

‘Worlds Apart’

The Development of a Serbian Civil Society in Post-conflict Kosovo

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“Tell me and I will forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I will understand.”

– Chinese proverb

“Ne mesaj babe i zabe” – “Don’t mix grandma’s and frogs”

– Serb saying

“Gde deca nisu besna, kuca nije tesna” – “Where kids aren’t wild, a small house isn’t too small”

– Balkan proverb

Contents

Preface & Acknowledgements.....	4
Executive Summary.....	6
List of Abbreviations	9
Part 1.....	10
Chapter 1 - Introduction	10
Introducing the Problem.....	10
Societal and Scientific Relevance	12
A Note on Neutrality	13
A Short History of the Kosovo Case	13
A Bookmarker to the Thesis.....	16
Endnotes – Literature Chapter 1.....	18
Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework.....	19
Conceptual Level: Civil Society.....	19
Strategic Level: Post-Conflict Situations	23
Tactical level: Third Party Intervention.....	28
Endnotes – Literature Chapter 2.....	33
Chapter 3 – Methodology	34
Research Traditions.....	34
Research Types: Fundamental and Practice-oriented	36
Methods of Data Collection	37
Data analysis	41
Endnotes – Literature Chapter 3.....	42
Part 2 - Results and Analysis	43
Chapter 4 - Sketching <i>Serbness</i> , Pinpointing Its Conceptual Roots	43
A Narrative Thread.....	44
Serbian Political Life	45
Serbian Social Life	54
In Conclusion.....	61
Endnotes Chapter 4 - Literature.....	66
Chapter 5 - Developing a Serbian Civil Society in Kosovo.....	67
A Contemporary Serbian Civil Society in Kosovo?	67
Development Practice: Approaches and Results	74
The Development Environment.....	82

Endnotes – Literature Chapter 5.....	88
Chapter 6 - Conclusion.....	89
Answering the Research Question.....	94
Bibliography	96
Appendix A - Interview Guide	100
Appendix B - Place names municipalities Kosovo.....	103
Appendix C - Maps	105

Preface & Acknowledgements

This thesis was written in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Science in Human Geography, specialization 'Conflicts, Territories and Identities,' at the Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands. The curriculum and staff of the master's program armed me with the necessary academic ammunition to successfully confront the challenge of investigating the topic of sustainable civil society development in post-conflict Kosovo. Little did I realize in the beginning that the focus on *sustainability* in the research design would necessitate such an elaborate undertaking in order to come to its conclusion. Nevertheless I am grateful for the opportunity to have expanded my knowledge on the topic, for it is both fascinating and important in our time. And now that I have concluded my endeavor I am more than ever convinced that sustainability of civil society development in peace processes is not only tantamount but also attainable.

My interest in civil society as a means of addressing the problems of conflicts arose in interaction with my supervisor. At first I approached him, concerned as I was, with the apparent inability of elites during processes of *peace-making* (i.e. negotiations) to place the structural needs and concerns of the common person at the center of their deliberations. I wanted to research if a sustainable peace process could be designed within a peace agreement. During the discussion, it became clear that I placed more faith in common people to resolve conflicts than I did on the elites that represented them. My thesis supervisor suggested to research civil society instead of peace-making, and so the focus of this project was born.

My take on civil society expands on the pioneering insights of some academics that continue to represent too small a faction within its discourse. The findings in this thesis allow for rigid reevaluations of current peace-building practice in Kosovo. My research efforts revealed to me that the contemporary *modus operandi* of the international community is deeply ingrained in its institutional think and normative conviction, and its sheer vastness makes it difficult to entice a revolutionary change. However, a shift in thinking is warranted if we desire to attain a sustainable peace, which must be built on the foundations of empirical reality. For if we continue to base it on outside normative values, we run the risk of sustaining frail post-conflict societies that continue to rely on an international life line. Ultimately, such a life line does not correspond with the principle of sustainability, and that peace is primarily the responsibility of former belligerents.

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of many people, whom I owe my sincerest gratitude. Firstly, I thank my parents and their partners for their undying and unconditional support to my education and who continue to stand by me in my endeavors in the present and future. Secondly, I thank Bert Bomert for his supervision and cherished substantive and detailed contributions which helped this thesis to materialize into its current form. Also, many thanks go out to Willemijn Verkoren for being my second reader. Thirdly, a very warm and special thanks go out to the wonderful people of NGO Fractal – Filip, Miloš, Ana, Milica, Sonja, Ziggy, Ana, Neboša and the volunteers – who admirably and tirelessly work to improve conditions for peace in Kosovo, and also accepted me within their team. Without them, my research would not have been possible. Also, my sincere thanks go out to IKV Pax Christi's Daria Nashat and Linda Schevers for stimulating me to apply my research design to the Kosovo case and introducing me to their partner NGO Fractal.

