite women's roles in the struggles for independence, African men who had internalized colonial concepts of administration regarding private property, male-centered family structures, and exclusion of women from inheritance simply perpetuated these negative practices against women (see Campbell 2005).

As such, feminist scholars assert that while the values of *hunhu* might readily apply to community relations, they do not address marital codes or gender interactions. They argue that the moral points of view of African women continue to be ignored and their interests are therefore left to the whims and caprices of patriarchy, often camouflaged in the communitarian philosophy under *hunhu* or *ubuntu* (Mangena 2009). The articulation of shots in an early scene prepares the viewer for the film's commitment to comment on social boundaries as they relate to gender issues. The

scene is composed of a long shot of the woman going away from the homestead in search of food. The scene is then intercut with a close-up of the man looking at her figure which is small and shot from his point of view as he stands at a higher angle. After she walks out of shot, he then sneaks behind the house to scoop ants into his mouth.

In addition, we are presented with a family unit that is depicted throughout the film as one which is isolated from any community (*nyika*) as a microcosm of society. The film anchors actions around the family and not once throughout the film do we see any other characters (other than the spirits of the termite hill who play a cameo role) except the members of the family whose story is unfolded. From the onset of the film, the husband's conduct falls short of the pivotal values of *hunhu*. In the first scene, he refuses to share nuts with the baby. Thus, he breaks one of the codes which fall under Kunzwanana, a broad concept covering *kudyidzana*, which literally translated means dining together, as a way of implying the importance of promoting the welfare, happiness, and self-realization of others (Chimuka 2001). Next, he also does not disclose his source of sustenance—the ants which he rushes to scoop greedily into his mouth as soon as his wife goes off in search of food.

In addition, when the woman in the film points to her husband's unwillingness to strive to find food for the children because he claims the drought is a curse, she is holding him up to another important cultural value, '*kununa*'. She insists that there "is no curse without end." Conjointly, *Kununa* is acknowledged as crucial to mental health as it is related to the provision of sufficient life-sustaining and life-enhancing resources, including stable and peaceful environments, food, and tools (see Chimuka 2001). The man's lack of *hunhu* values continues after he kills the woman and eats her alone while the children sit at a distance from him watching as they continue to starve.

Again, under the *hunhu* philosophical approach, it is expected that a leader will not trample on the rights and well-being of others. However, even as the woman calls the man "My lord," thereby conceding leadership to him, he does not live up to the standards of leadership. She is therefore within her rights when she criticizes him for failing in his paternal duties because those who failed to perform *hunhu* were regarded as deviants who risked being ostracized because they threatened peace and stability within the community. To the Shona people, food is not only one of the ways of rejuvenating strength but also a way of promoting the well-being of others. It is a way of renewing life and power which transcends ordinary goodwill because it is also the means through which the community is realized, strengthened, and regenerated. This approach to food is underscored by other anthropological literature on commensality in Africa. Hamer (1994) attests to how the Sadāma of Ethiopia view the ritual sharing of food by elders as a metaphor for cultural codes. For them, ritual food sharing is way of enunciating similarity between socio-political events and food consumption, both of which are dynamic. They also recognize that just as food sharing rituals need to be continuously negotiated in order to reach a consensus about commensal correctness, Sadāma elders are also expected to strive to make policies and settle disputes consensually.

However, rather than live up to his responsibility, this husband chooses to kill and devour his wife. On the other hand, from the woman's interactions with the children it is apparent that she has socialized them to value the principles of *hunhu* which according to Carol Pearce (1990) children learn through *tsika*. *Tsika* refers to the knowledge and ability to apply and abide by the rules, customs, and traditions of society. A well-raised child is one who exhibits *tsika*. This is reflected in the children's unwillingness to eat the nuts since there was none for the mother. *Tsika* is also displayed in the older daughter's willingness to offer the father her share.

Reimagining Motherhood

Unfortunately, the children's training, while enabling them to question their father's initial attempt to get them to help him with his objective of turning their mother into food, is not enough to help them resist his wiliness and persistence at luring them into complying with his request. Unwilling as the children are to help him move the woman's body home, it is in response to their voices appealing to her to do his will that her spirit rouses so that he succeeds at brutalizing her repeatedly. Thus Dangarembga vocalizes radical statements about gender by showing how easily the woman's spirit is roused by the sound of her children's voices. This is a cautionary note to women against becoming over-committed to motherhood to an extent that it becomes the only way through which they are defined. According to Anne McClintock (1995), for African women, motherhood is not a universal and biological quintessence of womanhood; rather, it is a social category which is subject to constant contest. As such, African women continue to embrace and transform the notion of motherhood in various ways within traditional settings.

In this regard, the opening sequence of *Kare Kare* is framed so that we see the mother cradling the baby but we cannot tell where the mother's body ends and the baby's begins. Thus, the illusion that the baby is an extension of her is suggested because she is sitting in the doorway of the hut and shot from the side. The camera is positioned so that her profile is shot against daylight. This leaves the side of her body facing the camera appearing dark. This contrasts sharply with the bright exterior, which is seen in the background, as the man comes to crouch beside her from outside. In a subsequent shot, she is standing with the man holding the plump baby who is crying as she tries unsuccessfully to breast feed her/him. Her emaciated body also marks a sharp contrast to that of the chubby baby. All of these prepare us for the film's mission as a cautionary tale which points to the kind of sacrifices women are lured into making because of their children. As Dangarembga admits "if there is a slippage between your identity, your perception of yourself and your body, then that kind of butchering could represent a disjunction" (Veit-Wild 2005, p. 138).

Dangarembga's refiguring of the tale to display the woman as food for man is not fortuitous but a warning against the cult of motherhood, a phenomenon which promises to reward mothers for self-sacrifice and which in recent times has become compounded for African women by Islam, Christianity, and celebrations

such as Mother's Day to which the ironic English title of the film alludes. Mate Rekopantswe's (2002) study, which investigates the position of churches on the gendered nuances of the process of social change in Zimbabwe, illustrates this. Rekopantswe advances the argument that motherhood is pitched as an ideal state and while women might be encouraged by their churches to excel in their professional life and economic engagements, they are also enjoined to submit to their husbands at home.

While the literary translation of *Kare, Kare Zvako* means long, long ago, the English title which Dangarembga provides, *Mother's Day* is evocative of the present times. It indexes the not-so-distant nature of the crux of the story and the possibility that such occurrences are really not in the past but very much in the here and now. Her response when asked about her aim in making the film illuminates this as she admits setting out to explore what people "allow themselves to do under conditions of stress [. . .] *Especially for Zimbabwe at this point in time . . .*" (Italics mine, Veit-Wild 2005, p. 137). It would be misleading to view the film as a period piece in which the occurrences in it might be seen as things that happened long ago. The film shows that even if such events can be traced to the past or might have started long ago, modern day viewers should see their lives reflected.

Film, Orature and Intertextual Discursive Practices

Dangarembga engages in dialog with orature by rewriting and, therefore, underscoring Richard Bauman's (2004) position that texts are perpetually in dialog with other texts. Bauman relates genre to the production and reception of meaning because texts are mediated through intertextual relationships with prior texts. He credits this approach which conceives of generic intertextuality as discursive practice to Mikhail Bakhtin, who proposes that texts only come to live through interactions with other texts, thus, creating context. Solomon Iyasere (1980) provides several examples which illustrate the nature of such dialog in oral performances. One model has to do with the performance of story-telling even in some formal situations such as the complex *Ijala* chants. Iyasere opines that the performance by one *Ijala* artist would be carefully listened to by other exponents and if a performer thought another performer had made a mistake, he would cut in with his own version.

Veit-Wild (2005), who investigated some of the many versions of the folktale which Dangarembga adapted, confirms that Shona speakers whom she consulted were unfamiliar with one of the most crucial aspects of the film's plot: the fact that the woman is slaughtered and eaten by the man. Veit-Wild records that the most common feature of the many versions of the folktale is that a man deceives his family during a period of drought by procuring food for himself alone but gets caught and punished at the end. Dangarembga's adaptation of the folktale illustrates a form of criticism through refiguring that is one of the hallmarks of orature. The ways in which intertextual gaps are manipulated provide a vantage point in analyzing the ideology and politics of genres. This is because prescriptive insistence on adherence

to generic codes works to uphold established order and authority while the widening of intertextual gaps and generic innovation allows creative resistance to hegemony, and openness to change (see Bauman 2004). By signifying on some basic elements of traditional versions of the folktale, Dangarembga's adaptation enhances the entextualization of her version as part of folklore, which hopefully will be reflected in future retellings of the tale by people who watch the film.

Also, her choice of adapting a folktale rather than writing a new one even though she is an accomplished writer, speaks to the attempt to implicate the audience. Opoku-Agyemang (1999) provides some insights into the pedagogical values of folktales. She proposes that they are vital in the process of socialization and constitute a primary source for the freedom of the imagination. They serve therapeutic, emotional, cathartic, and didactic purposes by transcending social barriers and contexts. They achieve this by engaging the audience in multiple functions as listener, active participant, commentator/actor, and/or musician thereby bringing the tale from the isolated past by appropriating the realities of the present. This relationship between collective participation in the creation of stories and collective responsibility is also advanced by Ncube (2001) as well as by Leroy Vale and Landeg White (1991).

While, ordinarily, oral story-tellers bridge times and spaces when the audience verbally contribute to the story or when the narrator directs phrases which rope the audience into the narrative or elicits their verbal response, this film does it through devices which lend themselves more readily to the cinematic medium. Dangarembga achieves this through her unconventional use of locations which normally serve to indicate the genre or psychological settings. The location and setting of this film are down-played and this enhances the viewer's ability to see it as something which is not necessarily fossilized into a distant space or time gone past. In other words, it is as much an occurrence of the past and there, as it is of the now and here.

Moreover, disregarding mainstream Hollywood style in which transition devices are used to indicate elision of time, spatial or temporal reorientation, Dangarembga's directorial method works to rupture the audience's inclination to separate themselves from the time and space of the stories unfolding. No bridging devices such as cutaways, insert shots, fades, dissolves, or mixes are used to delineate the story, which the woman tells her children from their story as a family which the film is unfolding. From the time she starts telling the story till toward the end of the film when the children ask her how the story ends, the story she tells is conflated with the film's narrative and the family members are turned into the characters of the story. The necessity for the story-teller to involve the listeners is also illustrated at the beginning when the mother insists on the children responding to her pronouncement of "Kare kare zvako!" which is the traditional preamble to Shona stories before proceeding with the story. This way, she ensures their participation in the making of the story. The simple act of responding to the call turns them into cocreators.

In addition, Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs (1990) argue that the illocutionary force of an utterance is not only dependent on its placement within particular genres and social settings; it is also the result of the indexical relations between the performance and other speech events that precede and follow it. In this regard,

Dangarembga confesses that her use of song is deliberate and typical of African story-telling traditions in which songs are repeated "with slight variations at different parts of the story." She further explains that:

> the interesting thing about the music, or, this kind of song in our narration, our folk-tales, is that the song (…) is part of the dynamic force of the narrative. By the time the song ends you are in a different position . . . . (Interview in Nordic African Institute (NAI) 2003)

The repetitive use of the children's chorus as diegetic sound establishes it as the film's theme song and enhances the audience's ability to sing along. These devices help draw the audience into the narrative as more than just viewers/auditors but as participants. Interventions like this help the narrative to occupy a hermetic space. By collectively participating in the formulation of the story/play, the audience is expected to abide by its morals. Collaboration also enhances the ability of the artist and the audience (which simultaneously constitutes the critic) to operate within the same space time frame (Opoku-Agyemang 1999).

In addition, because of the film's pedagogical intent, it uses pleasure and entertainment to impart lessons in much the same manner in which the woman in the film relies on her story. The story entertains while also warning her listeners about the dangers of the prevailing order and the importance of their involvement in the shaping of the community which the family unit represents. The lesson alerts the children to their power to rouse her spirit as well as their malleability at the hands of the father, the patriarchal figure. It also warns against their complicity even if it is unintended. The woman's insistence on the children's participation and Dangarembga's involvement of the audience are linked to the belief that they and their ancestors are part of the story which is being narrated. This undermines the privileges conferred through hierarchy on the story teller as the sole maker or giver of knowledge. By making the listener part of the *auteur*, or the creative process, power is decentralized. It opens up the story and challenges traditional representation of a voice-of-God narrator point of view.

Orality and Ritual Performance

The woman's songs and the dance sequences which on the surface connote a romantic interaction, constitute forms of ritual for music, dance, and mime are vehicles through which the Shona express and share complex experiences (Chinyowa 2001). However, while Chinyowa writes that the ritual experience translates itself into a kind of communal healing, the role of the spirits in the film deviates from this simplistic effect of ritual. While it can be read as a way of signaling a need for communal healing, one in which the spirits make things right, it also shows that though the spirits have the ability to rouse the woman's spirit, even heal her physical wounds—as we see some of the blood on her body disappear when one of the spirits touches her—they chose to return her to the manhole, perhaps in acknowledgement of her agency. Read this way, her songs and dances become part of a ritual which help her find her strength within. These attest to the resilience of orature in Shona culture and

its capacity to perpetually recreate itself while finding new relevance in a constantly changing society. By linking her critique of *hunhu* to spiritual dance, a widespread archetypal phenomenon in Zimbabwe, Dangarembga instantiates a powerful form of intertextual mediation.

In addition, while the narrative depicts the woman's story telling her children about a woman who is being dismembered and eaten by her husband, the shots are composed to depict the spirit of the woman in the story growing progressively resplendent, climaxing in a scene which starts with a close-up of an insect. The close-up lingers on the insect with its wings fluttering rapidly only to give way to the reemergence of the butchered woman in all her glory. As the children rush to embrace her, the man is no longer in the shot. It is as if she bursts out of his distended stomach and her reemergence marks his disappearance from both stories. This directorial intervention illustrates a sharp contrast between the woman's agency and her physical condition. There is an obvious contradiction inherent in the agency of the woman's spirit which is captured in medium shots intercut with close-ups of her physical body which is brutally cut and cooked. This contradiction works to frustrate the viewers' desire to interpret the male and female characters' relationship as romantic while drawing attention to the dilemma which the woman telling the story faces as she tries to craft her own story.

As indicated earlier, Dangarembga's directorial approach makes no attempt to delineate the story which the woman tells from the story of the film. This quality, in addition to the way that the film ends which does not commit to a conclusion of the woman's story, is typical of traditional oral narratives. With the introduction of the woman's story, the woman/narrator is situated firmly within the story in much the same manner as a traditional story narrator might claim to be captured by the story. Again at the end, what the viewer of the film sees is akin to what Okpewho (1992) describes as the woman's "return" from the scene of the narrative, almost as if her return does not stop the world of her narrative from continuing its existence.

The film ends without the viewer knowing how the woman's story, which she tells her children, concludes. In the last scene before she urges her children into the hut, the audience is presented with a close-up of the mother's tear strewn face which might elicit several questions: Did the telling of the story bring her to a realization of the parallel between the story and her life? Does the story that she tells her children empower her and them to change, arm or shield themselves against the possibility of the man's onslaught which the story highlights? When she tells the children: "Come! Let me tell you how it ends," will she assert her agency as the creator of her own story by telling an ending which does not leave her a victim? Does she, through the scene in which the woman emerges from the man's stomach only for him to disappear, enunciate the notion that are what we eat? (see Yue 1999) thereby signaling the notion that rather than becoming satiated in any way, men who turn on women to devour them in a bid to find any kind of fulfillment only become the type of women they devour? The open-end allows the viewer to also proffer an ending for the story and in so doing, they are reminded of their own agency as active participants in the making of not only the stories of their lives but also of their *nyika*. Like the characters in the film, they are left with the prospect of becoming their own story.

Conclusion

I have appraised this cinematic adaption of a traditional oral narrative against the background of the Shona belief in *hunhu* which is traditionally expected to govern fundamental principles, esthetics, and beliefs systems. I have demonstrated that the film's interrogation of values of *hunhu* raise questions related to the crisis around gender, cultural values, and collective consciousness in postindependence Zimbabwe. My analysis demonstrates the highly generative role of orature as a site for civil struggle in Zimbabwe as it opens up a discussion of the values underlying the notion of *hunhu* as a model for collective consciousness.

By reading the film as an allegory against a backdrop of the values of *hunhu,* I highlight how Dangarembga enunciates the tragedy of any struggle which relies on mythically exclusive narratives. Read as an allegory, the film also enunciates the dangers which attend attempts to build a path to national or private aspiration based on sacrificing women materially, psychologically or spiritually. The film works as an allegory by juxtaposing traditional beliefs about social cohesion inherent in *hunhu* against the allegorization of gender relations envisioned around the paradigm of hunger and cannibalism. It is also effective as a tool for civil contestation because it engages the cultural unconscious, modeled on the significant experience of hunger. Dangarembga does this by signifying on traditional beliefs about food as expounded by *hunhu* worldviews, thereby highlighting the power of discourse as social negotiation. In addition, I have evaluated the significance of *hunhu* for issues of nation and motherhood and reflected on the film's attributes as an intertextual discourse and the qualities of ritual as a mode of oral performance.

I have argued that Dangarembga draws on traditional oral narratives in order to highlight the crisis of postcolonial nationalism and comments on the brutality of the patriarchal postcolonial nation through the use of an extended metaphor drawn from oral narrative. She demonstrates how women's labor and bodies are metaphorically eaten by the men who depend on them to survive and to exert power. In so doing, Dangarembga illustrates that a notion of Africa in which tradition and modernity are opposed is simplistic and inaccurate and doomed to overlook the contributions of women's labor to the making of the nation. Her work critiques the present by drawing on the oral strategies which continue to be generated by women in the present. Perhaps by destabilizing the relationship of tradition to orality, Dangarembga inadvertently raises questions about the forms of truth, power, and knowledge on which contemporary nation states are based.

The major concerns raised in the film about postindependence struggles in Zimbabwe are relevant even beyond Zimbabwe's borders as illustrated by the connection between commensality and political consensus as practiced by the Sadāma of Ethiopia. The need to constantly evaluate communal cultures and values which lie at the heart of this film are not unique to Zimbabwe, they are challenges which may also be pertinent to many other former colonies which are also contending with similar situations.

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Part V
Aid, Volunteering and Philanthropy

Chapter 23
Civil Society and Aid in Africa: A Case of Mistaken Identity?