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Executive Summary

This thesis concerns a scientific analysis of current civil society development practice in Kosovo and investigates its sustainability. It is not a policy brief. Thus, instead of providing recommendations, I rely on the academic exercise and restrict myself to providing an answer to the research question. The findings can inform development practitioners and stakeholders in the Kosovo peace process, but the implications thereof are left to them to interpret. That being said, I do soulfully hope that the relevant persons in Kosovo that are occupied with civil society development will take notice of this analysis, because it can offer important contributions to their work. These contributions will be summarized below.

In order to investigate the sustainability of the development of a Serbian civil society in Kosovo, I have taken a wholesome approach. Chapter 2 sets out the theoretical framework of conceptual thinking on civil society, the strategic uses of civil society in post-conflict situations and the tactical implementation of its development. Chapter 3 motivates the methodological approach to this research project. Chapter 4 lays out the contextual framework of the case by investigating the conceptual roots of Kosovo-Serbian life. Chapter 5 is an analysis of civil society development practice in Kosovo. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the thesis.

In Chapter 2 I establish the theoretical framework for this thesis. Firstly, we see that the popular contemporary understanding of civil society is based on the emergence of the concept in late 18th early 19th century Western Europe. This mainstream view of civil society is based on important thinkers such as Hegel and de Tocqueville, representing a sphere of private associational bonds between individuals that is situated between the state, the family and the economy and is an important societal tool for democratic learning. There are also alternative conceptualizations of civil society, although these are less identifiable under a common banner and are under-conceptualized in the discourse. A review of its conceptual discourse reveals that it is crucial to remember that the civil society debate of Western or post-industrialized states developed along very specific historical and cultural lines and should not be presented to have a universal meaning or form that is readily applicable to other regions or localities that lack said historical and cultural conditions. I argue for the necessity to recognize that we tend to think of civil society in normative terms, which can lead to the scientific pitfall that we overlook alternative forms of civil society elsewhere. This is regrettable. Therefore, I have taken the liberty of merging the definitions of Cohen and Arato (1992) and Kaldor (2003) to propose a new definition that does not discriminate to form and places the emphasis on activity – civil society as a process: *civil society is a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority.*

Secondly, in order to strategically apply civil society development in post-conflict situations, we have to reconsider how we view war and peace. Wars are essentially social projects among competing social projects that also occur during peace time. This allows for understanding that wars can embody a realignment of the societal order in relation to the state, albeit violently. It is crucial that this process is not left unaddressed with an international intervention. This is where civil society's merits come in. Civil society in post-conflict situations can mitigate tensions and problems in those societies, and it can continue the process of a realignment of the societal order in relation to the

state. Such a function is especially useful in cases where the legitimacy of the state itself is contested as a result of the conflict, such as in Kosovo. In such contexts, a careful analysis of the conceptual roots of political and social life allows for a tailored approach to civil society development. Ultimately, in order to achieve sustainability of development, support to civil society in post-conflict situations must be anchored within a locally-owned normative framework because it advances ownership and local applicability. Although this remains a challenging task, it is nevertheless the best way of achieving meaningful and long lasting development.

The realization of civil society development at the tactical level is in majority executed by unofficial third party interventionists, such as NGOs. However other factors, such as donors, states and the relationship between international and local NGOs, have to be considered because they shape the environment in which civil society development takes place wherein these play important roles. Since civil society is defined as a process the principal concern of development practitioners on the ground is to increase individual and group participation therein. Four aspects are highlighted: capacity building, advocacy, ownership, and social capital. I particularly focus on the generation of bonding and bridging social capital because of its significance in both micro and macro level processes and its importance for all societies to prosper. Bridging social capital – ties between communities – is in the literature seen to be most advantageous because it is believed to instill tolerance and acceptance of others, whereas bonding social capital – the ties between individuals within communities – is feared to kindle malignant goals towards the other community. However, reviews of development practice in Kosovo revealed problems with these assumptions. In Kosovo, bonding social capital was more easily realizable in practice and was also more effective at mitigating societal tensions. This phenomenon was further investigated in this research.

The second part of this thesis concerns the results and analysis of the conducted field work in the case study. Firstly, Chapter 4 provides an ethnographic account of the conceptual roots of Kosovo-Serbian life on which to base a grounded civil society development approach. This provides for an understanding of the local contextualities wherein we can build a peace that is meaningful on the ground. Both the political and the social life of Kosovo-Serbs are explored. First and foremost, we have to take note of the narrative of a 'Heavenly Serbia' that is interwoven in the worldview of Serbs, which connects Kosovo to the heart of Serbian identity. Furthermore, we see that on the political side, Kosovo-Serbs face dire difficulties. Two principal factors dominate their political life: the fact that their system has been and continues to be in a state of transition which brings about many uncertainties, and the emerging culture of apathy that has spread pervasively in Kosovo-Serbian society. The consideration of the former implies that we should hold careful expectations of Kosovo-Serbs and allow them to first generate much needed experience with taking political responsibility, whereas the latter arises from the feeling among Kosovo-Serbs that they have no control over their own situation. Both factors need to be confronted. Finally, on the social side, we have to take note of three factors: The vertical structure of social relations, the heterogeneous composition of the Serbian communities, and the situational experience of Kosovo-Serbs. Taken together, these insights in the political and social life of Kosovo-Serbs offer the outsider a contextual understanding that can help to inform their development efforts.