Alan Fowler

Introduction

The short title of this chapter incorporates three types of plurality that work against arriving at reliable general statements or conclusions about the relationship between aid and civil society in Africa. As we will see, the concept of civil society is subject to contested interpretations that prevent its use as a firm point of reference. Over decades, aid—understood as concessional finance, incorporating transfers of exogenous knowledge and technologies—has taken on so many objectives, forms and channels such that reliable categorization, enumeration or mapping is not feasible. And, with 54 countries, the continent exhibits too much socio-political and historical diversity for a nation state to offer a sound framework for analysis. Inherent to all of these factors is the issue of selecting relevant time frames within which to understand processes and outcomes. Under these conditions, a practical approach is to explain the situation in each case and argue for a particular point of view from which description and analysis can proceed. This is the method employed towards an argument that current appreciations of civil society in Africa are often highly distorted because they usually rely on an exogenous lens (Fowler 2012).

The analytic approach is akin to that applied in studies of organisational ecology (Hannan and Freeman 1989). Here, variations in actors' comprehensions of civil society, in different qualities and quantities of aid and in the diverse contexts of African countries are assumed to interact in ways which, over time, create conditions that dynamically 'select and amplify' or 'attenuate and reject' particular configurations of the associational populations of citizens. What these co-evolutionary processes generate as 'civil societies' on the continent is thus a central theme in description and analysis.

The chapter starts with short reviews of civil society, aid and Africa's diverse country conditions to define the conceptual and analytic terrain. These treatments

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provide empirical data needed to explain the interplay between Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) as well as other sources of aid and the formations of civil society to be found on the continent leading to a concluding discussion of the political dimensions involved.

Establishing the Conceptual Ground

Reflected in other volumes about civil society, this and other chapters grapple with an inconsistent use of concepts and of language to describe and analyse their perspectives (e.g. Edwards 2004, 2011). A particular problem in doing so is the lack of any generally accepted categorization of terms that populate civil society as an area of study and action. In this chapter, the framework of categories, nomenclatures and their relationships follows that set out in Fowler (2012, p. 13). In brief, civic agency in society is treated as an overarching, inclusive category with civil society as its associational expression encompassing voluntary organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), non-profit organisations (NPOs), professional associations, religions, social movements, traditional associational arrangements and other forms of self-organised collaboration towards a shared endeavour. Interfaces with civil society can be found in political parties, in hybrid forms of organising, such as mutual insurance set ups, cooperatives, and in social enterprises and corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Civil Society

The notion of civil society that re-emerged in political science after the implosion of the Soviet Union has been described by van Rooy (1998) as an analytic hat stand. It can and does mean many things to many people, making the concept too plural for some applications (Fowler and Biekart 2011). A recent work by Glasius (2010, pp. 1–2) pulls together a variety of normative understandings and applications of the concept in the following way:

> Civil society as **social capital**: through frequent association with each other in a variety of networks, trust between citizens is built up through a virtuous cycle of repeatedly meeting each other's expectations. This solves collective action problems and improves the well-being of the community and its citizens—a notion inspired by de Tocqueville and Putnam.
> Civil society as citizens **active in public affairs**: rather than just being producers and consumers, civil society denotes people's willingness to give time and attention to engagement in public affairs for the common good.
> Civil society as **non-violent** and resisting violence: it constitutes the recognition that resolving conflict through non-violent means is preferable to the use of force, and engages in non-violent and anti-violent collective action. Inspired by Gandhi and peace movements.
> Civil society as **fostering public debate**: this sees civil society as synonymous with the public sphere. In this sphere, through the media and venues of public debate such as town hall meetings, citizens debate each other with proposals for the public good, and through

these deliberations better policy proposals are formulated, which informs formal politics. Inspired by Habermas.

Civil society as **counter-hegemony**: while civil society is in part a hegemonic project of designing and disseminating ideologies that justify individual and collective differences in power and wealth, this sphere also gives space to doing the opposite: formulating and disseminating ideologies that challenge the powerful and champion the marginalised, through cultural institutions such as the media, churches, associations or trade unions. Initially one creates one's own counter-hegemonic institutions, but eventually the project is to 'overwhelm' the mainstream. Inspired by Gramsci.

We need not be detained by the myriad other publications addressing the topic, other than to set out one observation and a solution to an analytic problem. The observation is that the way authors use the concept of civil society is self-referential to the theory in which it is embedded, making sound empirical comparisons impossible. The solution is, with caution, to accept a proposition that despite its limited geo-historical provenance of an industrialising Western Europe and North America, the concept can be applied to other geographies and times as long as the limitations of its exogenous origins are kept firmly in view (Hearn 2001; Lewis 2002).

To some extent, the problem of which 'perspective' of civil society to use in this chapter is straightforward in that the aid system has alighted on formulations which support a neo-liberal economic and democratization agenda towards aid recipient countries. With variations, civil society is portrayed as a 'harmonious' arena of associational life with its own intrinsic value that contains a mix of the first four properties listed above. The counter-hegemonic function of civil society is excluded because propagation of Western universalism for all societies—through aid, trade and other means—is itself a hegemonic project (Wallerstein 2006). 'Aided' civil society becomes an accomplice in extending Western hegemony (Wright 2012). Development through conflict and contention cannot be overtly accommodated alongside a harmony model of change that is to be abetted by aid to civil society. In part, this selectivity is justified by the 'sovereignty constraint' of not interfering in another country's internal affairs. Obviously, through conditionalities and other means, aid intervenes all the time, but the illusion must be held that recipient governments are in sovereign control of the assistance they receive (Collier and Hoeffler 2007; Krasner 1999).

With these observations in mind, we can rely on a mainstream liberal democratic interpretation of civil society along the lines used by Civicus, The Global Alliance for Citizen Participation in its recent report on the state of civil society (Civicus 2012, p. 8):

... the term civil society to mean 'the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market, which is created by individual and collective actions, organisations and institutions to advance shared interests.' Civil society therefore encompasses Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the actions of less formalised groups and individuals. Where the term 'organised civil society' is used in this report, it refers to independent, non-state and non-private sector associations and organisations that have some form of structure and formal rules of operating, together with the networks, infrastructure and resources they utilise.

This formulation is valuable in that it acknowledges that much civic agency is not 'organised' in a formal, registered sense and that this property cannot be used as an essential, defining feature of civil society as some analysts are wont to do in order to

permit comparative enumeration of associational life. For aid agencies, however, this associational field is populated by recognisable, usually legally registered, entities with roles valued for international development. From within a tri-sector—state, market and civil society—perspective of becoming a modern society fully tuned to market capitalism, CSOs offer comparative advantages in reaching particular target groups, for example the marginalised (Brown and Korten 1989), and generate domestic public support for aid budgets (Smillie 1994). By the 1980s, partnership between aid agencies and NGOs became a norm (Smillie and Helmich 1993, 1999).

Over time, (official) aid has steered many CSOs towards a limited set of functions. These are: (1) a provider of social services, (2) a builder of civic competencies and capacity; (3) a (policy) advocate for the poor, marginalised and oppressed; and (4) an active democratizing watchdog for the public good (Banks and Hulme 2012; Tvedt 2006). Adopting this apolitical (Feldman 2003), utilitarian perspective gives rise to an incongruity: in performing these tasks, the aided organisations of civil society are often treated as separate from the citizenry that rationalize them. It is therefore common to find donor policy formulations in which civil society is seen as distinctive from society, yet the very concept is premised on citizenship as a shared political identity that is not sector bound. It will be argued later that the implied separation of aided civil society from others in the 'arena' has had distinctive effects on the associational ecology of civil society on the continent.

In practice, the aid system recognises two principle types of CSOs: those positioned as *intermediaries* in resource flows and disbursement and those composed of members that are the *constituencies* that would gain from development initiatives. In common parlance, intermediaries are equated with NGOs and constituencies with community-based organisations (CBOs) populated by those justifying aid mobilization—the poor, marginalised, oppressed, disabled, displaced and so on. Combined forms of membership-based civil society—religious, cooperative, trade union—and similar mutual forms of association are recognised but are subsidiary in aided development.

Within this viewpoint of civil society, a useful distinction can be made between NGOs that are *on* the continent and those that are *of* the continent. The former are exemplified by international organisations with branches and offices in African countries but usually financed and governed from elsewhere or are a locally governed 'brand-bonded' part of international families, such as World Vision or the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Though often modelled and reliant on foreign support, NGOs of the continent have their origins and governance within an African country. The aid-justificatory constituencies that should carry their own development initiatives, that is CBOs, can have *indigenous* roots—for example in traditional ethnic structures—or they can be *induced* by an aid agency, for example the management committee of water supply or a health clinic. The issue then becomes how aid flows through to them and how this affects the composition of the associational population.

Aid to Civil Society in Africa

It is virtually impossible to estimate the total volume of aid reaching civil society in Africa. Figure 23.1 illustrates why this is the case. The types and channels of foreign assistance reaching civil society are too numerous to track or to aggregate.

The scope of this chapter is not to reach a plausible number for the financial aid resources reaching civil society. Nor is it the intention to set this against non-aid flows seen, for example, in finance from the African diaspora. Although this measure does provide a helpful sense of proportionality of what impact aid is actually exerting.

> The African Diaspora is comprised of over 30 million emigrants from Africa's 54 nations. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) estimates that each year the African Diaspora contributes about 40 billion USD in the form of remittances to their families and communities. Between 1960 and 2003, the continent of Africa received over 600 billion USD in aid, **but Diaspora remittances were double that sum in the same period**.[1] (Emphasis added)

By treating civil society as an enumerable 'sector,' such an aggregate overview creates a worrying distorted picture of the analytic terrain, as illustrated in the following section.

> There has been a dramatic expansion in the size, scope, and capacity of civil society, which has come in the wake of growing democratic governance throughout the world. It is estimated that the annual expenditures of the non-profit sector worldwide is $ 1.3 trillion and that it employs over 40 million people. The sector channels approximately $ 20 billion in financial assistance to developing countries per year. CSOs have also demonstrated an increased influence and ability to shape global public policy during the past two decades. This dynamism is exemplified by successful advocacy campaign movements that have mobilized thousands of supporters around the world on issues such as debt cancellation, poverty reduction, and climate change.[2]

For an African context, the elision and disingenuous equivalency between civil society and non-profit sector seen in this quotation is seriously misleading. Two critical factors argue against this conceptual mistreatment. One is the mass of unreported associational forms that characterise the thick web of socio-political life, seen for example in multiple micro, tradition-bound institutional memberships common to the continent. A similar distortion stems from the exclusion of pan-African networks, social movements and net-enabled activisms that can play a major role in development—the Arab uprising being one example. These 'uncountable' formations are (politically) significant features of civil society as fully understood. Their exclusion from civil society and its agency introduces serious bias in existing analysis dominated by exogenous agendas.

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[1] http://futurechallenges.org/local/cash-back-remittances-from-the-african-diaspora/. Accessed 18 August 2012. Though changing, the fact that remittances are often applied to consumption rather than development is irrelevant to the extent that this type of finance supports the material base from which associational life is driven.

[2] http://worldbank.org/civilsociety/. Accessed 18 August 2012.
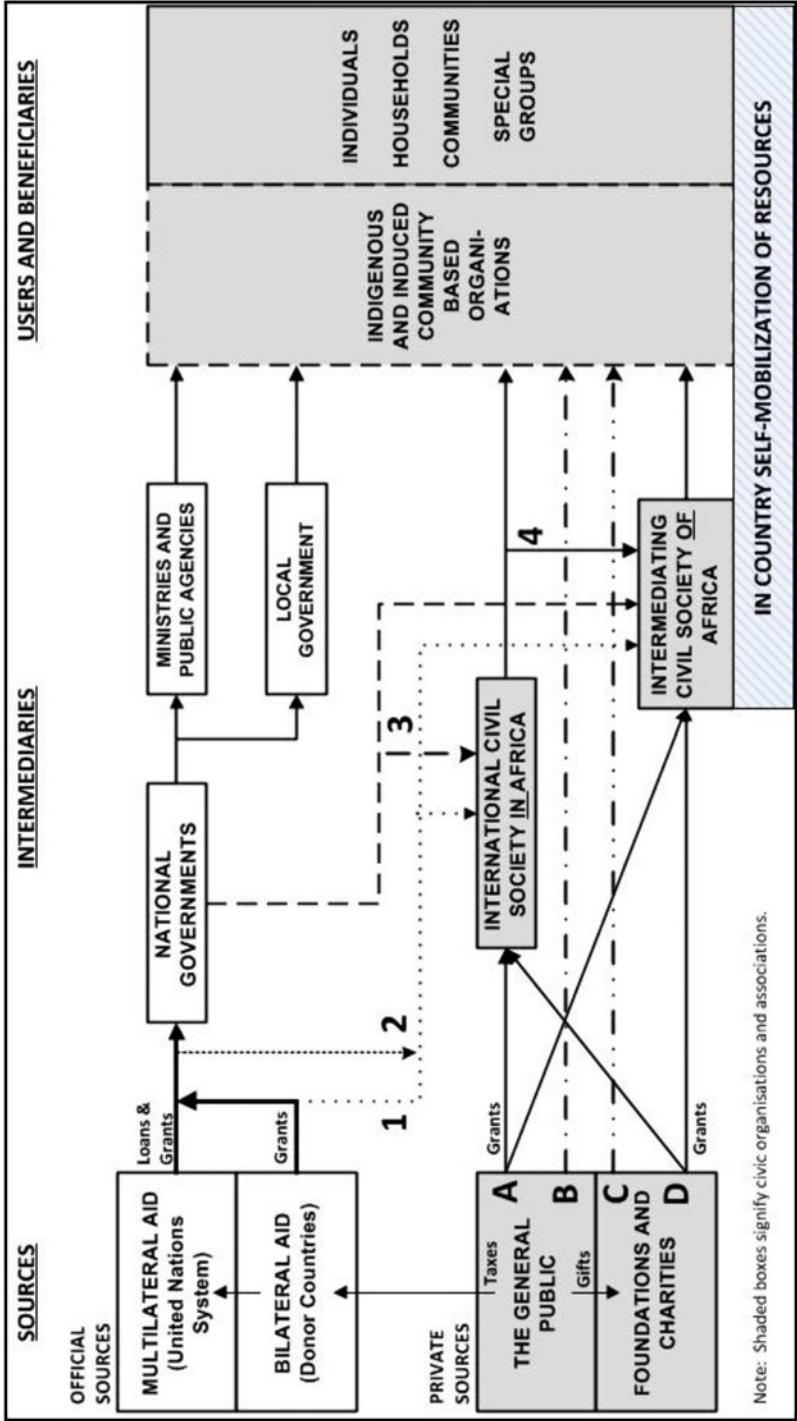
Fig. 23.1 Aided sources for civil society in Africa

A second caution is that such financial estimates rely on attributing a shadow value to the voluntary effort that much of 'thick' civil society relies on as a resource. This valuation contains major assumptions about the universalism of volunteering that are contextually disputed. While useful in giving an idea of the scale of visible associational life, such enumerations cannot be relied on as a reference point for sound analysis of civil society on the African continent.

What can be done is to illustrate the various aid streams in order to try and tease out their effects on the ecological formation of civil society in a country. Line 1 in Fig. 23.1, connects bi-lateral aid to the direct financing of donors' domestic CSOs and to their local equivalents, often through in-country embassy grants. This bi-lateral channel gives a heavy weighting of ODA to Africa—in 2009, some 25 of the $ 28 billion allocated bi-laterally by member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) went to countries on the continent.[3] In 2011, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development disbursed £ 329 million of its total budget of £ 7.7 billion through some 35 UK NGOs (DFID 2011, p. 98).

The conditions associated with bi-lateral assistance tend to make many NGOs align with official practices and measures (Wallace et al. 1998). With donors taking on board much of original NGO vocabulary and labelling, such as empowerment and participation (Moncrieffe and Eyben 2007), it would be easy to overlook—under the banner of accountability for public funds—the 'standardization' of development practice that official aid to NGOs brings about. There can also be pressure to ensure a prominent branding for the bi-lateral 'back donor'. This recent requirement for British Aid can confuse what non-governmental means as being part and parcel of civil society.[4] Ambiguity of aided-CSO identity and mistrust of motives is one ecological outcome.

Line 2 brings in the CSO financing coming from multi-lateral institutions, themselves funded bi-laterally. Figures for total long-term ODA resource flows from Development Assistance Committees (DAC) countries in 2010 amount to US$ 494,416 million.[5] The volume estimated to flow through private voluntary agencies is US$ 30,639 million or 6 %.[6] By and large, accessing funds from multi-lateral resources is heavily bureaucratic and only possible for the larger CSOs with highly trained professional staff. And, where loans are concerned, the normal channel is Line 3 with CSOs operating as a supplier of social services to a national government for an externally financed programme. Despite much anecdotal evidence of the corruption in play when applications are invited, there are no estimates of the volume of finance reaching CSOs through this channel. Contractual conditions reflect what has been negotiated in the grant or loan which, despite statements to the contrary, tends

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[3] http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhlf4/en/countries/africa/581.html. Downloaded 7 August 2012.

[4] http://bigpushforward.net/archives/1700. Accessed 22 August 2012.

[5] http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/development-aid-total-official-and-private-flows_20743866-table5. Accessed 23 August 2012.

[6] http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/development-aid-grants-by-private-voluntary-agencies_20743866-table3. Accessed 23 August 2012.

to be highly prescriptive. An ecology of 'parastal' CSOs or GONGOs (Government NGOs) arises.

Be that as it may, interactions between CSOs and multi-lateral agencies do not just revolve around contracting within loans or for grants. Many multi-laterals have dedicated civil society staff, focal points and forums for policy dialogue.[7] Often, these interfaces are populated by International NGOs (INGOs) tending to speak on behalf of their African partners. An ecological effect is for NGOs *on* the continent to monopolize public space and the highly skilled professionals required to interact with the multi-lateral system. This can give rise to a configuration showing a 'patterned' division of labour in the four development functions described earlier between NGOs *on* and NGOs *of* the continent: the latter concentrating on delivery, and the former on policy.

In 2010, as a region, Africa received the biggest share of ODA—US$ 47,932 million out of a total of US$ 128,492 million, some 36 %.[8] The 'slipstream effect' (Koch et al. 2009) of INGOs following distributional patterns of official aid would suggest a similar favourable bias in allocation to civil society on the continent. For example, indicative figures for official aid to CSOs in countries of southern Africa for the period 2000–2004 show a dramatic growth from US$ 1.85 to 92.82 million dollars (SAT 2007, p. 10, Table 3). But these figures are fraught with reservations (Ibid p. 11):

> This Table should be interpreted even more cautiously. Some important donor countries have recorded a larger share of their aid to civil under sector categories. These flows are not captured. A country like the Netherlands which appears to classify a very large portion of their civil society support under the "support to NGOs" category is over represented. In the case of Denmark, on the other hand, it is expected that a significant part of their sizeable support to civil society is not captured in these statistics. Even more significant to note: These figures are based on disbursements and therefore do not capture the more recent and emerging trends in the aid flows to civil society which the team observed during the country visits.

Under-, over- and mis-reporting, plus the simple problem of gathering data from embassies across the world, makes forming an accurate picture of aid to CSOs a practical impossibility. Moreover, the volume of finance need not bear any linear relationship to effect in society. For example, when effectively implemented, a policy change opening up media freedom could have more impact for the public good than increasing the scale of service delivery.

In Fig. 23.1, starting at A, Line 4 reflects flows from International CSOs to their local counterparts. The total monetary value of resources involved cannot be estimated, but the general policy towards partnering with local CSOs rather than being self-operational suggests growth over time. Two examples can illustrate ecological organisational effects. In 2011, World Vision dedicated 42 % (US$ 934.7 million) of its programme allocation to Africa (World Vision 2012, p. 27). It did so through direct operational work in area development programmes governed from its Global Centre: World Vision *in* Africa. But to enhance accountability, it is also in the process of establishing locally governed entities towards the organisation becoming *of*

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[7] www.worldbank.org/civilsociety/.

[8] http://www.oecd.org/development/aidstatistics/42139250.pdf. Accessed 7 Aug 2012.

Africa. A legal affiliation to World Vision International keeps the local entity within the family. Other INGOs are following similar paths. In contrast, with African offices in addition to local and national government, WaterAid works to and through local NGOs and consortia.[9] In both instances, their functioning relies on the continued availability of foreign resources (Brehm 2004). An ecological effect is to create foreign/local hybrids—CSOs both *of* and *on* the continent. But reliance on external resourcing means that they belong to but are not rooted in the continent. This condition is relevant to the extent that observer status at the African Union's Economic and Social Council requires an African CSO to be financed for more than 50 % from local resources. A third quality of resources through this channel comes from northern NGOs without a physical or operational presence. Often substantially reliant on government financing, their role is to identify and provide resources—money, knowledge, information, relationships—to African initiated CSOs. Examples are Dutch and German development foundations largely financed by the state whose existence reflects domestic political histories and their public constituencies (e.g. Biekman and Lammers 2009). Their effects on African CSOs often lie in the rules of the game they apply and the quality of relationships that grow over time where funding becomes subsidiary to trust and ideological solidarity. In this sense, northern political expressions, norms and interests are seeded into African soil, gender equity and defence of sexual orientations being examples.

Over decades, many INGOs have worked in similar ways across the continent (Fowler 2011a, b). Allied to INGO policies of working with and through 'partners', in response to a continual expansion in financial supply, most local NGOs are initiated and staffed by middle class professionals acting as social entrepreneurs (e.g. Holmén 2010). An ecological effect is to create a political economy of NGO-ism, populated by an aid-dependent class and strata of externally modelled CSOs with mixed degrees of local ownership or accountability. A reasoned judgment would be that this private channel of aid finance originating some 60 years ago in grants from the general public for charitable/humanitarian purposes is probably the most significant factor in terms of volume and effects on the shape of formally constituted civil society on the continent.

The effects of private financing are also seen in departure point B, with a direct channel to the constituencies—community-based and populated organisations (CBOs) that justify NGO existence. One result, noted earlier, is to induce the emergence of new forms of civic association predicated on aid availability. While often portrayed as building on the indigenous, more often than not, utilitarian drivers to deliver outputs and outcomes subordinate the latter principle in favour of the creation of community entities for the participatory management of aided processes and practices (Wilkinson-Maposa and Fowler 2009). The language of 'our partners' is commonplace. The capacity development required for this task brings with it a range of technical skills and competencies that remain once the finance has stopped. In this sense, the foundation of Africa's associational life is modernized and connected to a wider range of development possibilities.

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[9] http://www.wateraid.org/documents/annual_report_and_financial_statements_201011.pdf. p. 7.

Departure point C can have similar outcomes but with a difference in that foundation financing offers another quality in terms of possible development practice. Endowed foundations can take a longer view than the political cycles of official donors, choose their own metrics and define conditions for grant making without reference to governments or the general public. However, transaction costs of foundations working directly with communities are high, making this a less attractive channel than grants to intermediaries. Consequently, finance starting at D has the effect of pluralising African intermediaries by, for example, creating community foundations (Moyo 2003). The philanthropic source of influence on civil society has expanded dramatically from the older foundations such as The Ford, Rockefeller and Mott to include mega-foundations such as that of Bill and Melinda Gates, as well as local entities such as Trust Africa based in Senegal. Though starting from a low base, African philanthropies and grant makers relying on resourcing from the continent itself are on the rise.[10] Again, the total sums involved are not known, but as the continent's middle class and super-rich increase, so does a potential for African philanthropy to influence how civil society on the continent is reconfigured. The agenda is out on the degree to which the socio-political interests of many older foundations are being overtaken by the more technical delivery emphasis of the Gates Foundation.[11]

This synoptic overview of aid to civil society illustrates the range of ways in which configurations can be shaped. But it is only one part of the story. Equally important are the conditions within which aid may or may not exert effects. Country contexts matter a lot, particularly in the extent to which the regime in power perceives what aid's civil society agenda is all about: citizens' associational right? A helping hand? A Trojan horse? The following section considers the country environments that co-determine what African civil society looks like.

African Environments and Civil Society

Aid policy to advance civil society beyond NGOs started some 20 years ago. With this aim in mind, funders' attention was directed at determining the operating conditions of developing countries in terms of promoting an 'enabling environment' for civil society to exist, express itself and engage with government (e.g. World Bank 2003). The response from developing countries has been mixed, with some of the most autocratic regimes prompting a backlash against CSOs as being illegitimate and 'unrepresentative' (Mohammed 1997). Consequently, over time, the civil society ecology in a country has been very dependent on the stance taken by African regimes. This section illustrates and discusses such variations.

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[10] See; www.africangrantmakers.org.

[11] See Alliance Magazine, Vol. 16, No. 3, Focus on . . . Living with the Gates Foundation.

Table 23.1 Civil society index Africa country studies

Country	CSI environment rating
Egypt	1.1
Ghana	1.5
Guinea	1.1
Liberia	12 out of 33
Madagascar	22 out of 33
Morocco	11 out of 33
Rwanda	2.1
Senegal	1.2
Sierra Leone	0.8
Tanzania	1.7
Togo	0.7
Uganda	1.4
Zambia	2 out of 33

CSI civil society index

Since 2003, in collaboration with local hosts, Civicus, The Global Alliance for Citizen Participation, has carried out numerous country studies on the operating environment for civil society. These have been undertaken in the Civil Society Index (CSI) projects. The CSI provides a comparative snapshot, though historical determinants would need to be examined in each case (Civicus 2012; Heinrich 2007a, b Civicus 2012). Table 23.1, lists the African countries studied in two phases which differed slightly in the method used to assess country operating conditions.

In the earlier phase, sub-dimensions of the environment—including the political, socio-economic, socio-cultural context, legal conditions basic freedoms and rights, access to information, state-civil society relation—were scored ranging from 0 to 4, the higher the number the better the situation for CSOs. The second phase adopted a ranked approach showing the position of the 33 participating countries relative to each other. A lower ranking signals a less enabling the country context for CSOs. Variation in CSI methods makes sound comparisons a problem, but the general picture is relatively consistent—operating environments are less than hospitable and are becoming even more so. A few extreme examples are used for illustration.

Sierra Leone's history of decades of authoritarian rule and civil war has worked against a social and economic fabric from which associational life can flourish. Weaknesses in the rule of law, inadequate state resources with poorly functioning government services all add to the difficulties faced by the population at large. Poverty and the harsh impact on children and youth—as combatants and sex slaves—has created an inter-generational problem for establishing trusted relationships that civil society needs in order to function. Survival is the priority for collective action and associational life. Nevertheless, for those who wish to do so, forming and registering a CSO is not too arduous. From a low base, more formalised civil society is slowly emerging (Heinrich 2007a, b, p. 352).

At another extreme, associated with highly institutionalised civil society, of all countries profiled in CSI phase 2, Zambia records the highest rate of civic participation.

> Civil society in Zambia includes professional bodies, trade unions, gender-based groups, human rights and advocacy groups, service-oriented CSOs, faith-based organisations, international NGOs and the media. (Civicus 2012, p. 284)

The process towards multi-party democracy opened up a space for formalised civil society to take hold, but with high dependency on foreign aid to do so. A legislative history has created a variety of forms of registration allowing varying degrees of state control and interference.

> Partly as a result of these legal restrictions, dialogue on governance issues is assessed as weak. When CSOs are involved in such processes it is usually at the insistence of donors, with considerable ambivalence about this on the part of government. Government is supportive of CSOs in playing a service delivery role, but there is hostility when CSOs enter the territory of advocacy for good governance, with threats of bans . . . (Civicus 2012, pp. 283–284).

Egypt is an interesting example of civic agency in action in ways both unforeseen and innovative in creating associational life on the move, so to speak. The 2007 Civicus assessment stressed a 'disabling' environment for civil society characterised by an overbearing state. The existence of kinship-based associations and NGOs run by civil servants made it difficult to distinguish a civil society arena separate from the family, state and market. Limited citizen participation, meagre resources and low level and penetration of aid to civil society beyond government control all contributed to a configuration that was weak unless allied to religious organisations that themselves faced state containment or outright repression (Heinrich 2007a, b, p. 114). What the Arab Spring demonstrates are tricky features of civil society, aid and development. One is the point already made about civil society as dynamic, fluid and 'uncountable'. The self-mobilised and financed coalition of civic associational life that erupted, unveiled a deeply felt sense of denial of dignity that had to be redressed. Risk was recalculated. Another feature is the limited role of international CSOs in the political processes that unfolded, while the subsequent electoral process illustrates that conflictual fault lines can and do run deep within civil society. A harmony model of civil society is simply a naïve aid construction. Finally, Egypt and other sites of popular resistance highlight the issue of choosing an appropriate time frame to judge what civil society means in a specific context (Tadros 2012).

In east Africa, Uganda is a country that has been considered amenable to CSOs—predominantly NGOs—engaged in delivery of social services. Despite significant progress, levels of poverty remain a barrier to gaining the economic foundations for associational life to move much beyond survival, while inequality gains ground. Reforms to legislation have reduced scope for civil society to fulfil advocacy and watchdog roles (Heinrich 2012a, b, p. 408). An interplay between ethnicity and religion stemming from colonial penetration is a factor in how much of civil society is configured.

How environments can change dramatically is illustrated by recent legislation in Ethiopia which seriously curtails the expressive possibilities of civil society (Beyene 2012). For example, this new act prohibits a CSO receiving more than 10 % of its finance from outside of the country to engage in public policy advocacy. This function belongs to Ethiopian CSOs without external 'contamination' and importation of foreign agendas.

These are somewhat thin and brief illustrations of the contexts in which aided and unaided processes of civil society formation play out. To these cases, geo-political conditions and alignments, linguistic and legal differences between Anglophone, Francophone and Lusaphone inheritances and interferences can be added. In sum, the ecological forces in play on civil society are complex and seldom fully visible.

A recognised limitation in both phases of the CSI is to be sufficiently inclusive of all constituent forms of civic associational life. It has proven to be very difficult to incorporate non-formal institutional arrangements on the one hand, while showing aided-civil society biases on the other. In other words, the full configuration of civil society and its experience of operating conditions are not captured. By way of confirmation, an overview based on the global findings of the Index phase 2 speaks of CSOs—read NGO-isms—being disassociated from the polity at large (Civicus 2011). This does not imply that aided CSOs have not saved lives, protected the environment, challenged rights violations and brought well-being to many of the world's poor and marginalised. It simply confirms a less then complete picture of civil society allied to a semi-detached position of aided CSOs.

The landscape of countries studied to date is one of less than accommodating, if not hostile, conditions for and beyond aided CSOs. And, according to the most up to date research, conditions are deteriorating further.

From a 'golden age of CSO expansion in the 1980s and 1990s (Fowler 2011a, b), the past decade witnessed the arrival of critical questioning about aided-civil societies' performance, credibility and legitimacy. Though obviously uneven in application, current operating conditions appear as follows (Civicus 2012, p. 10):

- Civil society space is volatile and changing;
- State-civil society relations are limited and mostly unsatisfactory;
- Financial and human resource challenges for CSOs are continuing and in some cases worsening;
- There is often a gap between CSOs' articulation of values and their internal practice of them;
- Networking is insufficient, with significant gaps in international connections and civil society private sector relationships;
- CSOs achieve greater impact in the social sphere than in influencing policy, and there is a gap between high levels of activity and moderate levels of impact;
- There is continuing public trust in civil society as an idea but low levels of involvement in formal civil society activities compared to higher levels of non-formal participation;
- Understandings of civil society need to be expansive to encompass non-formal movements, traditional forms of participation and online activism;
- New processes need to be instigated to better connect formal CSOs with non-formalised forms of participation.

Governments in Africa and elsewhere are generally closing civic space. But in Egypt and elsewhere on the continent, the nature of civil society itself is changing. Consequently, the discussion which follows needs to be seen in a dynamic and historical way. It starts with a long view of civil society as a part of Africa's political ecology with aid as a relative newcomer.

Discussion

In taking a long view, the discussion which follows continues with an ecological perspective of civil society in Africa as compositions of associational life which emerge from changes in resource-based and political conditions of which aid is a recent part. It draws on a four-stage evolutionary process put forward by Opuku-Mensah (2008, pp. 77–78) and elaborated in Fowler (2012). The preceding sections are then used to elucidate the probable effects of international aid to civil society over the past 30 years or so.

A Historical View

It needs to be borne in mind that Africa has been home of Egypt as an ancient civilization as was Abyssinia stretching across the Red Sea to Yemen, with complex societies emerging on the Niger Delta as well as Kingdoms in western, eastern and southern Africa. However, the sophisticated socio-political arrangement and urbanisation in Egypt marked a notable transition from social organisation reliant on hunter gathering involving small disbursed groups of 20–50 people that remained in the sub-Sahara (Cotterell 1980, p. 11). But as groups grow, so do the issues of social relations and language development. Dunbar (1993) argues that the dispersion of the world's population from East Africa resulted from the limit to the size of a social organisation whose survival relying on the familiarity with each other to maintain social cohesion. His estimate is some 150 people, beyond which this form of self-organisation breaks down, leading to migration. Endemic diseases and parasites worked against large scale settlement, a condition which maintained an associational life in pre-colonial Africa characterised by community institutions composed of self-help groups whose joint survival relied on cultivating solidarity between them within the geo-physical conditions and resources available (Reader 1997). Significant for this analysis is that such strong group affinity prevails to this day.

In Opoku-Mensah's schema, this was the situation confronted by colonial penetration as a second phase of what was to become the civil society of the modern era. Colonialism brought urbanization and migration from rural areas, but without losing existing affinities which were relied on to facilitate entry into urban centres and livelihoods. Ethnic identity and its valuable connections was reinforced by the divide and rule tactics of colonial authorities that labelled people into 'tribes' of foreign understanding. In addition, the imposition of rule by written law with ex-ogenous origins prescribed acceptable forms of associational life, such as societies, cooperatives, trade unions and sports clubs.

Wage employment, education and professionalization of the indigenous population contributed to class formation, while the importation of and competition between Western religions interacted with ethnicities to diversify and complicate associational configurations. Progressive formalisation of associational life created unintended sources for the emergence of political mobilisation and resistance to colonial power
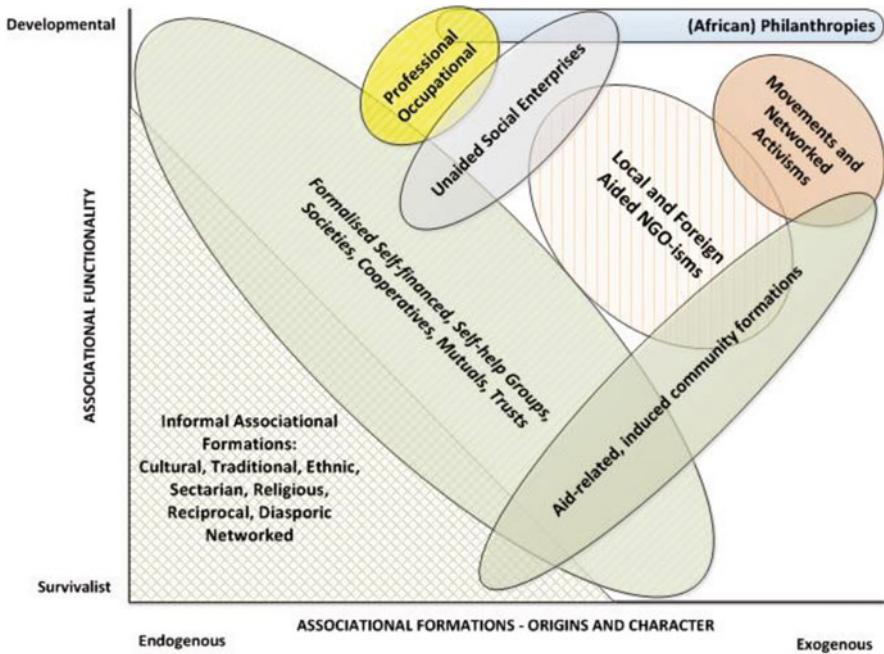
Fig. 23.2 Civil society in Africa—illustration of contemporary associational composition

and exploitation. Success at de-colonialisation beginning in the 1960s ushered in a third, post-colonial, stage of civic organising premised on citizens exercising their constitutional rights. This era is characterised by predatory leadership and single party states (Bavister-Gould 2011) as well as military dictatorships that denied rights and suppressed the polity. One feature of governance was to forcefully co-opt civic associations. A particular target were the associations with mass memberships that could be a source of political opposition. Civil society was seriously constrained. Around the 1970s, spearheaded by INGOs, aid to civil society in Africa entered and supported a fourth stage in civil society formation on the continent. The fourth and current era gained further momentum when, allied to the advent of multi-party politics and democratization noted earlier, official aid policy adopted civil society as a major development actor (Giffen and Judge 2010).