Finally, in the analysis of development practice a number of important findings comes to the fore. Firstly, the perceptions that both development practitioners and Kosovo-Serbs themselves have of civil society reveal important complications. Development actors in Kosovo generally do not share a

consensual understanding of civil society, which complicates not only its development but also strains the effectiveness of the results achieved in the past. Meanwhile, the perception of civil society by Kosovo-Serbs is shaped by their experiences, which have not altogether been positive. They mostly equate civil society with NGOs, which through their experiences are seen to be primarily occupied with post-war justice and financial gain. It seems warranted to pursue both results that provide benefits to their communities as well as coherence within the development discourse in Kosovo in order to combat these difficulties.

Secondly, an analysis of the types of approaches to civil society development by NGOs reveals important implications for future practice. Here we see that, rather than bridging social capital, bonding social capital is much more effective in drawing Kosovo-Serbian communities into the process of civil society in Kosovo. NGO programs focusing on creating bonding social capital, such as the Enclavia program of NGO Fractal, produce long lasting and profound effects. They instill ownership of the development process among Kosovo-Serbs because the responsibility for the results is placed with them. Furthermore, bonding social capital development seems to emancipate Serbs as a group or community in Kosovo. It increases their capacity to par-take in Kosovo wide processes. Also it enables them to start formulating their problems from within the context of Kosovo and envisioning constructive solutions that are presented to relevant centers of authority. These results increase the participation of Kosovo-Serbs in civil society, albeit on a small scale, and also produce valuable spin offs that seem to activate the community on a Kosovo-wide scale. Conversely, the value of bridging social capital for civil society development remains unclear. The programs that aim to create this type of capital have so far been largely ineffective, producing mere superficial results that run the risk of evaporating once outside support is ceased. This does not mean that bridging social capital cannot be advantageous. Rather, it suggests that the approaches to its development are insufficiently substantiated and require further attention. The overall analysis of this research suggests that the Kosovo-Serbs structurally lack the conditions within their communities for bridging social capital development to take hold. These conditions must first be improved through their own initiatives, spurred by the stimulation of bonding social capital, before bridges can be built between communities.

Overall, the development of a Serbian civil society is, despite a decade of international development efforts in Kosovo, still in a very premature state. Envisioning civil society as a process will help to identify local forms and alternatives that were previously overlooked. Civil society is conceptually able to function as a conduit between Kosovo-Serbs and Kosovo-Albanians in mitigating their discords peacefully. However, in order to enable this principal merit, first the structural problems of Kosovo-Serbian life must be addressed. The provided account of the conceptual roots of political and social life should provide ample understanding of their current situation. Development practice seems to be most advantageous at present when it focuses on bonding social capital. This can help form a true sense of Kosovo-Serbian community in Kosovo, which is in part still lacking. This frustrates their participation as a group in the process of civil society in Kosovo. Ultimately, civil society must be allowed to address all foreseen problems as formulated by the participations in this process themselves. Ownership herein is key. This means that we must allow civil society to be place for genuine disagreement and stakeholders must be careful not to press their desired normative form of civil society onto Kosovo, but instead allow it to be formed according to a locally owned, normative framework.

List of Abbreviations

CCK	Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija
CCSD	Center for Civil Society Development
CDA-CLP	Collaborative Development Action-Collaborative Learning Projects
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DS	Democratic Party (Demokratska Stranka)
DSS	Democratic Party of Serbia (Demokratska Stranka Srbije)
ECLO	European Commission Liaison Office
EIWB	European Integration and the Western Balkans
EULEX	European Union Rule of Law Mission
EUSR	European Union Special Representative
ICO	International Civilian Office
ICR	International Civilian Representative
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
INGO	International Nongovernment Organization
IO	International Organization
ISG	International Steering Group
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KPS	Kosovo Police Service
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PISG	Provisional Institutions for Self-Government
RTK	Radio Television Kosovo
RTS	Radio Television Serbia
SFRY	Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia
SLS	Independent Liberal Party (Samostalna Liberalna Stranka)
SNC	Serbian National Council
SNS	Serbian Progressive Party (Srpska Napredna Stranka)
SOC	Serbian Orthodox Church
SRS	Serbian Radical Party (Srpska Radikalna Stranka)
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UÇK	Kosovo Liberation Army (Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës)
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIK	United Nations Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General