This long term perspective is important because *each subsequent stage overlays, and does not displace that which went before.* The recognition of traditional leaders in the Constitutions of many African countries testifies to this reality. The historical outcome is an ecological process leading to civil society as a complex layering of and connectivities between very old and very young associational forms illustrated in Fig. 23.2. With this in mind, analysis of the data presented in the previous sections, suggests an ecological trajectory leading to a configuration of civil society mediated by endogenous and exogenous features of associational life on the one hand and functionalities from survival to a developmentalism associated with a modernization

agenda on the other. An important point when considering the diagram is that—as elsewhere in the world—African people can and do maintain multiple memberships within civic associational life. This multiplicity creates thick relational webs and forms of bonding, bridging and linking social capital that are difficult to disentangle (Lin 2001) but form an essential feature of the socio-political make up of civil society in a country. Increasing and shaping this 'capital' has been a dedicated target of international assistance (Brown 1990, 1994). The preceding analysis suggests that foreign aid to and through civil society in Africa appears to have accelerated a particular type of civil society and class formation with political effects discussed later.

A significant proportion of the population in sub-Saharan Africa—some 51 % of the total of 763 million—live on less than $ 1.25 dollars a day.[12] This lack of material means maintains an informal, survivalist base to much of associational life on the continent. For example, a study in South Africa—a country with the highest penetration of a modern economy on the continent—enumerated some 98,920 associational forms of civil society, of which 53 % are less formalised (Swilling and Russell 2002).

In addition, often spawned by the religious right (Gifford 1988) a more recent civil society phenomenon is a significant expansion of self-initiated African independent churches that perform important supportive functions for members who are poor (Ellis and Ter Haar 2004; Rakodi 2012). Since independence, Kenya has been generally amenable to foreign aid financing civil society. Yet, a study (Kanyinga et al. 2007, p. 16) indicates that NGOs form just under 2 % of the 347,387 formalised nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in the country. Moreover (Ibid. fn 17):

> A former Chair of the National Council of NGOs in February voice the opinion that" the number of NPOs in the country is grossly underestimated. . . . In his view, for every registered NPO there are eight other unregistered NPOs.

If Fig. 23.1 were at scale for Kenya, the bottom left area would be eight times greater than the formalised ellipse and NGOs would be almost invisible to the eye. Valuable as they may be, the visible and vocal advent of aided civil society in the form of NGO-ism must not be allowed to distort the continent's associational reality. In terms of ecological processes, from the 'enduring' base of associational life have emerged more formally constructed member-serving CSOs. They themselves evolve into entities that promote and defend professional and occupational interests with organisational forms based on counterparts to be found elsewhere in the world.

Another ecological pathway is to form social enterprises that do not rely on aid or external finance for the generation of benefit to members or a wider client base. An increasing example of this phenomenon is to be seen in the hybridization of NGOs as a strategy to reduce their aid dependency (Fowler 2000a, b). Even so, the bulk of NGOs *of* and *on* Africa are predominantly aid-reliant and economically detached

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[12] http://www.worldhunger.org/articles/Learn/world%20hunger%20facts%202002.htm. Downloaded, 17 August 2012.

from the continent. Outreach to constituencies is typically via a connective pathway provided by induced community formations. This channel brings knowledge, information, technologies and modernizing organisational capabilities into the foundational civil society arena. Aided NGO-ism also induces movements and networked activisms, often engaging in policy advocacy and causes. Finally, there is a more recent appearance of philanthropic bodies modelled on western ideas but financed from a growing African elite and middle class.

This modelling is obviously a crude generalisation with imperfections and countervailing examples. But, to the extent that it is a reasonable translation of the geo-historical conditions and effects of international aid, it opens up a more endogenous view of what civil society is all about on the continent. In doing so, it invites a more nuanced approach to understanding the political effects of aid to civil society.

Political Dimensions of Aid to Civil Society in Africa—Intermediation and Disassociation

Poverty is a political outcome and aid is a political act (DFID 2010). And civil society is an essentially political concept to explain (the evolution of) relations between a state and its citizens. Previous analysis argues that aid to civil society in Africa has created an ecology inhabited by an organisational category intermediating between domestic and international constituencies and interests; a category which is 'semi-detached' or 'disassociated' (Civicus 2011) from the dense fabric of the associational life of citizens. One overt and one less visible pathway connects the two. The obvious is via aid-related CBOs with origins that may be indigenous or induced, but in a relational frame that is exogenous and 'modernizing' in its premises and effects. The less observable path is via leaders and staff of aided-CSOs whose private lives remain attached to the deeper fabric socio-organisational fabric that incorporates networks of mutual support in cash, kind and knowledge that are of survival and developmental value (Wilkinson-Maposa et al. 2005). Typically, exhibiting forms of patronage intimately tied to the nature of African states and the *Politics of the Belly* (Bayart 1993), this organic system of civil society operates en masse and in parallel to aided CSOs.

The exogenous bias in writing and analysis of civil society on the continent has elevated, equated and mis-represented NGO-ism with Africa as civil society. The visibility and articulation of aided civil society is indicative of the fact that, over decades, a supply-led organisational niche was created which has stimulated the emergence and reproduction of a class of African socio-economic and socio-political entrepreneurs (Fowler 2000a, b, 2003). Often the individuals concerned are urban-based, liberal-minded, middle class, with tertiary education and the capabilities to respond to the language, rules and resource opportunities established by a system of assistance that increasingly required local civil society to be participants, 'partners' and, with governments, co-owners of development. The concluding question for

discussion then becomes: what political affects has this process engendered? Answers obviously vary over time and place.

A starting point is to disabuse readers' minds of the idea that aid resources made available to NGOs within wider civil society have always been motivated by or applied for public benefit. A range of disparaging acronyms (Fowler 1997, p. 32) signals a public scepticism about 'intermediation' for whose benefit. For example, NGO is translated as Next Government Officer; PANGO as a political NGO established to protect a politician's backyard when aid to civil society was available; BRINGOs— or Briefcase NGOs—are entities established by individuals to 'follow the money' to harvest and capture aid resources (Albertyn and Tjønneland 2010). The list goes on. In addition, as Ndegwa (1996) argues, hostile political environments encouraged some 'activist' NGOs to wear two faces, one of a soft benevolent charity, the other with a harder emancipatory entity driven by human rights and social justice. In short, in Africa, aided civil society is not necessarily what it seems. For good or ill, over time, this uncertainty has influenced political processes on the continent.

In the immediate post-colonial era of state-centred nation building and single party states, aided civil society could provide a refuge or holding ground for the political opposition. In many countries, the advent of a multi-party-ism politics in Africa's second liberation (Bboya and Hyden 1987) saw the migration of NGO leaders into new political parties, fully aware that NGO-ism could be potentially duplicitous. The generally inhospitable environments being increasingly encountered by aided civil society could, in part, stem from the location of ex-NGO people in ruling regimes. It can also arise from reactions against the democratizing role that aided civil society is intended to play, particularly in relation to policy advocacy and enhancing the capacity for citizen voice to gain greater regime accountability (Clark 1991; Court 2006; Foresti and Sharma 2007; Fowler 1993; Tembo 2012; World Bank 1999; World Vision 1997) .

This chapter has already argued for a modest, proportional view of aided civil society when set against the whole. This position is augmented by recent research which suggests that the impact of civil society on governance is more likely to emanate from rooted civil society than from foreign funded intermediaries (Gaventa and Barrett 2010). There is also reason to doubt the extent to which direct aid to civil society has anticipated wider effects than the projects and programme being financed (Abuom et al. 2012).

Nevertheless, when the moment is right, the limited scale of aided civil society does not necessarily prevent significant effects. Aided civil society and religious organisations can be instrumental in mediating conflicts behind the scenes, for example in the political settlement ending civil war in Sudan in the early 1970s (Miller 1972). In the political space opened up during Africa's second liberation, through civic education, aided civil society introduced a polity to 'ideological' criteria of representation beyond the primacy of ethnicity that may have inter-generational effects. Kenya provides a direct political example where, through collaborative effort of aided civil society—The Ufungumano Initiative—the regime of president Daniel Arap Moi was unable to hijack and control a constitutional reform process that culminated in a new post-colonial disposition (Mati 2012).

However, aid-civil society is not immune from reproducing the factionalism and patronage relations found within civil society as a whole. For example, sensitivity to ethnic balance is a common consideration of INGOs operating on the continent. In sum, it is not possible to reach a sound calculus of what aid to civil society has brought about politically, in part because it not possible to adjudicate the counter-factual case of what African politics would have looked like if aided NGO-ism had pursued a stronger counter-hegemonic agenda along Gramscian or similar lines (e.g. Shivji 2011; Wright 2012). What can be said is that the lens of aid to civil society exposes the fact that reaching a balanced judgment will call for a more fundamental appreciation of an African civil society rather than of a civil society with African characteristics.

An overall conclusion is that the beauty, or otherwise, of aid to civil society remains in the eye of the beholder.

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Chapter 24
Volunteering, Civic Service and Civil Society in Africa

Helene Perold and Lauren Graham

A map of the largest African cities tells a remarkable story about a continent of contrasts. Like beads, cities line the northern coastline of Egypt, Libya, Algeria and Morocco, skip across the Sahara desert and form a necklace around the west coast of Senegal, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon. In the east they feature in the Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya and Uganda, and then south through Tanzania, Uganda and DRC to Zambia, Zimbabwe, Madagascar and South Africa.

By contrast, the cities are located on the periphery of vast, sparsely populated areas—deserts, forests, lakes, mountains and plains that constitute the northern, central and south-eastern regions of the continent.

Some 60 years have passed since the wave of post-colonial independence and liberation swept across the continent, and in this relatively short space of time massive social, economic and political changes have occurred across the 54 countries that make up the contemporary African continent. The most visible of these have been the drive for democracy, efforts to integrate various regions, the establishment of continent-wide structures such as the African Union (AU) and the African Development Bank (ADB) and, most recently, significant prospects for economic growth. Forecasts show that urbanisation in all regions is set to increase (UN-Habitat 2010), signalling that huge social and economic changes are in the offing. Foreign direct investment inflows have sky-rocketed since the 1990s, and although Africa was not immune to the fall-out from the 2008 global recession, the impact on African economies has been less than elsewhere in the world.

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At the same time, African countries contend with under-development, high levels of poverty (in sub-Saharan Africa just under half of people live below the poverty line of $ 1.25/day; World Bank 2013), skewed global relationships between north and south, and a focus on the extraction of natural resources largely for export purposes.

What does this diverse, complex, evolving and multi-layered context hold for volunteering, civic service and the growth of civil society?

Volunteering and civic service play an integral role in many aspects of African life. For instance, volunteerism and acts of service can be seen to contribute to service delivery, particularly in the area of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) related care, youth development, women's empowerment, and holding governments accountable. But beyond this, the most pervasive form of volunteering and service occurs in the day to day lives of people who provide mutual aid and care in their communities (Patel et al. 2007). This form of voluntary service tends to be overlooked and is most certainly under-valued by decision-makers in government.

In this chapter we argue that volunteering is an integral part of traditional life in the African context, that it contributes to the resilience of communities, and that it plays a significant role in the civil society sphere by enhancing opportunities for citizen participation. However, it also often goes unrecognised and unsupported, and if not properly managed, can lead to poor communities shouldering an even greater burden. As African countries experience the pressures and promises of economic globalisation, and as demographics change and communities become more modernised, it is necessary to consider how volunteering is changing and how both the opportunities and the challenges affect civic participation and citizen action on the continent.

Of course, capturing the extent and diverse nature of volunteering across a continent that is shaped by multiple ethnicities, languages and religions in one chapter, is an impossible task. From the outset, we must therefore note that this chapter provides broad brushstrokes of the state of volunteering in Africa, and that it can never hope to give enough credit to the multiple and diverse ways in which volunteering contributes to civic life.

Conceptualising and Contextualising Volunteering in Africa

As a starting point, it is worth considering how volunteering is understood in Africa and how 'indigenous' understandings of volunteering compare with international notions of volunteerism. Internationally, most definitions of volunteering comprise three fundamental principles (UNV 2006, 2011):

- That the activity is undertaken out of free will, that is, that the person is not forced or legally obligated to engage in the activity. While social obligations may play a role, the person should nevertheless be free to engage in the activity.

- That the activity is not undertaken primarily for financial reward, although some financial compensation might be involved since volunteering does often involve costs to the individual volunteer.
- That the activity is undertaken for the common good.

This definition also captures notions of volunteerism put forward by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Johns Hopkins University's study on global volunteering and civil society. They note that volunteerism is 'unpaid non-compulsory work; that is, the time individuals give without pay to activities performed either through an organisation or directly for others outside their own household' (Salamon et al. 2011).

Volunteering takes a range of forms in different contexts:

- At one end of the spectrum are occasional interactions between people helping each other in times of need, as was the case in Zimbabwe in 2005, when 700,000 women, men and children lost their homes in the Zimbabwean government's Murambatsvina Operation[1]. Almost overnight people in neighbouring communities hosted up to three families in their homes rather than one.
- More regular forms of community-based support or larger programmes are run by volunteer-involving organisations of different types. These may provide care to the elderly or people living with HIV/AIDS in small communities, may be large international programmes offering relief in times of disaster, or could be volunteers supporting a haven that serves children living and working on the streets, child-headed households and abandoned babies and toddlers.
- The term 'civic service' represents a more formalised and engaged form of voluntary action that can be defined as 'an organised period of substantial engagement and contribution to the local, national, or world community, recognised and valued by society, with minimal monetary compensation to the participant' (Sherraden **?** , p. 2). National youth service programmes are one example of this category.

But how do such definitions fare in the African context? Firstly, we need to consider who volunteers. Very often, these definitions, while broad enough to capture a range of volunteer activities, bring to mind notions of employed or skilled individuals giving their time to provide services, often to people who are poorer than themselves. Volunteerism thus tends to be viewed as involving a sacrifice of time and/or money on the part of the volunteer or server. Modern African economies have seen a rising number of employed people who volunteer and provide scarce skills to the civil society sector (Eisner et al. 2009). However, this trend remains limited and undocumented (VOSESA 2011). Available research (Patel et al. 2007) shows that the largest contribution of voluntary service is not made by those skilled or educated people volunteering for those who are worse off than themselves, rather, volunteerism

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[1] Operation Murambatsvina (which in English means Operation Drive Out Trash, also officially known as Operation Restore Order or the Clean Up Operation) was a large scale campaign launched by the Zimbabwe government in 2005 to forcibly clear slum areas across the country. United Nations estimates indicate that at least 2.4 million people were affected. http://practicalaction.org/blog/news/shelter-me-and-ill-shelter-you-too/.

in the African context most often involves an engagement between volunteers and beneficiaries who are from the same class and very often the same community, i.e. poor people volunteer among fellow members of their communities (Patel 2007).

Secondly, some have questioned whether in the African context the notion of free will or non-compulsory activity is relevant, since people living in poor and under-resourced communities often rely on volunteering for reciprocal giving or to derive some form of income in the form of stipends (Russell and Wilkinson-Maposa 2011). In some cases, volunteering may even be expected or commanded by elders in communities to fulfil social obligations of service.

Further, the commonly used definitions discussed above tend to juxtapose volunteering and social activism. However, as is argued in a joint paper by IAVE, UNV, and CIVICUS (2008), both social activism and volunteering can foster human participation in the achievement of development outcomes and constitute different (but related) forms of civic participation. The study found that social activists rely on volunteers to undertake campaigns and social mobilisation programmes, while volunteers often need the leadership of social activists if they are to achieve sustained social or economic impacts, particularly in poor communities.

Lastly, while volunteer action inevitably carries an element of sacrifice and cost for the volunteer, in the African context individuals in poor communities often have to choose between participating in volunteer programmes and using their meagre resources to put food on the table. This makes the provision of stipends a critical factor in enabling the poor to engage in long-term and more structured voluntary service. While such allowances are intended to cover the direct and indirect costs of volunteering, which are irregular expenses for servers, they may be one of the rare sources of income for volunteers in poor communities. When volunteers remain engaged in service programmes of longer duration and draw a regular stipend during this time, the boundaries between employment and volunteering become blurred. In the African context, such realities do not detract from the intention of volunteering as a form of mutual support, solidarity and reciprocity, but rather highlight the constraints in which more formalised volunteerism functions, particularly in programmes run by volunteer-involving organisations.

Volunteerism in Africa thus takes many forms and involves a diverse range of people. It includes employee volunteering (albeit still limited), international volunteers, regional volunteers, youth volunteers, faith-based volunteering and volunteering through highly structured service programmes. But the most prevalent form of voluntary service undoubtedly occurs in the largely undocumented, localised arrangements between people within communities—mutual aid and self-help activities, often revolving around community obligations, sharing of resources, and distribution of care activities. These contributions are generally not facilitated through structured programmes and do not involve training, support or allowances. By locating volunteering in contexts of unemployment and poverty in African countries, we are able to recognise these forms of volunteerism that formal definitions often overlook. International discourse terms these forms of volunteering as 'informal' and defines them as 'spontaneous or sporadic help by individuals or groups . . . informal types so often embedded in cultures and traditions.' (UNV 2011, pp. 17, 20) Further

research is needed to gain more insight into these assertions, but on the basis of current work being conducted in southern Africa (Russell 2012) it can be argued that these indigenous arrangements of volunteer engagement are far from ad hoc. Instead they frequently constitute well-defined forms of social engagement that underpin the socially cohesive nature of communities, even when community members may be dispersed across a geographic area by virtue of migrant labour, activities such as cross-border trading, or in the case of refugees. While international discourse recognises the difficulty of measuring these forms of volunteering (UNV 2011), we would argue that this is because the terms in which such voluntary community-based engagement in the African context are defined are inadequate. The risk is that the term 'informal activities' contributes to undervaluing community-based volunteering in developing countries.

Little is known about the extent of such volunteering, but recent research in Tanzania and Mozambique (Perold et al. 2011) demonstrates that in these twenty-first century African countries, the need for mutual support in rural areas, for example, is translating into the growth of organisations which, while poor, demonstrate resilience and the ability to contribute to community-centred sustainable development. The study identified three categories of local volunteers:

- 'Founders'—local volunteers who founded organizations/institutions and run them on a voluntary basis (founder of a kindergarten; sisters from a religious order who start a programme for marginalised young women, but receive little support from the church).
- 'Stakeholders'—local volunteers who have a stake in the organization or institution (such as the parents of children at a school or the leaders of membership groups in a micro-finance organization).
- 'Short-term volunteers'—local volunteers who serve in the organization for limited periods of time (1–3 months) to deliver services in rural areas, particularly to people living with HIV and AIDS.

The table below demonstrates that when the definition of volunteering is expanded to include localised and less formal forms of volunteering, the percentage of the population considered to be volunteering increases dramatically (Table 24.1).