Part 1

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Peace is wonderful. Peace allows for calm, reason and stability; it is a stable environment which best facilitates a society's development to relative prosperity. This is the most popular notion of peace and it is arguably also the most important reason for the 'international community' to build peace in the not so peaceful areas of the world. But peace is also mythical. The image of peace is so powerful and desirable, that we have come to see it apart from other states of being. There is a pervasive duality of peace and war. War is the anomaly, peace is normality. But is it fair to present it as a duality? What is underneath processes of peace and war? Peace is wonderful because the same things happen in society as they do during war, but non-violently. It is wonderful because that makes it the most difficult and challenging endeavor to all, requiring a level of courage to maintain it that far surpasses the courage needed to settle issues by fighting violently.

This is the central thought to the thesis before you. It motivates that similar societal processes occur both during peace and war or conflict. The difference is violence, which by itself is quite meaningless. It is the underlying processes that matter. And civil society embodies these processes in a non-violent manner. These words undoubtedly raise many questions. The answers can be found below.

Introducing the Problem

Kosovo is in many ways a unique case. Kosovo was the gate closer of the breakup of the former Yugoslavia that occurred throughout the 1990s. It hosts one of the largest scale international interventions, which encompasses not only security (NATO), but even an unprecedented take-over of the complete administration of the region (UNMIK) from 1999 until February 2008, when the Provisional Institutions for Self-Government (PISG) of Kosovo declared independence from Serbia. Meanwhile, international efforts to build peace and supervise the independence of Kosovo continue to this day – including the continuance of UNMIK, and the conflict over Kosovo's status between Serbia and Kosovo remains unresolved. Also, the Kosovo case has challenged the traditional and highly valued principles of self-determination and territorial integrity, thus sparking an international reorientation on these matters. The embodiment hereof is the pending advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice of "the accordance with international law of the unilateral declaration of independence by the PISG of Kosovo."ⁱ

Civil society is a magical word in the intervention and peace-building discourses. In the popular academic debate, the relative stability and prosperity of Western countries is to a very high degree attributed to civil society. Civil society is seen to be mitigating tensions in society that arise from democracy and capitalism. Partly because civil society is framed in this manner, its development in post-conflict regions is highly valued and sought after, including in Kosovo. However, it is crucial to be sensitive to the contextual differences of regions that are alien to the origin of civil society as a concept in order to pursue not only successful, but also sustainable development. Sustainable development should enjoy the highest priority seeing as international commitment to a post-conflict region is not endless. Therefore the development of civil society should materialize in such a way,

that it can be sustained after the international community packs up and leaves to devote its much needed attention elsewhere.

This thesis aspires to motivate the uses of civil society for peace-building processes, and aims to prove that civil society development in Kosovo, as part of the peace-building process, should be done within a locally-owned normative framework, and where sustainability of such peace-building can only be reached when the efforts are integrated into local capacities.

The empirical goal of the project is to have the fieldwork testify to the strengths and weaknesses of theory on civil society development, and aid in the development of further knowledge and insight. The project has a strong ethnographic approach that ambitiously aims to seek an understanding of the local contextualities on which to ground civil society development integrally. Practically, the project results should help to inform the work of the various stakeholders in the civil society development process in Kosovo. There is very little research done specifically on civil society development in Kosovo and the project thus has the potential to vastly contribute to insights into the process taking place.

To this end, the following central question will be answered:

What is the sustainability of the development of Serbian civil society in post-conflict Kosovo and how can it be improved?

In order to answer the central question, a number of sub questions are formulated:

- *What is civil society?*
- *What are the conceptual roots of political and social life of Kosovo-Serbs?*
- *What is the perception that various actors on the ground in Kosovo have of civil society and how does this relate to its development?*
- *What types of approaches to civil society development are most effective in Kosovo?*
- *What is the environment in which civil society development takes place in Kosovo?*

The project is able to paint a detailed picture of Serbian civil society development in Kosovo through the uses of participatory fieldwork, observations and qualitative in-depth interviews. During a period of five months, I have had the privilege of experiencing the challenges to peace-building and civil society development in Kosovo first hand. During this time I was embedded as a researcher and intern with NGO Fractal, a Belgrade-based Serbian nongovernmental organization (NGO) with the majority of their activities in Kosovo. The research is derived from this experience and contains information and insights of different kinds of actors with experience with civil society work – apart from NGO Fractal also other local and non-local actors, and governmental, intergovernmental as well as nongovernmental actors are documented. All combined the answers to the questions will lay bare the difficulties of civil society development in Kosovo and, because of the unique opportunity to conduct the research from within the Serbian community, the local normative framework will be accounted for and will be a central part of the presentation.

Societal and Scientific Relevance

Post-conflict peace-building is done with trial and error for some decades now. It is a highly difficult and complex process, often requiring a long term approach to become successful. However, much of the efforts in building up civil society in war torn countries is wasted because it does not integrate well into localities' capital and capacities – its resources, customs, and culture. The necessity of long term commitment is usually recognized on paper but rarely works out in practice. Attention from the international community to a post-conflict country wanes after an initial few years of commitment. Resources of intervening states have to be allocated elsewhere, while the reconstruction of a fragile society is still in its early stages.

Peace-building is usually facilitated by the international community that has its own peace-building *industry*. Countless international NGOs, international civil servants, outside resources and programs all go to work in a post-conflict situation, driving the process. The problem is that outside help works from an outside perspective. There seems to be a biased view from external actors towards how to build up civil society. Their approach is founded on a Western based conceptualization of civil society with which the international community feels comfortable. However, if the programs it created do not fit well with local variables, such as culture and structure, the effects of peace-building programs can become redundant and even hazardous when the international circus packs up and leaves.

By researching the conceptual roots of local political and social life, we can learn how to integrate development into local contexts. This aids in strengthening civil society in post-conflict situations. By tailoring the programs in this manner, they become more inclusive and local actors can truly attain ownership of their situation. My reasoning is that this approach will have more effect and be more beneficial toward furthering sustainable peace. If it is indeed more effective, it will also help to save resources the international community spends on peace-building projects. The turnover of development will be higher in terms of the results it generates. Moreover, the current financial crisis is surging on a global scale, making the increased effectiveness of spent resources a more prudent matter than ever before. The project aims to lay bare the problems and challenges in the interplay between local/internal and international/external actors and can be used by the stakeholders in the process to improve the sustainability of their efforts.

Research on civil society development in post-conflict societies is still young in the already relatively young discipline of conflict studies. Subsequently, although quite some theory has been developed already, many new insights and developments continue to take place. One important feature of much of the literature is that the citizens-state relations, or social contract, should be strengthened to increase resilience to crises and instability. This is widely recognized. However, it also presents a paradox. International actors that would want to invest in another country's social contract must be careful not to infringe upon a nation's sovereignty. It can be seen as meddling in a state's affairs, while it is simultaneously seen as required to boost a country's resilience to fragility. Support for civil society by states can become politicized and that appearance is undesired. Meanwhile many seem to forget that the international actors that shy from the appearance of state meddling are committed precisely because they often had a stake in intervention in the first place.

Furthermore, the bulk of literature on the subject has pinpointed the major challenges to civil society development in post-conflict regions. Unfortunately the analyses and lessons learned seem troubling to apply in practice as development practitioners struggle to involve Kosovo-Serbs in

Kosovo processes, and previous research shows that past projects have mostly produced superficial results, evidenced for example by the riots of March 2004 that entailed a surge of inter-ethnic violence. Why civil society development continues to be problematic is documented in a less frequent way. This research can contribute to an explanation for this phenomenon. It tests how civil society development relates to peace-building by means of fieldwork in Kosovo. It is a small scale investigation of civil society development efforts among the Serbian community in Kosovo that, because of the project's size, is able to go into detail, thus supporting or disproving the literature on concrete focal points, and can alternatively provide suggestions for further research and future practice.

A Note on Neutrality

Since the opinions on Kosovo's status are utterly divided, all possible topics in Kosovo can become politicized. As a researcher I have aimed to perform my task from a neutral position. However, the research set up is limited to investigating the development of a Serbian civil society due to the restricted scope of a master thesis and the choices that were made in designing the project. Thus, I could not go into a comprehensive research of complete Kosovo civil society building that includes the Albanians and also the other minorities. I stress that the efforts to understand and subsequently present the Kosovo-Serb situation in this thesis are made because it was necessary to enable an answering of the research question, and hope that the reader will not take it up as biased research. Instead, I challenge the reader to read the thesis on its scientific merits.

Furthermore, since Kosovo's official languages are both Albanian and Serbian, place naming can likewise become a political issue. In this thesis I have opted for using the international name, instead of providing both the Albanian and Serbian names simultaneously – the latter manner is often used in reports and articles on Kosovo. I have done so for reasons of pragmatism and because it is not relevant to the substance of this thesis. However, in Appendix B I acknowledge the Albanian and Serbian as well as the international names of places. The reader can look there for further reference. Names of persons are presented in the fashion of the person's native language.

A Short History of the Kosovo Case

The following presents a short introduction into the Kosovo case that serves as background information to the reader. It is in no way comprehensive and encompassing of all events preceding and during the conflict in 1998-1999, nor of all events following it. Instead, it identifies the key moments in its history and the involved main actors.