As noted above, volunteerism has strong roots in the African context. Patel (2007) argues that conceptions of volunteering have their beginnings in early African associational life. They are expressed today in the words used by different cultures to describe the act of service or volunteering—words such as *Kujitolea* which is a Kiswahili word for service, meaning the giving of oneself for the benefit of others; *Ubuntu*, which means finding humanity in connections with others, and embodies an underlying commitment to service of others; and *boithaopo*, a Setswana word used to describe the act of helping other people (Rankopo et al. 2007). Such words capture the notions of collective responsibility, solidarity and reciprocity that were integral to meeting human and social needs in pre-colonial societies (Patel and Wilson 2004), and which often characterise aspects of community life today.

Table 24.1 Extent of volunteering in various African countries, demonstrating how inclusion of informal forms of volunteering in the definition of volunteering increases the percentage of population volunteering. (Adapted from Graham et al. 2013)

Country	% of population who volunteer	Notes	Source of information
Egypt	6.4	Volunteering through formal programmes	CIVICUS CSI (2011)
Egypt	1	Excludes volunteering through religious organizations and informal volunteering	Kandil et al. (2004)
Ghana	56.5	Indicates those who volunteer at least once a year; includes informal volunteering	CIVICUS CSI (2011)
Guinea	13.8	Volunteering through formal programmes	CIVICUS CSI (2011)
Kenya	6	Volunteering through formal programmes	Kanyinga et al. (2004)
Liberia	70.4	Includes informal volunteering	CIVICUS CSI (2011)
Morocco	4	Excludes volunteering through religious organizations and informal volunteering	Saidi et al. (2004)
Nigeria	83	Includes informal volunteering	CIVICUS CSI (2011)
Rwanda	21.4	Volunteering through formal programmes	CIVICUS CSI (2011)
Senegal	81.2	15.7 % of these volunteer in formal programmes	CIVICUS CSI (2011)
South Africa	9	Volunteering through formal programmes	Swilling et al. (2004)
Tanzania	11	Volunteering through formal programmes	Kiondo et al. (2004)
Uganda	81	Includes informal volunteering	CIVICUS CSI (2011)
Uganda	23	Volunteering through formal programmes	Nyangabyaki et al. (2004)

However, the contribution of volunteering should not only be viewed from the perspective of the role it plays in meeting human and social needs within communities. A social development perspective on volunteering (Patel 2003) allows us to acknowledge the wider potential of volunteering to meet developmental objectives, including the goal of strengthening democracy in African society. A social development approach is rooted in a pluralist understanding of society (Baldock et al. 2007) which, while recognising the conflicts and power imbalances between state, the private sector and civil society, nevertheless emphasises the mutuality of efforts between these three sectors of society and recognises the potential of collaboration.

A social development approach emphasises the interconnections between meeting human economic and social needs. This conception of development therefore envisages a role for all societal actors—the private sector in creating and providing jobs, the state in providing infrastructure and services, and civil society in holding the state accountable and providing additional services (Patel 2003, 2005). The latter involves citizen participation and the social development approach emphasises the agency and capabilities (Nussbaum 2001; Sen 1999) of individuals and communities to meet their own needs, in collaboration with state provision and access to the economy. 'Social development is therefore essentially a pluralist approach, focusing on strong government action and partnership between individuals, groups, communities, civil society and the private sector' (Patel 2003, p. 96). In this conception, volunteerism plays an integral role, not just in the meeting of social needs, but in creating opportunities for the active participation of individuals in contributing to developmental outcomes.

Such participation was evidenced in the role that volunteers played in the independence movements of the 1950s and 1960s in African countries, which provided opportunities for popular participation in opposition movements. In South Africa, civic activism coupled with growing social and community involvement were particular features of the anti-apartheid struggle. In this way, volunteerism played a role in facilitating political engagement, democratic values and bonds of solidarity (Patel 2007). More contemporary examples of volunteer civic action abound in response to citizen concern about government accountability (Nigeria[2] and Ghana[3]), the need to advocate for development in slum communities (Kenya[4]), opposition to state efforts to curtail freedom of expression (South Africa[5]), and fostering civic engagement in presidential elections and other campaigns (Senegal[6]) (VOSESA 2012a, b).

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[2] Enough is Enough (EiE) Nigeria, is a non-profit organisation formed in 2010 by a cross-section of individuals (across ethnic groups and cultures) and primarily youth organisations. This resulted from acute dissatisfaction with the flawed electoral process, continuing bad governance and corruption. EiE targets Nigerians between 18 and 35 years of age.

[3] *IMAIMANI-Ghana* was founded in 2005, as an African non-profit, non-governmental organisation that fosters public awareness of important policy issues concerning business, government and civil society. It stimulates public discussion on the promotion of economic prosperity rights, the rule of law, open and unconditional trade, free speech and the decentralisation of power and resources.

[4] Map Mathare in Kenya was founded in 2010, as a component of the established Map Kibera initiative. The initiative trains the young people of Mathare to use digital tools to highlight public interest matters within their community (such as insecurity and crime, poverty, prostitution, land-grabbing, etc.), to gather the necessary information and intelligence, and to mobilise and rally the community to action so as to ensure that government and political leaders remedy the unacceptable circumstances that prevail in this slum community.

[5] The Right2Know (R2K) Campaign in South Africa is a coalition of 400 civil society organisations and activists, which was founded in 2010 to oppose the Protection of State Information Bill (also known as the Secrecy Bill). The main aim of the campaign is to put access to information on the national agenda.

[6] *Sunucause* ('our cause' in Wolof, Senegal's national language) is an association created by the founders of the Senegalese Blogger Network Kebetu, a social network for Senegalese similar to Twitter. Initiated to cover the Senegalese presidential elections of 2012 via social networks, the initiative subsequently widened its efforts from political to social interests to mobilise people to take action on 'social causes' such as supporting acute health needs or flood victims.

The Shape and Changing Nature of Volunteering in Africa

Volunteerism has continued to play a significant role in community life through the process of Africa's colonialism and periods of independence. In pre-colonial society, voluntary actions were the key means of meeting social and human needs and enhanced social solidarity (Patel and Wilson 2004). Later, these mechanisms of support were undermined by the systems of colonialism, which sought to divide populations along ethnic lines, and which often brokeup families and communities through conflict, forced removals and migrant labour systems. While such bonds of solidarity, upon which service provision was premised, were undermined, welfare service provision was often not forthcoming under colonial states. Such states tended to only provide for the needs of settler populations, with minimal investments in health and education for the majority of the population. In these circumstances, despite earlier roots being undermined, mutual aid and support remained the primary system by which people were able to meet needs (Patel 2007). In addition, missionary involvement in Africa, which was often instrumental in filling the gaps of meeting human need where the state did not, also introduced new motivations for volunteering along philanthropic and religious lines, which continue to exist today in the form of volunteering through Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs). In fact, volunteering through religious organisations accounts for a very high percentage of volunteer activity today (CIVICUS 2011). In the latter part of the colonial era, based on social unrest, public welfare services provision was expanded to the wider population (Midgley 1995). However, such systems were often piecemeal and relied on models developed in Europe and Britain, which were not necessarily valid for adequate service provision in Africa (Patel and Wilson 2004). Here too, voluntary activities in the form of mutual aid and support became the fall-back for many communities.

Today, many independent African governments have attempted to expand services to their populations in a more equitable manner. But the challenges of unemployment and poverty, coupled with states that are often under-resourced and which lack capacity, often means that service provision does not reach the majority of the population. This leads to a situation in which communities again rely on the voluntary efforts of community members to meet vital needs. While this investment on the part of community members is admirable, it must also be noted that it often occurs in a context where the state does not or is not able to provide the required social services and social protection mechanisms (Everatt et al. 2005). In such cases, voluntarism must also be recognised as increasing the burden of care on communities already struggling (Patel and Mupedziswa 2007), particularly women within communities who often shoulder the responsibilities of care for extended family members and community members (Patel 2009; Voluntary Service Overseas Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (VSO-RAISA) 2011). These voluntary activities are central to the ability of communities to meet their needs, but they are precisely the activities that go most unrecognised and are least valued. In addition, these activities carry direct and indirect costs to the server, costs which are almost never accounted for in development indicators such as GDP, and which, when occurring through informal networks, are almost never reimbursed (CIVICUS 2011; Everatt et al. 2005; Patel et al. 2012). Thus, voluntarism has continued to play a central role in Africa through colonial and post-colonial arrangements.

Aside from the volunteer action and activism that underpinned many of the independence movements, volunteering in Africa has largely been located in field of service provision–that is in assisting people to meet their human and social needs (Patel 2003). This may be attributed in part to the nature of relationships between governments and civil society. African states have often had contradictory relationships with civil society organisations. In their service provision role, civil society organisations are accepted and even embraced as key mechanisms for providing services that governments are often unable to provide. However, where civil society organisations have been politically orientated—playing a watchdog or advocacy role—they are viewed by the state with suspicion and in some cases outright hostility (Banks 2012; Moyo in press). This may be one reason why volunteering in politically motivated organisations has declined in relation to those activities taking place in organisations committed to service delivery (CIVICUS 2011).

What we see therefore is that volunteering plays a major role in meeting human and community needs in Africa, particularly in contexts where the state is slow to respond or unable to deliver the services required. Volunteerism thus flourishes as a survival and risk management mechanism. While these activities should be celebrated, they should not be seen as a substitute for the responsibilities of the state. As Obadare (2012) argues, there is danger in transferring responsibility for service provision from the state to individual volunteers as this places additional pressure on an already struggling civil society. The social development perspective sees volunteering as being an activity that enhances citizen participation in the democratic life of society. As Obadare (2011) notes:

> volunteering is a civic act, one that is ideally, driven by a volunteer's sense of "belonging" within a particular civic community … It is at best a dialogic and socially embedded phenomenon in which the more a particular state is deemed to be socially responsible, the more individuals appreciate and value their "citizenship". Volunteering is therefore best "performed" and usually more effective when the state is seen to pay its dues to society. … (Obadare 2011)

Volunteering thus functions to meet survivalist needs, but also characterizes resistance movements that manifest in the face of state failure to provide services to citizens. The so-called 'service delivery protests' in South Africa are a case in point where under-served communities have taken to the streets to express their opposition to the inadequacy of service provision (for water, housing, refuse removal, etc) in their communities by local authorities. What then does the twenty-first century hold for volunteers in modernising African societies?

Volunteering in a Globalised World

In the past decade, Africa has witnessed enormous shifts. Once considered the pariah continent due to high levels of conflict, numerous kleptocracies, and large burdens of debt, Africa is now emerging as a continent of growth and promise. For reasons including rising commodity prices, increasing international trade particularly with

the East, and a rise in domestic demand, many countries in Africa have seen dramatic economic growth as measured by GNP. According to *The Economist* magazine (2011), many African economies have shown growth rates that outstrip most other regions, with 'over a quarter (28 %) of countries in the sub-Saharan African region achieving growth rates above 6 %, and several countries rivalling growth rates in fast-growing developing countries such as China, India and Brazil. Overall, 60 % of countries in the sub-Saharan region achieved growth rates of above 4 % [. . .], and in only about 5 % of economies were growth rates below 2 %' (World Bank 2011). Despite some slow-down since the global economic crisis of the past 2 years, Africa still stands as a continent of economic prosperity.

In addition to this economic growth, massive social and political changes have occurred across the 54 countries that make up the contemporary African continent—all in a relatively short period of time.[7] However, these developments have not necessarily translated into effective change for those living in these growing economies. Most African countries still find themselves ranked at the bottom end of human development measures such as the Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP 2009), and most are unlikely to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015. The nature of economic growth in Africa is largely export-led and relies on commodity extraction rather than manufacturing. As a result, economic growth in Africa has largely been jobless or very low job growth (Mbeki 2009; UNECA 2010), and informal or insecure forms of work (Chen 2012; Webster et al. 2011). Rising commodity prices, whilst positive for exports, also place pressure on households that struggle with increasing household expenses such as food and fuel. In addition, a number of African countries have very high levels of inequality, with South Africa holding the unenviable status of having the highest income inequality levels amongst those countries that measure this indicator[8]. In addition, sub-Saharan Africa has been faced with pandemic levels of HIV that put enormous pressure on the working-age population, on health systems, and on families caring for the sick. What we have seen therefore is high levels of social exclusion for the large majority of the population, alongside economic growth and increasing wealth for a few resulting in high levels of inequality and polarisation (Castells 1998).

Alongside these changes that are driven largely by the global market, Africa has also witnessed rapid urbanisation and an increasingly youthful population. Currently about one third of the sub-Saharan African population lives in cities and projections suggest that the urban population will double by 2020 (due to continuing migration and new births in the cities), ensuring that the urban population will be more than twice that of the rural population (Kessides 2005). Forecasts show that urbanisation

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[7] A mere 60 years have passed since the wave of post-colonial independence and liberation swept across the continent, starting with Libya (a former Italian colony) in 1951 and with Ghana becoming the first black African Sub-Saharan country to gain independence in 1957. African countries that attained their independence from colonial powers prior to this are Liberia (1847), Egypt (1922) with South Africa formally gaining independence in 1931, but only being returned to majority rule in 1994.

[8] Other African countries with relatively high income inequality measures include Namibia, Sierra Leone, Lesotho, the Seychelles and Botswana.

in all regions of Africa is set to increase from current levels of 40–60 % by 2050 (UN-Habitat 2010). Such projections are in line with industrial and urban shifts experienced in other regions of the world. Nevertheless, it does place a great deal of pressure on cities with large tracts of the urban poor dwelling in slum or informal areas that characterise these growing cities and signal challenges for development planners, housing, transport, infrastructure and service delivery. In addition, Africa has the fastest growing youth population (15–24 year olds) (PRB 2011), with 62 % of the African population being under 25 years old. Whilst this presents countries with significant opportunities of harnessing the potential of the demographic dividend provided investments in youth are made (Ashford 2007), it also presents a great challenge if support is not provided to this section of the population (IRIN 2007; World Bank 2007).

Voluntary service faces both opportunities and constraints arising out of the current and future socio-economic conditions in African countries. On the one hand, given the economic trajectory that is being followed by most African states, we are likely to see small numbers of people being able to access wealth and employment. These people, if recruited into volunteer involving organisations, have the potential to contribute much needed capacity and skills in civil society organisations that very often struggle with these assets. Opportunities to do so potentially lie in volunteer involving organisations' engagement with the increasing penetration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in African society. Engaging employed people in voluntary activities via social network recruitment and e-volunteering emerge as interesting possibilities for volunteer involving organisations to consider.

ICT and social media in particular have huge appeal among the large youth population, many of whom are increasingly connected. Given large numbers of unemployed youth, volunteering and service programmes emerge as important mechanisms to facilitate engaging young people in productive activities whilst contributing to their development. A number of the contemporary mobilisation examples cited earlier have youth skills development as an objective. This was certainly a consideration when national youth service programmes were developed in countries such as Nigeria and Ghana (Obadare 2007). According to Johnson et al. (2007) youth service can play a role in the social and economic development of the servers and the communities in which they serve, provided programmes are designed in such a way as to intentionally build the skills and work readiness of young servers (Pritzker and McBride 2006). The largest of these programmes are run by governments, sometimes with the involvement of the private sector and civil society organisations. Investments in such programmes therefore emerge as potential opportunities to use volunteering as a mechanism for youth development and enhanced employability. The risk is that in some cases the national youth service programme can be co-opted for narrow political ends and young people used to intimidate citizens ahead of and during elections, as was the case in Zimbabwe (VOSESA 2010).

At the same time, African states also face the rising social exclusion and polarisation that Castells (1998) predicted on a global level, with most people continuing to rely on one another for support, assistance and survival, shifting the burden of economic gain for the few on to the backs of those who do not benefit from such growth.

Are we likely then to see that volunteering remains largely focused around providing for human development needs with little potential for wider social engagement and civic participation? This will rely largely on how states and organisations choose to engage with the strong resource base of informal volunteers located in communities. Will they allow volunteering to continue unrecognised and unsupported, or will they harness its potential and invest in programmes that empower volunteers so that voluntary activities have benefits for personal development, community development and social cohesion? In addition, how can volunteer programmes, including national youth service programmes, become more deliberate in their efforts to prepare young people for employment and sustainable livelihoods?

A further potential challenge lies in a probable shift in values associated with economic growth. A key feature of globalisation or late modernity according to Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) and Giddens (1991) is individualisation or self-reflexivity. This refers to a shift away from behaviour that is shaped by belonging to a collective and the duties one has to such a collective, towards behaviour that is self-determined and based primarily on self-interest. This shift has implications for volunteer motivation as people tend to engage in voluntary activities less out of a moral duty to the collective good and more because of what it might say about or contribute to their own sense of self (Anheier and Salamon 1999; Dekker and Halman 2003; Hacket and Mutz 2002; Hustinx and Lammertyn 2003; Yeung 2004). However, research about such shifts largely occurs in developed countries and we know little about how the motivations of volunteers in Africa are shifting. Given strong associational ties, it may be that these shifts are not as marked in the African context. Thus, while there is increased emphasis on individual motivation, this is likely to coexist with more traditional and collective motivations (Heelas 1996). This is perhaps even more so in African communities and societies where mass consumerism and the expansion of neoliberal capitalism has manifested more recently and where faith-based association and cultural or community identity remains strong (Angell in press).

More research in this area is required, but some indications were found in a study on youth volunteering perceptions and motivation, conducted by VOSESA in 2012 for the South African National Youth Development Agency (NYDA 2012). Young people aged 14–35 surveyed in six marginalised communities (urban, peri-urban and rural) had a positive view of volunteering. They felt that impoverished individuals are twice as likely to volunteer as wealthier individuals, that young people are far more likely to volunteer than older people, that persons considered 'very modern' are reportedly far more likely to volunteer than persons described as 'very traditional' and that women are more likely to volunteer than men. Interestingly, respondents ascribed responsibility for caring for vulnerable groups in South African society more or less equally to civil society and the state. The high levels of responsibility for communities to take care of vulnerable groups indicate considerable levels of social capital and the majority of respondents consider the practice of *Ubuntu* as an example of volunteering. At the same time respondents raised concerns about the potential for volunteering to create dependency and conflict within communities.