Pre War Events & the Conflict

In Kosovo, Albanian students started to revolt in 1981 in protest against conditions of education and unemployment, which evolved into a growing dissatisfaction with Yugoslavia.ⁱⁱ In reaction, the Communist establishment took considerable measures to suppress Albanian defiance to the federation.¹ Meanwhile Slobodan Milošević ascended to power in Serbia by addressing and actively stimulating nationalist sentiments, the most famous incident being the 1987 staged abuse of Kosovo-Serbs by Kosovo(-Albanian) police in which he declared: "Serbs will never be beaten by anyone again," which was broadcasted widely on Serbian channels. Authors have marked this

¹ To give an example, between March 1981 and mid 1986 6,400 people in Kosovo were sentenced to a total of 10,000 years in prison. Interestingly, most judges were Albanians of the communist establishment who argued the 1974 constitution was worth defending against Albanian separatist sentiments (Detrez (1999), pp. 94-95).

incident the decisive tipping point of surging nationalism in Yugoslavia.ⁱⁱⁱ Milošević became president of Serbia in 1989. In that year Serbia revoked Kosovo's autonomy and in the period from 1989 to late 1990 Serbia proceeded to suppress Albanian rights, including the banishment of Albanian language media. Finally in September 1990 Serbia amended the Yugoslav 1974 Constitution. From then onwards Albanians were not considered a nationality with due rights, but a national minority in Serbia.^{iv} In response the Albanians organized themselves in a parallel government in Kosovo and on 22 September 1991 declared independence. This heralded a new period of peaceful protests by Kosovo-Albanians, but by 1995-1996 the situation escalated into the violent targeting by Kosovo-Albanians of Serbian symbols of state authority, such as policemen. During this period the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK) was being formed and began to take shape. The UÇK, although of low capacity and resources, started using clever guerilla tactics to strike critical blows at Serbian power instruments.

Subsequently, Serbia took measures of force to quell the Albanian uprising and use of violence. As a result of the ensuing violence many Albanians fled from their homes.² The exodus of Kosovo-Albanians threatened to destabilize neighboring regions, including Macedonia that was relatively spared from conflict in the process of Yugoslavia's dissolution.^v Alarmed by these effects, NATO started a massive bombing campaign on 24 March 1999, despite the lack of a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) mandate, with the specific purpose of forcing the surrender of the Serbian military campaign in Kosovo. Milošević's Serbia surrendered on 11 June 1999. During the intervention and its aftermath, Kosovo-Albanians seized the opportunity to express and vent their grievances against the Serbian population, often resulting in violent reprisals. As a result, this time many Serbs in Kosovo fled their homes to settle in the relative protection of Serb enclaves in Kosovo or move to Serbia proper entirely.^{vi} Meanwhile the UNSC deliberated on the Kosovo question. It adopted UNSC resolution 1244 on 10 June 1999 which installed the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), charged with governance of the territory until a final status settlement would be reached.^{vii}

Post War Events

The war brought with it a large displacement of population in Kosovo. The last census was conducted in 1991 and is no longer attributed any accuracy. Best estimates place around 150.000-200.000 Serbs in Kosovo and around 2-2.2 million Albanians.³ After the NATO intervention many Serbs fled to Serbia while others fled north of the river Ibar in Kosovo, where predominantly Serbs live, or into enclaves elsewhere. As a result, Kosovo became more or less a patch work of ethnic pockets. Since the movement of persons settled down, Serbs are a majority in the three northern municipalities Leposaviq, Zubin Potok, Zvečan and Shtërpce in the south, and made up a significant portion of the population in Albanian dominated municipalities throughout Kosovo such as in the enclaves of Mitrovica north, Novo Brdo and Gračanice.⁴

² Detrez (1999: 144) warns for taking sides in this history, as it is a chicken-or-egg story: Was Serbian repression a reaction to growing Albanian revolt or was it the other way around?

³ Furthermore around 1 or 2% of the total population is comprised of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians (RAE), while Gurani and Bosniacs are also present.

⁴ However, Kosovo authorities have recently initiated a process of decentralization that also restructured its municipalities to create new Serb majority municipalities. Local elections for these municipality bodies were held in November 2009, but in the Serb areas the voter turnout was very low.

Since the intervention in Kosovo, its governance has incrementally evolved into a vastly complex and overlapping web of authorities. UNMIK was established in 1999 and assumed full civil administrative authority over Kosovo – while building up indigenous capacity for self-government called the Provisional Institutions for Self-Government (PISG). NATO's Kosovo Protection Force (KFOR) was charged with security provision and continues to exercise this mandate to date. The UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) that headed UNMIK was also charged with finding a final status settlement for Kosovo. In 2006, after years of unfruitful deliberations between Serbia and Kosovo-Albanian representatives, then SRSG Martti Ahtisaari decided that the impasse in the negotiations on Kosovo's status could not be breached. He issued, in line with his mandate, a plan to the UNSC titled the 'Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement' (hereinafter called: 'Ahtisaari Plan') on 2 February 2007, which entailed the independence of Kosovo with sanctioned international supervision.^{viii} However, the UNSC rejected the Ahtisaari Plan.⁵ Nonetheless, strengthened by the support of various powerful Western states, including the United States of America and a number of European Union countries, the PISG of Kosovo declared independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008. In line with the Ahtisaari Plan and the new Kosovo Constitution, an international civilian presence was established called the International Civilian Representative (ICR) to supervise the roll out of independence for which it has executive powers in Kosovo during the transitional stage, the exact length of which is undefined. The ICR is appointed by the International Steering Group (ISG), a group of states that supported the plan for Kosovo's independence. Mr. Pieter Feith acts as ICR and he is supported in his tasks by the International Civilian Office (ICO).^{ix}

Furthermore, although the European Union does not recognize Kosovo as an independent state, 22 of its 27 member states do,⁶ and the European Union has announced that Kosovo has a European future. There is a European Commission Liaison Office (ECLLO) in Kosovo that performs many reconstruction tasks, helps with economic development, and deploys its tools under the Stabilization and Association Process to guide Kosovo on the way to a possible accession.^x Meanwhile, a European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) also operates in Kosovo to help build up the judiciary system and the general rule of law. Also, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is active in Kosovo by aiding the Kosovo government to develop its democratic capacities and institutions.

All the while Serbia has resisted the independence of Kosovo and continues to claim its sovereignty over the territory. In order to uphold this claim, Serbia has continued to finance its state structures in Kosovo since 1999 until the present. It has conducted local municipal elections in Kosovo and enabled Kosovo-Serbs to vote for the Serbian national elections too. Teachers and doctors, among others, are civil servants in Serbia and it has increased the salaries for Serbs to work in such public positions in Kosovo to 200 per cent as an incentive to remain or return there.

The acceptability of all these actors to the former belligerents has varied over the course of the last decade and is under strain. Although Serbia at first resisted UNMIK, it is now the only acceptable actor to represent Kosovo because it is status neutral in line with UNSC resolution 1244. In an attempt to reconcile the institutional ambiguity and the resultant increasingly negative reactions from both Serbia and Kosovo, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon drafted an unofficial 'Six Point

⁵ The Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China, both permanent members of the UN Security Council, oppose Kosovo's independence.

⁶ Spain, Romania, Cyprus, Slovakia and Greece do not recognize Kosovo's independence.

Plan.^{xii} ⁷ Unfortunately this plan was rejected by the Kosovo government. Since independence, Kosovo authorities and the general Kosovo-Albanian population are becoming increasingly impatient with the international presence and interference with governance issues.

The political status of Kosovo remains the source of intense dispute. At present, there are three dissimilar interpretations that give rise to different realities in Kosovo: its independence is recognized either formally or informally by 69 countries;^{xiii} United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 proclaiming Kosovo to be a UN protectorate is legally still in effect; and Serbia still considers Kosovo to be part of its sovereign territory.⁸ The result hereof is the complex web of Kosovo state structures, Serbian state structures and international administrative, judiciary and security bodies that were explained above.⁹ UNMIK is still present because UNSC resolution 1244 has not disbanded yet. The disputed status of Kosovo among Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo is still the primary source of tension and the lagging process of reconciliation.

The inflammatory status question is caused by the high emotional value of Kosovo for both former belligerents. Albanians regard Kosovo as their rightful territory. They argue to have inhabited the region as a majority for hundreds of years and have always been ruled by others. This is where their desire for self-determination and independence stems from. However, Serbs have a similar emotional plight and regard Kosovo to be at the heart of their identity. The Ottoman Empire ruled the Western Balkan region for six hundred years, but left the peoples they conquered their own religious institutions. It is claimed that the Serbian Orthodox Church originated in Kosovo. The influential Church once thrived in the region, and many of the oldest monasteries and holy sites are located in Kosovo. While Serbs were usurped and ruled by the Ottomans in this six century long period, the Church was left in relative peace. Hence, Serbs regard their Church as the guardian of their national identity, which attributes the emotional importance to Kosovo.^{xiii}

A Bookmarker to the Thesis

The presentation of the research on Serbian civil society development and its sustainability in this thesis is structured in two parts, each composed of multiple chapters that build on each other's substance consecutively. Part 1 presents the academic framework of the research. The first chapter introduces the research project and presents both the research problem, motivates its societal and scientific relevance, and provides a short history of the Kosovo case.

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framework. It approaches the academic debate on civil society from a holistic point of view on three different levels: a conceptual, strategic and tactical level. Therefore it starts with a discussion of the meaning and merits of civil society in post-conflict peace-building. Afterwards, the goal of civil society development in peace-building is established. Finally, the tactical level addresses how civil society development is implemented in practice, and identifies the main practical challenges.

⁷ These 'six points' cover the aspects: police, customs, transportation and infrastructure, boundaries, and Serbian patrimony.

⁸ Interpretation two and three are interwoven, though formally distinct. United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 established a protectorate on Serbia's territory.