Manifestations of Regional Volunteering

Political and economic integration has been a key focus for post-colonial Africa. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was established in 1963, followed by the AU in 2002. Together with the African Economic Community and the creation of institutions such as the African Development Bank (ADB), these developments marked some of the key efforts to create pan-African unity.[9] Regional organisations include the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Arab Maghreb Union and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

In a similar vein, regional volunteering and civic service programmes have been launched to foster regional identity, build bridges across borders, and promote integration, peace and social cohesion, particularly among young people. In 2010 the African Union Youth Service Corps was launched (UNV 2011) and in East Africa the newly established East African Peace Service Corps focuses on cross-border youth service in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia and Sudan (Caprara et al. 2012). A West African regional volunteer programme was launched in March 2010 by the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) with support from United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the European Commission and the ADB (UNV 2012). Currently involving three pilot countries in the region, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the initiative intends to deploy young citizens from all fifteen ECOWAS member states as volunteers primarily to strengthen government institutions in areas such as education, health and support to non-governmental organisations.

These volunteer and service programmes introduce a social dimension into conceptions of a regional political identity that have thus far been largely the preserve of heads of state and are less shared among the citizens of states that comprise the regional blocks (Kornegay 2006). While still evolving, the regional initiatives build on other efforts to foster cross-border volunteering, particularly among youth, through south–south volunteer exchange. Notable in this regard are the volunteer exchange programmes between UVIKIUTA in Tanzania and Kijabe Environment Volunteers (KENVO) in Kenya (supported by Canada World Youth), and SayXchange in southern Africa (supported by the Southern Africa Trust), which exchanges young volunteers between Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia (Caprara et al. 2012; Mati and Perold 2012).

South–south regional volunteer programmes provide an important dimension to international volunteering, which is well-established in the African context but is dominated by northern volunteers working in African countries. Unlike the north–south programmes that are characterised by global power relations (Perold et al. 2013), the African regional exchange programmes have been shown to produce among servers and host families an appreciation of reciprocity, mutual benefit, and a sense of common humanity (Mati and Perold 2012).[10]

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[9] http://www.sahistory.org.za/topic/organisation-african-unity-oau.

[10] Organisations that have promoted reciprocal volunteer programmes in the international domain include FK Norway, VSO and Progessio (UNV 2011; Mati and Perold 2012).

Strengthening Volunteering in the African Context

More research is required to document and understand the scope and nature of community-based volunteering in African countries. However it is evident that volunteering and civic service take many forms and that diverse programmes and practices are being initiated to respond to socio-economic imperatives such as youth marginalisation and the need for regional integration, as well as the imperatives of democracy which require people's participation in development.

Based on the current information available, however, it is clear that a number of policy actions are required to increase and improve the scale of volunteer involvement and civic engagement in African countries, not only among youth, but through an inter-generational approach (Caprara et al. 2012). In the context of the post-2015 MDG agenda, it will be important to recognise the role of voluntary service in fostering community-centred sustainable development and to include resourcing strategies for such programmes in national development plans. Advancing the implementation of UN General Assembly volunteering resolutions and advocating for national and regional policies incorporating volunteering in development and peace would constitute major steps towards this goal. In this regard, the UNV has played a major role in the African context to promote more formalised forms of volunteering programmes. For example, in Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Mali and Togo, legislation on volunteerism has been adopted. In the Gambia, Niger and Senegal, draft laws on volunteerism exist and are at various stages of being adopted. Volunteer policy frameworks exist in Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Mauritania and Benin, and Nigeria has a draft policy on volunteerism in place.

Closely associated is the need to recognise and foreground transnational and regional voluntary service programmes as a critical contribution to resolving socio-economic challenges accompanying regional integration projects across the continent. Private sector involvement is particularly important if volunteering and civic service programmes are to become more effective in contributing to youth employability and the development of sustainable livelihoods.

Other policy imperatives include reducing the burden of care on women volunteers, particularly in the health sector (VSO-RAISA 2011) and the need to incorporate community service and service-learning at all levels of the education system (primary, secondary and tertiary) (Caprara et al. 2012).

In the international volunteering sphere, international agencies and NGOs need to shift from the 'volunteer sending' model to more reciprocal modes of international volunteering that support the development of local volunteering within African countries and contribute to the strategic development of civil society organisations in poor communities. Increasing south–south programmes that are clearly designed for reciprocity and mutual learning could foster social cohesion and contribute to the formation of regional identity and transnational collaboration. (Caprara et al. 2012).

Volunteers offer to communities an immense resource that has the potential not only to assist individuals to meet basic needs, but also to hold governments to account and enhance community resilience. However, without efforts on the part of the state,

civil society organisations and the private sector to support volunteers and promote volunteering, this resource runs the risk of being exploited, reducing its potential for supporting individual, community, national and regional development. Investments in recognising, valuing, supporting and promoting volunteerism throughout the continent can underpin the drive for civic participation and democracy.

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Chapter 25
Philanthropic Foundations and Civil Society in Sub-Saharan Africa

Christiana Lariba Atibil

Introduction

Whereas formal philanthropic institutions such as foundations may be a new phenomenon in sub-Saharan Africa, giving to those in need and to one's community is not. Communities throughout the continent have developed a variety of mechanisms for self-help and mutual assistance, through which individuals in need are assisted and resources pooled for personal development and for the general advancement of the community (Copeland-Carson 2005). The specifics obviously vary from culture to culture, but they all involve the giving of time, skills, money, and material goods for mutual and shared benefit. Examples of institutions and mechanisms that serve philanthropic purposes in sub-Saharan Africa include the extended family, labor pools, revolving community funds, rotating savings and credit schemes, the "harambee" movement in Kenya, stokvels in Southern Africa, and burial societies, to name a few.

Alongside the informal giving indigenous to African societies, Africans have also been the beneficiaries of foreign philanthropy. During the colonial era, missionaries built schools and hospitals in the colonies. Since the 1960s, philanthropic institutions, mostly foundations from the USA such as the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford, Rockefeller, and Kellogg Foundations, have been involved in the promotion of education, agricultural development, poverty alleviation, and democratization. With the advance of democratization in many African countries and the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa in the 1990s, a number of them not only increased their support for civil society organizations (CSOs) and democratic institutions on the continent, they also began to invest in the establishment of local philanthropic institutions, mostly community foundations, to foster local resource mobilization and to ensure sustainable local support for CSOs.

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Despite the involvement of international private foundations and local philanthropic institutions in financing CSOs, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the democratization process on the continent, they have attracted very little attention from scholars of African development and civil society. Much has been written about NGOs and CSOs, but relatively scanty attention has been paid to the role of the private philanthropic institutions that, alongside multilateral and bilateral donors, have provided the funding for many NGOs and CSOs in sub-Saharan Africa. Nor has there been much research into traditional African giving and its relevance (or lack thereof) to community development and civil society.

This chapter draws attention to foreign and local philanthropic institutions and their efforts in promoting civil society and democratic governance in sub-Saharan Africa. I define "philanthropy" as practiced in an African context, and outline the conceptual relationship between "philanthropy" and "civil society." I then discuss the emergence of institutional philanthropy in sub-Saharan Africa, and the absence of philanthropy (both formal and informal) from the African civil society literature. The major philanthropic institutions working in the area of civil society development in sub-Saharan Africa are discussed. I conclude with a discussion of the continued dependence of most donor-supported African philanthropic foundations on external sources for the bulk of their funding, and why their dependent status is not germane to the development and strengthening of African civil society.

Philanthropy and African Traditional Giving

"Philanthropy," like "civil society," is a much contested concept that means different things in different cultures (Daly 2012). The definition of philanthropy that immediately comes to mind is "the love of mankind". Another is Payton's (1988) "voluntary action for the public good." However, since generosity manifests itself differently from culture to culture and is sometimes motivated, not by voluntariness, but by a sense of moral obligation, Payton's (1988) definition has been criticized for being overly American and unable to account for the various forms of informal giving prevalent in non-Western cultures (Copeland-Carson 2007). In their more recent work, Payton and Moody (2008, p. 20) made up for the earlier limitation by broadening their definition of philanthropy thus:

> We make a mistake in measuring the scale and scope of philanthropy if we neglect or forget about the pervasive, character-shaping good works that are immediate, direct, or personal . . . the domain of traditional benevolence, love of neighbor, civility, and tolerance. . . . We must think of philanthropy as encompassing both the spontaneous, individual acts of kindness and the planned, organized efforts that ensure acts of kindness are not ineffective or short-lived.

Copeland-Carson (2005, p. 78) led on this issue earlier by stating that "philanthropy is not limited to formal charitable institutions or developed nations. It also includes informal social networks, practices, and traditions that foster mutual aid and reciprocity that have existed throughout history in all societies among people of varying financial means." The inclusiveness of these definitions should reduce the confusion

about whether or not to classify informal giving to relatives, friends, neighbors, and communities as "philanthropy."

Since the denigration of informal giving by Andrew Carnegie and other wealthy nineteenth-century philanthropists in the USA (describing it as mere "charity" that addresses only the symptoms of societal problems) and the elevation of "scientific philanthropy" as the way to get to the root causes of social ills (Carnegie 1992; Kiger 2008) "charity has come to symbolize backwardness, lack of imagination, ineffectiveness" (Frumkin 2006, p. 11). Due to this attempt to distinguish between "charity" and "philanthropy" and to value the latter over the former, some analysts have tended to regard African informal giving as "charity," and, therefore, ineffective as a tool for bringing about social change (Ngondi-Houghton 2005; Wilkinson-Maposa et al. 2005). This sentiment may have led Western foundations such as the Ford and Charles Stewart Mott foundations and multilateral donors like the World Bank to "promote a culture of giving" in Africa. But as Frumkin (2006) points out about giving in the USA (which tends to serve as the model for formal institutional philanthropy in African countries), "there has never been a precise moment when charity was displaced by philanthropy. Instead, charity and philanthropy have come to occupy somewhat different niches over time and persist independently to this day" (Frumkin 2006, p. 5).

This should give pause to analysts who, based on that distinction, ignore Africa's indigenous cultures of giving as they promote the American community foundation model to solve the continent's problems (Malombe 2000; Wilkinson-Maposa et al. 2005). This is part of the general neglect of Africa's indigenous knowledge and practices as tools for development (Mammo 1999). Rather than discount informal giving as ineffective, Ruesga (2011) and Wilkinson-Maposa et al. (2005), for example, believe that giving in African communities, which they characterize as philanthropy *from* the grassroots and *philanthropy of community* respectively, can be the foundation for development and a vibrant civil society. According to Ruesga, "funding *by* and *from* the grassroots holds a special kind of promise. While the amounts contributed might be small when compared to some of the sums awarded by institutional funders, one can expect a high level of buy-in from members of a community who give of their own time and money to address issues that directly affect their lives" (Ruesga 2011, p. 463).

Philanthropy is shaped by the social, economic, historical, and cultural conditions of a people. As Anderson (1998, p. 57) explains "each tradition or culture has its own unique characteristics and each its own manner of setting the parameters for the occasion for giving, for what is to be given, who is to give, and who is to receive." There are, therefore, many features that differentiate African indigenous philanthropy from the formal philanthropy associated with the Western-inspired philanthropic foundations that have emerged on the continent. African indigenous philanthropy is characterized by, among other things, reciprocity and interdependence, disintermediation (absence of institutional intermediaries to filter giving), and the connectedness of individuals and groups to their places of origin, their kin, and ethnic groups.

Unlike Western notions of philanthropy in which wealthy individuals or well-endowed institutions make vertical, unidirectional, supposedly altruistic grants to

recipients without any expectations that the latter reciprocate in the future, African indigenous philanthropy is based on reciprocity (Feierman 1998; Hyden 2006; MacLean 2010; Wilkinson-Maposa et al. 2005) and the fact that "much of what we need and value in life . . . can only be obtained from others. People depend on one another for such valued resources, and they provide them to one another through the process of exchange" (Hyden 2006, p. 87). Giving (as well as receiving) in the African context is, therefore, not just meant to alleviate immediate material need, but also to build relationships between the giver and the recipient.

What Feierman (1998, pp. 9–10) says of precolonial African societies is still (for the most part) valid today in many parts of rural Africa:

> Reciprocity [in sub-Saharan African societies] . . . involved gift and counter-obligation; it involved people tied to one another through the exchange of [gifts of material goods and time] which established a relationship deeply embedded in social values. The poor were given help but through this help . . . they assumed an obligation. . . . Reciprocity was a form of exchange within which the rich were led to care for the poor . . . But the care was given within a moral framework very different from a European one which emphasized . . . self-abnegation . . .

In a sense, in traditional African communities, no one is too poor to give and no one too wealthy to receive, as Wilkinson-Maposa and her colleagues found out in Southern Africa. In philanthropy *of* and *by* community (as opposed to the philanthropy *to* community practiced by institutional philanthropic actors), the poor are rarely in a situation where they receive without the opportunity to reciprocate; which, in many African cultures, is more dignified than just being at the receiving end, without the ability to give back at the appropriate time according to one's ability. Hyden's (2006) "economy of affection" describes some of the ways in which wealth redistribution takes place in many African communities. In the absence of state or market mechanisms to provide a social safety net for citizens, "the economy of affection and its informal institutions are the mechanisms by which resources are allocated" (Hyden 2006, p. 77).

Another important feature of African indigenous giving is its interpersonal, face-to-face character, devoid of intermediation (Feierman 1998; Hyden 2006). According to Hyden (2006, p. 56) "in societies where face-to-face relations and primary forms of reciprocity prevail, there is no need for . . . impersonal authorities to enforce social action. Communities take it upon themselves to enforce rules." In other words, whereas modern professionalized philanthropic institutions, such as community foundations, trusts, and women's funds, act as impersonal intermediaries between givers and recipients, with the aim of making giving more efficient and targeted toward wider societal benefit (Frumkin 2006; Lenkowsky 2002), African indigenous giving values the social relationships and norms of community, trust and reciprocity created from direct personal interaction; norms that are often lost when philanthropy is conducted through institutional intermediaries (Frumkin 2006). The implications of the reciprocity, trust, and relationship-building features of giving in African traditional communities for social capital building and civil society have hardly been explored. Knight (2012) found in his work on philanthropy at the grassroots in Africa and elsewhere that community philanthropy should be a central feature in developing civil society. This is because having local people involved as donors, not just as recipients

of foreign generosity, is a game changer in any efforts to build civil society; it also enhances the prospects of sustainability when the external funding ceases.

Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that precolonial sub-Saharan African cultures were not totally devoid of indigenous philanthropic institutions. Feierman (1998) describes the existence of a variety of philanthropic institutions including healing associations that people joined not just to be healed but to learn how to heal others, sanctuaries and shrines for protecting the vulnerable, providing security for those seeking refuge from disasters, and for speaking truth to power on behalf of those in need. In the Lozi Kingdom (in modern-day Zambia), for example, the principle of sanctuary was seen as limiting the possibilities of royal abuse of power. The Dente shrine in Kete Krachi (in modern-day Ghana) provided refuge for slaves seeking freedom, while the Mbona shrine of the Lower Shire Valley (in modern-day Malawi) provided space for holding political authorities to account:

> The shrines' representatives were important critics of chiefly power holders. The medium at the shrine . . . fulfilled functions that, in another time and place, might have been thought appropriate to the public sphere. The medium was able to speak aloud at difficult times, saying things only whispered by ordinary folks . . . that chiefly actions were endangering prosperity, reproduction or survival. (Feierman 1998, p. 13)

These philanthropic institutions arose to provide a safety net for those who, for one reason or another, were not able to participate in the circle of reciprocity and, therefore, were less likely to receive help from others: people like older or barren women without kin to support them, or those without supportive family members who were too ill to support themselves. Indeed, the ability to provide help to the vulnerable came to represent an essential attribute of authority. The inability to protect and help one's subjects was a sign of kingly or chiefly weakness (Feierman 1998).

Africans' giving patterns are also shaped by a strong connection to "place and people" (Grim 1998, p. 25). Africans are, therefore, more likely to give to their own relatives (however distant), people who come from their place of origin or people with whom they have some type of affiliation than to give to beneficiaries with whom they have little in common. The attachment to one's place of origin and one's people also explains the phenomenon of hometown associations and diaspora philanthropy (Chazan et al. 1999; Orozco et al. 2005; Uduku 2002). These characteristics have implications for the resource mobilization strategies of modern African philanthropic institutions as they strive to mobilize resources from their citizens at home and in the diaspora, not only to support civil society and development in their countries, but also to reduce their own dependence and that of other CSOs on foreign donors (Moyo 2005).

Philanthropic Foundations in Sub-Saharan Africa

The major components of institutional philanthropy include foundations, corporations, federations, and gift funds (Lenkowsky 2002). The most prominent (and prevalent) among the four are foundations, which fall into four categories: independent, operating, community, and corporate. Private independent foundations are

endowed institutions that make grants to charitable organizations using the interest from their investments. Community foundations solicit their funds from residents of a particular geographical area (city, region, or country) and corporate foundations are funded with corporate profits or endowment interest. Unlike the other three types, operating foundations use interest on their endowment, not to make grants to other organizations, but to fund programs carried out by their own staff. Most foundations are, therefore, grant-making bodies set up for the principal purpose of (1) mobilizing resources either from one source (an individual, a family, or a corporation) or from a variety of sources in a particular community (in the case of community foundations and federated charities); and (2) distributing these resources to other charitable organizations.

Beneficiaries of foundations include voluntary associations, nonprofit organizations (NPOs), NGOs, CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) that provide goods and services to society. Philanthropic institutions represent the supply side of the philanthropic process, which explains why charitable organizations that provide services to the public are not classified as philanthropic institutions, but rather as beneficiaries of philanthropic institutions.

Independent foundations established by Africans on the continent, like the TY Danjuma Foundation in Nigeria and corporate foundations like Vodafone Ghana Foundation and Safaricom Foundation in Kenya, are comparatively new (many established after 2000) and few. For reasons that remain unclear at the moment, there are more foundations (private independent, community, corporate, trusts) in Eastern and Southern Africa than in West Africa. The oldest independent and corporate foundations were formed by Asians in East Africa to give back to their host countries (Ngondi-Houghton 2005). For instance, the Chandaria Foundation and the Rattansi Educational Trust were established in Kenya in 1952 and 1956, respectively. Currently, the majority of local foundations (as opposed to international foundations working in sub-Saharan Africa) are community foundations, most of them located in Eastern and Southern Africa. So far no study has been conducted to determine the exact number of local foundations in sub-Saharan Africa. The tables compiled by the author from various sources list a few foundations in South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal (Table 25.1–25.5).

As with most matters concerning the political and socioeconomic development of the African continent, the history of sub-Saharan African philanthropic foundations involves the activities of philanthropic institutions located in the USA and Western Europe. This is because, in the same way that the continent's formal political and administrative institutions (including the state) came out of the colonial encounter and have been shaped by current globalizing trends, Africa's formal philanthropic institutions are the cocreation of foreign private foundations (mostly American) and local elites (Malombe 2000; Ngondi-Houghton 2005; Savane 2011).

Long before their active involvement with civil society in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s, US private foundations such as the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations were involved with funding development projects (in areas such as agriculture, higher education, and health) in the 1960s, when many African countries were just emerging from colonial rule. However, it was the

Table 25.1 South Africa

Name of foundation	Type	Year of establishment	Purpose
Uthungulu Community Foundation	Community foundation	1999	Civil society, economic development, education, health
Absa Foundation	Corporate foundation	1994	Collaborating with the South African government to achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs)
The Shuttleworth Foundation	Private foundation	2001	Invests in initiatives and individuals who challenge the status quo and positively contribute to change
Social Change Assistance Trust	Trust	1984	Resource mobilization, poverty alleviation, and human rights
Greater Rustenburg Community Foundation	Community foundation	2000	Capacity building, economic development, strengthening institutions
Southern Africa Trust	Public foundation	2005	Civil society, democracy and governance, economic development, strengthening institutions
West Coast Community Foundation	Community foundation	2001	Civil society, community and economic development, strengthening institutions, resource mobilization

dramatic geopolitical and economic events of the 1990s that made the promotion of civil society and democratization in a number of sub-Saharan African countries, especially South Africa, attractive to major US philanthropic foundations, namely the Ford and Charles Stewart Mott Foundations and the Soros Foundation Network. These events included the retrenchment of the African state, its withdrawal from the provision of social services, and the resultant proliferation of NGOs in many African countries to provide services that states had abandoned.

Other significant events that influenced the involvement of philanthropic foundations in the promotion of civil society in the 1990s, not only in sub-Saharan Africa but also in Central and Eastern Europe, and Russia, were the dismantling of the apartheid regime in South Africa, the end of the Cold War, and the collapse of the

Table 25.2 Kenya

Name of foundation	Type	Year of establishment	Purpose
Kenya Community Development Foundation	Community foundation	1997	Promotes sustainable development of communities through social investment, resource mobilization, endowment building, and grant making
Rattansi Education Trust	Family foundation	1956	Education
Jomo Kenyatta Foundation	Public foundation	1966	Publishing of educational materials and scholarships
Kianda Foundation	Private operating foundation	1961	Establishment of schools for women's empowerment
Safaricom Foundation	Corporate foundation	2003	Education, health, economic empowerment, environmental conservation, arts and culture, music and sports, millennium development goals (MDGs)
Chandaria Foundation	Corporate foundation	1952	Education and health

Table 25.3 Nigeria

Name of foundation	Type	Year of incorporation	Purpose
The TY Danjuma Foundation	Private independent foundation	2009	Health, education, and income generation
The Tony Elumelu Foundation	Private independent foundation	2010	Business leadership and entrepreneurship
The Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND)	Public/private initiative	2010	Economic development, Strengthening the skill and ability of government, civil society, and communities to encourage the development of broad-based, economic growth, conflict prevention, and resolution

Soviet Union. The collapse of communism resulted in cuts to Official Development Assistance (ODA) to African countries that had become geopolitically irrelevant to the USA, the remaining superpower. This provided many US private foundations, whose assets had grown dramatically during the 1990's stock market boom, with opportunities to increase their support for developing and transitional countries, including sub-Saharan Africa (Renz et al. 2000). The decision of international private

Table 25.4 Ghana

Name of foundation	Type	Year of incorporation	Purpose
The Akuapem Community Foundation	Community foundation	2005	To improve the living standards of people within the Akuapem Traditional Area
African Women's Development Fund	Women's fund	2000	Strengthening civil society, women's social and economic development
MTN Ghana Foundation	Corporate foundation	2007	Education, health, community development, information and communication technology (ICT), socioeconomic development
Vodafone Ghana Foundation	Corporate foundation	2009	Socioeconomic development of the country

Table 25.5 Senegal

Name of foundation	Type	Year of incorporation	Purpose
West Africa Rural Foundation (WARF)	Community foundation	1993	To help solve the problems of rural society by strengthening local organizations and promoting participatory methods of research and development
TrustAfrica	Public charity foundation	2006	Securing the conditions for democracy; fostering African enterprise and cultivating African resources for democracy and development
Fondation Youssou N'Dour	Private foundation	2003	Youth, health, economic development, civic empowerment

foundations to invest in nonprofit sector development, the strengthening of civil society, and the promotion of democratization and good governance in many African countries in the 1990s can, therefore, be seen as the response of private international funders to Africa's economic and political crisis at a time when international public sector funders (multilateral and bilateral donors) were reducing their support for the continent for lack of geopolitical interest.

Moreover, the proliferation of NGOs and CSOs, many of them totally dependent on foreign sources for their very survival, raised concerns about the long-term sustainability of African civil society (Bratton 1994; Edwards 2009; Fafchamps and Owens 2006; Moyo 2005; Ngondi-Houghton 2005). One of the strategies for providing local, sustainable, and self-reliant sources of support to civil society in African countries was the building and/or strengthening of philanthropic institutions with firm

roots in African soil. The establishment of philanthropic foundations on the continent was, therefore, also an attempt by international philanthropic foundations and some multilateral institutions like the World Bank to create or support community-level philanthropic institutions that would mobilize local resources to finance CSOs and community development.

Unlike private independent foundations which, by definition, are established by the wealthy, community foundations (and also women's funds) allow people from all walks of life in a given geographic area to contribute their quota to a common resource pool for collective problem solving. Indeed, it is this aspect of the community foundation model that has made the concept so attractive to many countries and communities in the developing world, including sub-Saharan Africa (Sacks 2000).

Finally, the emergence of African institutional philanthropy needs to be located within the framework of the calls in the 1990s for decentralization and the empowerment of local communities, for self-sufficient community-based development with local people defining and solving their own problems, and the urgent need for Africa's people to wean themselves off of foreign aid of all kinds (Ake 1996; Holmén 2010; Mammo 1999; Moyo 2009). Indeed one of the main themes of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was for Africans to take control of their own destiny: "Africans must not be the wards of benevolent guardians, rather they must be the architects of their own sustained upliftment" and "the hopes of Africa's people's for a better life can no longer rest on the magnanimity of others" (cited by Anyemedu 2002). It was in this kind of political environment that the World Bank and US private foundations proposed the establishment of local philanthropic institutions to mobilize the continent's own resources for its social, economic, and political development (Malombe 2000).

African foundations support organizations carrying out a wide range of programs, all of them aimed at improving people's lives and enhancing their capacity to participate in the public sphere. Whether they fund economic development, social justice, education, health, women's rights, civil society, or the promotion of local philanthropy, all these activities make a contribution to civil society as defined by Edwards (2004), as they create the environment needed for a functioning civil society. As Bratton (1994, p. 8) aptly puts it:

> Societies riven by wide and growing gaps between rich and poor are structurally ill-suited to the cultivation of norms of reciprocity and participation on which civil society is based. Indeed, the global association between stable democracy and advanced industrial economy suggests that democratic institutions (including civic institutions) are difficult to construct under conditions of mass economic privation and great social inequalities.

The extent to which African philanthropic foundations are succeeding in fostering civil society in communities across the continent is hard to tell without targeted research, especially as their resources are limited compared to those of bilateral and multilateral donors. Nevertheless, that they are making an effort is obvious. Table 25.6 shows the grants made by TrustAfrica from 2006–2011 to several organizations for program areas including Peace and Security, Citizenship and Identity, Business Development, African Philanthropy, Democracy and Civil Society, and Equitable Development.

Table 25.6 Grants made by TrustAfrica from 2006–2011. (Compiled by author from annual reports)

Year	Grant ($)
2006–2007	2,144,500
2007–2008	1,671,186
2008–2009	1,758,686
2009–2010	3,141,725
2010–2011	3,983,893

Philanthropy, Civil Society, and the Public Sphere

Philanthropy and civil society have an interdependent relationship that is integral to the functioning of both: civil society could not function without philanthropy and vice versa. Civil society is defined here as voluntary organizations, the public sphere, and the good society (Edwards 2004). Civil society organizations depend on "charity, volunteerism and individual or organized philanthropy" (Prewitt 2009, p. 8) for the financial wherewithal they need to do what neither the state nor the market is willing or able to do. By the same token, civil society is where organized philanthropy finds the institutions it needs to carry out its philanthropic mission. Organized philanthropy is not just a financier of civil society, it is an integral part of civil society (Prewitt 2009; Schambra and Shaffer 2011). As Prewitt (2009, p. 8) puts it, "organized philanthropy is not only in and of the civil society sector; it has a vital interest in expanding the sector … In the absence of civil society institutions, there is no philanthropy as we know it."

There are a number of different ways to think about the role of philanthropy with regard to civil society. One is to highlight philanthropy's role in providing the financial infrastructure that civil society needs to convert its ideas into programs and organizations in order to provide much needed services (Frumkin 2006; Prewitt 2009). However, some scholars argue that this is not the most important role of philanthropy vis-à-vis civil society. They posit that philanthropy is at its best when it promotes pluralism; when private money allows multiple visions of the public good, rather than only those favored by the government, to flourish in the polity. Frumkin (2006, p. 375) argues that "the very act of giving can and should be understood as a core civil society activity, which contributes both to the formation of social capital and to the functioning of democracy." Giving to support public causes is, therefore, just as much about pluralism as it is about redistribution and change, and allows individuals to connect their private visions of the public good to real public problems and, in the process, to enliven the public sphere (Frumkin 2006; Ilchman et al. 1998).

However, there is the counterargument that philanthropy, by its very nature, is dangerous to the democratic system and the public sphere. Arnove (1982, p. 1), for example, has stated that private philanthropic foundations have a

> Corrosive influence on a democratic society: they represent relatively unregulated and unaccountable concentrations of power and wealth … They help maintain an economic and political order, international in scope, which benefits the ruling-class interests of philanthropists.

Some point out that it is problematic when individuals and/or institutions use private philanthropic funds to advance their own social change agendas which may not always coincide with the broader public agenda (Frumkin 2006).

Recent scholarship also faults private foundations for not doing enough to support civil society at the grassroots level, which is where marginalized citizens need to learn the democratic skills necessary for effective participation in the public sphere. In this view, professionalized philanthropic institutions are distant from the everyday citizen. "Although organized within, and directing [their] funding towards, the institutions of civil society, philanthropy has become complicit in the disparagement of . . . the inculcation of democratic engagement in problem-solving and the development of community-mindedness." (Schambra and Shaffer 2011, p. 451) The authors recommend that foundations reach out to everyday citizens and the community associations they form to tackle their own problems, adding that "the process of formulating and proposing solutions to their own problems cultivates in citizens the skills essential to democratic self-governance" (Schambra and Shaffer 2011, p. 452).

Other critics contend that even when they fund grassroots projects, foundations tend to select organizations that fit into their own theory of change. Noting that not all grassroots organizations are the same when it comes to promoting civil society, Ruesga (2011) suggests that foundations avoid "philanthropy *to* the grassroots," the top-down support of grassroots organizations without their participation in funding decision making or problem solving. Philanthropy *with* grassroots, where grassroots organizations are involved in grant-making decisions, and/or the design, implementation, and evaluation of grant making to some degree, is more conducive to the promotion of civil society. The best strategy, Ruesga recommends, is for foundations to support philanthropy *by* and *from* the grassroots—the giving of time, money, and other forms of support by ordinary citizens to one another and to collective activities of their own communities, defined either by geography, identity, or interest.

This is reminiscent of indigenous giving practices in African communities and what Wilkinson-Maposa et al. (2005) term "philanthropy of community." This type of grassroots philanthropy allows ordinary people to self-organize and take their destiny into their own hands; and to develop the skills necessary for participation in the public sphere. Edwards (2011, p. 489) captures philanthropy's role in building civil society from the grassroots best when he states that

> By building the independent capacities of a broad base of citizens to engage with each other and take collective action, philanthropy can support civil society to shape itself . . . not in the short-term . . . way that is favored by technocrats, but gradually over time, and directed by people's own interpretations of root causes and the strategies that are required to address them.

With the low level of research into the activities of local African foundations' civil society-promoting activities on the continent, it is difficult to say if these criticisms leveled at their foreign counterparts apply to them as well.

What does apply to almost all the philanthropic institutions in sub-Saharan Africa is the issue of dependency—foreign foundations being faulted for creating dependency in their grantees and local philanthropic foundations as well as CSOs and

NGOs being overly dependent on their foreign "partners" (Edwards 2009; Malombe 2000; Moyo 2001, 2005). All civil society actors face the three main issues of independence, sustainability, and accountability (Pinter 2001). Their success in achieving these determines their survival and effectiveness.

One of the rationales for establishing local African foundations was to mobilize local resources for development in order to minimize the dependence of African civil society on foreign sources of funding. In reality, however, despite their rhetoric about Africans now leading the charge in developing their continent through their own philanthropic resources, many African philanthropic foundations are, for the most part, regranting institutions, channeling foreign funds to local organizations. Only a relatively small percentage of their revenue is raised from local individuals, corporations, and organizations; the bulk comes from foreign philanthropic and governmental institutions. For example, in the 2009–2010 fiscal year TrustAfrica raised only $ 3,539 from nineteen individuals, $ 129,618 from special events, earned $ 54,982 in investment income, and received the bulk of its revenues, $ 6,320,991, from foreign institutions (TrustAfrica 2010). These included Humanity United, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, International Development Research Centre, and USA for Africa. This is a recurrent pattern of dependency, not just at TrustAfrica, but the majority of African philanthropic institutions.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with foundations receiving grants from other foundations or from foreign sources, when African foundations make it their goal to promote civil society in their countries or, in the case of TrustAfrica, to promote it throughout Africa, it becomes legitimate to question how their dependency on foreign sources and their inability to mobilize local resources affect their effectiveness. How legitimate is an African civil society that is sustained by foreign donors? If, as this chapter has tried to show, giving to public causes is, in and of itself, an act of participation that helps to shape the public sphere, how does the inability of African philanthropic institutions to get local populations and corporate entities involved in giving for public purposes affect participation in the public sphere? These questions deserve further research attention.

The overdependence of African philanthropic institutions on foreign funding has several consequences for the development of civil society. The direction of accountability is reversed, with African foundations reporting to their funders abroad, rather than to the members of their communities or their constituencies (Bratton 1994; Moyo 2001). Another outcome of this situation is the crowding-out effect: as foundations continue to receive the bulk of their funds from abroad, they have little incentive to cultivate local individuals and establishments for donations (Fafchamps and Owens 2006; Holmén 2010). Moreover, overreliance on foreign funds is a political liability as it reduces the credibility of African foundations. Finally, the failure to engage citizens in supporting their own CSOs is a lost opportunity to cultivate ownership, participation, and engagement, which are all good for civil society.

Philanthropy and the African Civil Society Literature

While there is a burgeoning literature on civil society and CSOs in sub-Saharan Africa, there is very little literature pertaining to their sources of funding in the private (nonprofit and for-profit) sector. The literature on development funding, including support for CSOs, has been limited to ODA and rarely mentions the role of philanthropic foundations in funding and creating NGOs and other institutions for development. This is despite the fact that foreign and local foundations such as the Ford Foundation, the C. S. Mott Foundation, and TrustAfrica have been promoting civil society on the continent (Moyo 2005; Savane 2011; Stacey and Aksartova 2001). Without much research in this area, there is no way of knowing how much philanthropic foundations have contributed to civil society programs over the years. However, rough estimates show that, though small when compared to ODA, the combined grantmaking of 13 African foundations totaled US\$ 22,069,848 in 2009 (Savane 2011).

This omission in the literature has to do in part with the nature of state–society relations in Africa, in which the state has held a preeminent role in development, vis-à-vis the private sector. It is illuminating to compare this situation with the USA, for instance, where the federal government's role in social and economic development has traditionally been minimal, while a lot of the responsibility for social policy and economic development has been delegated to the private sectors. As a result of this division of labor between the state, the market, and civil society, the civil society literature in the USA is vast and intricately interwoven with that of philanthropy and the third or independent sector.

Unlike the USA, almost all the development plans fashioned by (mostly *for*) African countries have been state-centric, and even with the attention toward NGOs as agents of development in the 1980s and 1990s, foreign governments and their agencies (multilateral and bilateral donors) have remained the most prominent development financiers. For various reasons (the most frequently mentioned being high poverty levels and a presumed lack of a culture of giving), the people of Africa have been viewed more as beneficiaries of aid from wealthy nations than as contributors to their own development (Ake 1996). Since Western-style formal organizations tend to be funded by multilateral and bilateral donors, while the informal/indigenous ones depend on their own contributions, the literature, which more often than not is framed by Western developmental theories and concepts (Fowler 2012; Holmén 2010) has tended to account for the contributions of ODA while neglecting that of philanthropy, both local and foreign.

Moreover, the distinction between "philanthropy" and "charity" as well as the problems associated with applying the term "philanthropy" to giving in non-Western cultures (Copeland-Carson 2005, 2007; Payton and Moody 2008) seem to have complicated the acknowledgment of many charitable activities in African societies as philanthropic and capable of contributing to the development and strengthening of civil society on the continent.

While there is a lot of literature on US private foundations' international philanthropy and their role in supporting civil society in many transitional and developing

countries, there is very little research into their activities in sub-Saharan Africa. Research on indigenous African philanthropy, philanthropic foundations (foreign and African) in sub-Saharan Africa and the interrelationship between philanthropy and civil society on the continent is, therefore, limited. Available work is mostly descriptive. To my knowledge, the main source of information on indigenous African philanthropy at this time is the work of social anthropologists such as Feierman (1998) whose historical and anthropological studies on African life before the transatlantic slave trade and European colonization also shed light on African ways of social exchange. On contemporary indigenous African relations of reciprocity, Wilkinson-Maposa et al.'s (2005) empirical work on helping habits among people of modest means in a number of Southern African countries is ground breaking. Another source of information on contemporary indigenous African philanthropic behavior is the work of political scientists and political economists. One of the most recent, MacLean's (2010) work on Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, examines not only the relations of reciprocity in these countries but also how they have been affected by each country's past political history and current economic situation. She finds that though many people, especially in Ghana, were too poor to participate in the circle of reciprocity due to the economic crisis, they still felt a sense of obligation toward those in need in their communities.

Work by practitioners in the philanthropic sector, as well as institutional research commissioned by foundations and the World Bank provide other sources of information on African philanthropic institutions (Malombe 2000; Ngondi-Houghton 2005; Sacks 2000). For example, the yearly reports put out by the Worldwide Initiative for Grantmaker Support (WINGS) is a very useful source of information on community foundations all over the world, including those in sub-Saharan Africa. The scholarly literature on institutional philanthropy and its role in the promotion of civil society in sub-Saharan Africa is very limited and concentrated on South Africa (Moyo 2001, 2005; Savane 2011; Stacey and Aksartova 2001). While many of these writings are focused on US foundations in South Africa, a few, like Savane's, have a broader focus that includes the emergence of African philanthropic institutions in sub-Saharan Africa.

Given the gaps in African traditional and modern institutional philanthropy and how these intersect with civil society, there is a need for a knowledge base for philanthropy on the continent. This will also be relevant for the African civil society literature since the two are closely linked. Initially, the areas that need more research include (1) quantitative survey studies to provide reliable data on individual and institutional giving (involving governments, corporations, and foundations) in sub-Saharan African countries; (2) qualitative analyses to provide knowledge about traditions of giving in African countries, philanthropic values and motivations for giving, and the impact of African philanthropy on civil society and on development; (3) the development of theoretical frameworks to further the understanding of what philanthropy (both traditional/informal and formal/institutional) can contribute to civil society and (4) resource mobilization strategies in the African context. Johnson et al.'s (2004, p. 41) call for more research into philanthropy in non-Western cultures is apropos here:

> Traditional practices are critically important and can be essential to the further development of philanthropy. Existing cultures of giving should be identified and studied, perhaps even before efforts are made to introduce external models.

These knowledge gaps can, however, only be addressed if the link between civil society and philanthropy are well understood and if civil society stakeholders, including institutions of higher learning and research centers on the continent, see the value in such research.

Conclusion

This chapter underlines the utility of philanthropy (however defined and practiced) to a free, open, and democratic civil society. While the link between philanthropy and civil society has yet to be recognized and explored (and probably questioned) by researchers interested in the overall development of the African continent, it is the reason why foundations from the developed world and the World Bank have been investing in the establishment of local philanthropic institutions, albeit based, for the most part, on models that are foreign to African social structures. Due, however, to the lack of research into (1) traditional African philanthropy and its modern institutional counterpart; and (2) the role of philanthropy in the development and strengthening of civil society, there seems to be a disconnect between African foundations and the people they purport to serve through their support for CSOs, NGOs and CBOs.

This disconnect is evidenced, among other things, by the overdependence of African foundations on foreign donors and the corresponding lack of local contributions to foundations. Since civil society is not just service-providing NPOs, but also people's collective visions of the good society and the public space in which these visions are argued and debated for the public good (Edwards 2004), African institutional philanthropy ought to go beyond the first to promote the second and the third as well. This requires that philanthropic foundations not only support CSOs but also strive to achieve financial independence from foreign sources by providing opportunities, based on African cultures of giving, for the African people to get actively involved in formal giving to foundations. Participation will create trust and only then will the people in sub-Saharan African countries take ownership. But, more research will be needed to provide the theoretical grounding for engaging African philanthropy and civil society in a productive way.

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Chapter 26
Volunteering, Civic Agency, and Citizenship in Africa

Ebenezer Obadare

Overview

Amid what seems like a global restoration of faith in the voluntary sector as a putative conduit for civic renewal, there has been an equal resurgence of interest in volunteering as a vehicle for societal remoralization. In this nascent climate, the advocacy of volunteering can be as intriguing as the very quarters from which it has emanated. An illustration: British Prime Minister David Cameron's instinctive solution to the wave of 'recreational rioting' which lashed London and other parts of the United Kingdom in the summer of 2011 was a proposal for a national citizens service program to be made available to young people of 16 years and above. Clearly impelled obviously by his diagnosis of the riots as evidence of Britain's "slow-motion moral collapse," Cameron desires a return to "old-fashioned" values like "teamwork, discipline, duty" and "decency." Hence the proposal of a national service program, seen as an integral part of what he refers to as the British government's "social fight back" (Stratton 2011).

Cameron's determination to get Britain working again under the umbrella of 'The Big Society' is subtly ironic, coming as it did almost 25 years back to the day in 1987 that another conservative leader, the late former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, insisted that "And, as you know, there is no such thing as society." The current Conservative government, it seems, not only admits that society actually exists; it thinks it ought to be enlarged, and is convinced that volunteering and service-learning can help in the realization of that objective.

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Ordinarily, this should be music to the ears of all protagonists of volunteering and civic service. After all, what can be more reassuring than the spectacle of the leader of a major Western nation touting the benefits of civic service as a panacea for ostensible social chaos? Be that as it may, the British prime minister's sudden touting of volunteering as a magic wand for social regeneration raises the eyebrows for some key reasons. One is the way volunteering seems to have emerged as a convenient solution that serves to (1) mask economic inequalities, and instead (2) is used to attribute social problems to lack of community cohesion—as opposed to fundamental economic disparities.

Politicizing volunteering is not exactly new; for instance, students of volunteering in Africa will recall its (ab) use as a mode of pedagogical nationalism oriented at the creation of obedient state subjects, a political technique epitomized, to take just one example, by events in Zimbabwe. In a neoliberal context, however, what we seem to be witnessing instead is an incipient transformation in the role and *meaning* of volunteering, crucially against the background of rapid state withdrawal; a forceful reminder that certain assumptions about the value of volunteering, particularly in relation to citizenship and social integration, persist.

In this chapter, I take issue with these assumptions, even though I continue to defend the basic value of (formal and informal) volunteering, broadly understood as un-monetized service in the cause of the social; and although I trouble it (i.e., volunteering), it is only with a view to insert a much needed clarity about its possibilities and limitations, particularly in an African context.

Volunteering in Africa may be divided into two broad spheres. In the first are the official national service programs, which were part of the efforts of the newly independent governments and part of the broader project of nation-building. At the same time, there is a vibrant history of other forms of volunteering that do not involve the state, and are in fact arguably triggered by its abdication of issues to do with social welfare. My attention here is focused on the former. I engage, first, with the state, which, in a growing number of cases, has championed the cause of volunteering. While noting that there is nothing inherently wrong with this, I alert us to the danger of a trend in which weak 'public' 'service' provision and delivery are narrated as a problem of inadequate volunteering (as opposed to effects of deliberate political decisions), and thereby downloaded on the fragile shoulders of an already beleaguered civil society. The pattern itself emanates from what, in my judgment, is a genuine misapprehension of society's problems as being primarily *moral* in nature, to which, according to that logic, a society of 'more' volunteers and 'deeper' volunteering is the answer.

On the contrary, I favor a more searching interrogation of the state against the background of the transformations wrought by a rapidly changing global economic order. Moreover, because the call to volunteering is often framed in a way that might lead one to imagine that state and civil society are permanently convivial, I suggest an insinuation of social conflict into the discourse of volunteering. Furthermore, because, I claim, volunteering is a civic act, one that, ideally, is driven by a volunteer's sense of 'belonging' within a particular civic community, I urge an approach to volunteering as an act of social citizenship that is best 'performed' *after* the state has

paid its dues to society. I argue that this dialogic understanding of volunteering as something socially situated is underemphasized in the relevant literature.

Finally, I address youth angst and speculate on the meaning of volunteering to a social demographic experiencing profound alienation. From Cairo to Cape Town, young people in African countries face difficult challenges, and it seems pointless talking about volunteering and civic service, especially as it relates to young volunteers, without being attentive to those challenges. Certain basic questions are pertinent in this regard. For instance: What can the notion of volunteering mean to a generation that often feels alienated from authority, and seems rootless amid the economic pressures of globalization? How is the nature of volunteering itself changing, given that an increasing number of young people are 'forced' to volunteer, and to see volunteering as a coping strategy, or at best a half-way house between joblessness and productive employment? Is it still volunteering as we know it if young volunteers approach volunteering as a way of marking time while waiting for the right opportunity to bail out? Under what conditions is volunteering emerging as a social panacea, and in whose interest? Or, to summon Michel Foucault, What sort of practices (by state or other actors) does the discourse on volunteering enable?

In pursuing these questions, my assumption is that the greater our understanding of the landscape for volunteering, the better our chances of providing effective answers to the question as to how to stimulate popular participation and revitalize democracy across the African region. Although the provocations which I put forward are primarily orientated at African dynamics and problems, my reflections point throughout to a global context.

Africa in a Global Context

The state has been at the forefront of recent campaigns for a return to the ethos of voluntarism and national service. I should add that this is not a bad thing in itself. What is paramount is that there is enough realism about what it (volunteering) can achieve, and the constraints on its social utility. Furthermore, I think it is crucial that volunteering is not seen by its advocates as a substitute for politics. This, it seems to me, is where the problem currently lies in regard to volunteering's advocacy, hence my dubiousness about it. I will explain.

Most observers of the contemporary global order agree that the world is in the throes of a fundamental crisis, the depth, complexity, and dimensions of which remain elusive. One certainty is that the crisis is transforming both (the ideas of) the state and citizenship as they have come to be understood. For instance, in regard to the state, scholars like De Benoist (2011) have mourned its increasing ineffectualness "in the face of contemporary challenges, progressively losing all its 'majestic values'" (2011, p. 10). Part of his explanation for this is the resurgence "of a process of individualization in all arenas … leading to the disappearance of all the grand collective projects that one provided a foundation for a 'we.'" (De Benoist 2011) The erosion of the ideational foundation for a "we" speaks to a global diminution

of citizenship, evidenced across the world (including the economically advanced societies) by the profound incapacity of citizens to consummate the ideal of popular participation.

Clearly, this has important implications for regional integration, regional citizenship, and ultimately the development of a regional identity. Volunteer exchanges (which do not have to be limited to young people) and collaboration and exchange programs in the area of higher education can reinvigorate the idea of citizenship through the promotion of regional integration and a sense of regional identity. In this regard, member countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) can learn from the experience of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which has had a measure of success in fostering a sense of West African citizenship among nationals of its sixteen constituent countries.

This challenge of consummating citizenship has a specific resonance in Africa, where the character of the state inherited at the dawn of political independence, and the ever-widening cleft between state-power and the people are nagging issues. Yet, to say that both states and citizens face increasingly difficult times is not to elide the fact that, at the same time, "different kinds of states" continue to "make different kinds of citizenship possible." (Cornwall et al. 2011, p. 7) This means that, while it is important to reflect on the African experience against a global backcloth, it is equally important not to discount how African countries' specific "architectures of governance" have impacted the various formations of state and citizenship. Crucial to this is a discussion of the ways in which the crisis of political accountability, the transparency deficit, and the stupendous poverty found in many African countries are reinforced by a political culture still largely characterized by the use of personal 'connections' and other informal arrangements.

It seems valid to suggest therefore that, unless these dynamics are fully understood, the ideals of volunteering cannot be fully realized, even with the purest of intentions. This is partly because, as I mentioned earlier (a point also emphasized in the relevant literature), volunteering seems to produce the best outcomes when anchored in the sociopolitical fabric. In addition, it will prevent a repeat of the mistake of a previous historical moment, when newly independent African states rushed to invest in social development without requiring local voluntary input (Perold 2006). At the moment, African states are championing volunteering and rushing to implement various voluntary service programs without pausing to ask critical questions about the sociality of volunteering, and what kinds of benefits it is likely to produce in different environments. Moreover, these states are pushing the argument that volunteering is a necessary corrective to the moral squalor in the society, emblemized, not surprisingly, by a bereft youth demographic and 'broken families.' In qualifying this narrative, I think it is important to:

1. deny that the problems of African societies are primarily moral, or at the very least that they are not 'moral' in the way their current normative framing might imply;
2. remind ourselves that while volunteering can be productive of social capital, its specific outcomes are always uncertain;

3. insist that, in the end, volunteering is just one dimension of a morally and politically complex spectrum that is civic participation, involvement, or engagement;

4. insist, as a corollary of the latter point, that volunteering has its own dark side, ranging from the tyrannies inherent in certain organizational models of voluntarism, to the atrocities committed by categories of volunteers under particular political regimes; and finally

5. remind ourselves that the kind of narrative we are contesting here is usually what results when civic engagement is hijacked by the state for its own partisan ends.

Moral Politics Versus Political Moralism

A world in which moral judgment of some sort plays no role in human calculations is unimaginable. Therefore, in taking on the moralist perspective on the modern (African) predicament, I am by no means suggesting that a moral approach is in itself invalid. On the contrary, the problem with the current moral approach to the analysis of African societies is in fact its reductionist view of morality. Badru makes this point eloquently with his crucial distinction between "moral politicians" and "political moralists" in Africa. For him,

> A moral politician is one who interprets the principles of political prudence in such a way that they can coexist with morality, while a political moralist is he (sic) who fashions his morality in such a way that it works to the benefit of the statesman. As such, a moral politician is an altruistic agent in the sense that he accords his actions with morality in serving the people, while a political moralist is egoistic. In other words, the aim of a moral politician in acquiring political power is to ensure distributive justice in society, while that of a political moralist is to acquire political power in order to satisfy his (sic) selfish interest. (Badru 2011, pp. 58, 59)

Political moralism in the African context often tends to lack moral diversity, particularly when moral debasement is defined strictly as youth 'anti-social behavior', illustrated with ready examples such as prostitution and drug abuse. Second, political moralism is often blind to the moral problems of the state and its functionaries, thus creating the impression that moral codes apply only to young people or other non-state agents.

How does this speak to volunteering? The basic connection is this: a reading of social crisis as a product of moral collapse means that volunteering becomes an imagined corrective to perceived ethical flaws, rather than the first step in a process of civic involvement, one that poses critical questions about the nature of political power, the distribution of social goods, and the allocation of resources within the society in question.

Volunteering, rightly imagined and properly orientated, can help in this pursuit. Nonetheless, it cannot be the magic wand that some recent advocates expect it to be, for in the end, volunteering is at best "a narrow slice of citizenship" (Leighninger 2004, p. 38); whereas the long-term solution is "to give people a range of political

opportunities" (Leighninger 2004) which can lead to fundamental changes in the rules of the political game.

Youth, Citizenship, and Social Exclusion

Julius Malema, the former president of the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League, is a controversial figure. His critics accuse him of an opportunistic atavism, which is sharply at odds with post-apartheid South Africa's neoliberal consensus. At the same time, he divides opinion within the party (ANC), from which, following a protracted internal inquiry, he has received a 5 year suspension.

Yet, if you discount his own proximity to power, Malema actually epitomizes the contemporary sociology of young people in (South) Africa in various ways: in his tense relationship with the past, his unseemly, though understandable appetite for political resolution, and his ambiguous relationship with authority. This may explain why many young South Africans have taken to him and his 'cause'. Beyond that, he is also a symbol of hope for many young South Africans, not because they cannot see through his own personal contradictions (in fact, many actively distrust him, pointing out that "Malema always got a full fridge, whereas our fridge continues to be empty") but because they also feel that he may be their best chance of bringing their private frustrations into the public space.

Whatever one may think of Julius Malema, there is no running away from the reality of young people's disaffection on the continent. Take South Africa for instance. According to a 2005 study commissioned by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund and compiled by the South African Human Science Research Council [HSRC] (2005), "more than two-thirds of South Africans between the ages of 18 and 35 are unemployed" (HSRC 2005). The same report notes that "Africans and women make up the largest proportion of unemployed people," and that "of these, those living in rural areas are the most severely affected, often isolated by deeply embedded patterns of male and youth labor migration" (HSRC 2005 pp. 7, 8). Furthermore, while adult unemployment in the country currently stands at over 25 %, almost 50 % of young people aged 15–24 years are unemployed (Statistics South Africa [SSA], in press).

Youth angst in South Africa is an important slice of a larger problem, which is the inability of the post-apartheid state to consummate the promise of the anti-apartheid liberation struggle. For the black majority, the fact that it boasts one of the most liberal constitutions in the entire world may be something to be proud of; yet, it is also a painful reminder that political liberalization has failed so far failed to deliver economic justice. Hence, nearly two decades after the end of apartheid, South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies in the whole world.

The foregoing matters to the discussion here is for at least two reasons. One is perspective. Since the turn of the century, South Africa has witnessed a recurrence of apparently xenophobic attacks in which various nationals—Mozambicans, Zimbabweans, Congolese, Nigerians—have been targeted by gangs of armed youths. These attacks have caused many unfortunate—including South African—deaths. While not

discounting the many plausible explanations for these attacks, I wish to emphasize here the need to insert them into the larger African ecology of despair, in particular young people's feeling of alienation, and "feelings of powerlessness and futility that may manifest in depression and even despair" (SSA in press). Suffice to say, these do not justify the attacks. Anti-foreigner sentiment is a serious problem in South Africa, and no amount of syrup laid on it will change that. But it serves no purpose to denounce anti-foreigner sentiment without taking into account the despair of everyday existence as part of the animating factors.

This leads me to a second reason why the foregoing matters, which is that an awareness of sociohistorical context might curb growing enthusiasm about the social functionality of volunteering. In particular, it should serve as a reminder that, while volunteering may indeed produce tangible outcomes for both the volunteer and the immediate community, it cannot be a replacement for full political involvement. What this means is that volunteering must simultaneously be combined with other civic measures, crucial among which are the ideas of civic engagement and active citizenship as more engaged forms of volunteering that have a more explicit purpose of social change.

Conclusion

Ulrich Beck has noted the irony that many of the positive social goods we have taken for granted today are actually unwitting fallouts of utterly cynical social engineering. With similar sensitivity to paradox, I have suggested that the outcomes of apparently positive social initiatives are uncertain, if not dubious. I do not mean to dampen critical enthusiasm for volunteering. Rather, I wish to interject a particular agnosticism into the emergent official African discourse, as a way of bringing in a desperately needed realism in regard to what volunteering is capable of achieving, particularly in the current global situation in which states, communities, and citizens worldwide are in profound flux, while civil societies continue to chafe under the weight of various prerational impulses.

The tendency in this climate, evident especially in the examples of many states struggling to cope with different degrees of social breakdown, has been to turn toward volunteering. As I noted earlier, there is actually nothing wrong with this, so long as there is clarity about the possibilities—and limitations—of volunteering. In fact, if history is a guide, there are no insuperable reasons why instrumentalizing volunteering in this way should not lead to concrete positive outcomes. A good example is the Nigerian National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) program, which was introduced to help bring about national reconciliation following the end of the country's civil war in 1970. Despite nagging difficulties which are not unrelated to the larger political milieu, the program remains a model of institutional tenacity (Obadare 2007, 2010).

Even then, the instrumentalization of volunteering ought to be combined with persistent questioning about the nature of volunteering, what motivates people to

volunteer, the overlaps and divergences between volunteering and other forms of civic engagement, the gains of formal volunteering vis-à-vis informal forms of volunteering, and the complex links between volunteering and social activism (Perold and Cronin, 2008).

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