⁹ For a more detailed description, see for instance International Crisis Group (2008).

Chapter 3 provides the methodological approach to the research project. After a critical reflection of different research traditions and types, it motivates the eventual research methods that were applied to establish the theoretical framework and the collection of data during five months of fieldwork in Kosovo and Serbia. Finally, the applied methods of data analysis are presented and motivated.

Part 2 of the thesis contains the presentation of the fieldwork and ends in the research's conclusion. Chapter 4 is devoted to establishing the conceptual roots of political and social life of Kosovo-Serbs. The focus of this chapter is to create a thorough understanding with the reader of how Kosovo-Serbs picture their world and explains their situation in detail. The goal hereof is to create a contextual sensitivity wherein the eventual development of civil society can be integrated.

Chapter 5 is a meticulous scrutiny of the practice of civil society development in the Serbian communities in Kosovo. It first establishes the current state of Serbian civil society in Kosovo, including the perception of civil society by both development practitioners as well as Kosovo-Serbs. Then, it studies the types of approaches to civil society development by nongovernmental organizations, focusing particularly on creating two kinds of social capital among Kosovo-Serbs. The analysis of these different approaches is placed within the larger framework of theory and contextual understanding of Kosovo-Serbs. It finishes with a bird's eye view of the environment in which civil society takes place, accounting for the relations between international and local NGOs, donors, and the role of state actors, in order to account for structural incentives and difficulties surrounding the facilitation of civil society development in Kosovo.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis. It weaves the answers to the research questions into a coherent whole and analyzes its implications, not only for Kosovo on a practical level, but also for the academic debate on civil society development in post-conflict situations on an international scale.

Endnotes – Literature Chapter 1

- ⁱ International Court of Justice, General List No. 141, 17 October 2008.
- ⁱⁱ Detrez (1999), pp. 78-89.
- ⁱⁱⁱ *ibid.*, p. 102; Judah (2000), pp. xii, 160-162, 298.
- ^{iv} Krieger (2001), pp. 1-2.
- ^v Detrez (1999), pp. 176-184.
- ^{vi} Collaborative Development Action-Collaborative Learning Projects (2006), p. 24.
- ^{vii} United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244, S/RES/1244, 10 June 1999.
- ^{viii} Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement, 2 February 2007.
- ^{ix} <http://www.ico-kos.org/>
- ^x Website of the European Union Liaison Office in Kosovo: <http://www.delprn.ec.europa.eu/?cid=2,110>
- ^{xi} This 'Six Point Plan' is an unofficial document, but it is derived from the Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, S/2008/692, p. 8-10.
- ^{xii} <http://www.kosovothanksyou.com/>
- ^{xiii} Interview 7, 13 March 2009.

Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework

This chapter goes into the theoretical concepts that underline the research I performed in Kosovo. The first section treats the origin and concept of civil society and takes place solely at the conceptual level. Next is a section on post-conflict situations and state-building, covering the strategic level. The chapter concludes with a treatise of third party intervention and can be regarded as the tactical level. These paragraphs are further introduced below. Together, they form the theoretical framework by means of which I analyze the research materials gathered in the field.

Conceptual Level: Civil Society

In order to establish the sustainability of Serbian civil society development in Kosovo, it is necessary to first come to an understanding of the phenomenon coined 'civil society'. This rather elusive concept has been laden with a wide variety of meanings and interpretations. In order to be clear about what I understand it to mean, I first go briefly into the origin of modern thinking on civil society. Next I will treat the way civil society is embedded in contemporary political and public thought. Since the role of Western states in the international intervention and subsequent peace-building and state-building in Kosovo is prominent, I expect that their customary model of civil society also informs their development efforts. The final part of this first section treats the relationship between civil society and state-building itself. Civil society development is deemed necessary for effective state-building. Thus I explore the debate on this intricate relationship.

The Origin and the Concept of Civil Society

It is a quite commonly heard term in discussions about public life, politics and society: civil society. It is used as a kind of catch-all phrase for the activities a society is buzzing with. But the more often it is used, the more eclectic the debate becomes and authors have struggled to define it and capture it in theory. To grasp what civil society is, we must take a brief historical look at the concept, how it got first introduced and how it was understood. Then we will see that civil society is context-dependent and its meaning resembles the life of its time. Once this is clear we can also be sensitive to the context of civil society development elsewhere, such as in Kosovo, and we will be better equipped to analyze what we can do to enhance that process.

Civil society is a very old term and the origin of the idea is attributed to Aristotle.¹ In his time civil society indicated as much as the polis or society that was civil and democratized.¹ Backward as it may seem in our time, the Athenian city state democracies were quite the revolutionary concept in theirs, and civil society was used to describe it. The conceptual meaning of civil society changed in the late eighteenth, early nineteenth century period. It became a prominent term that signaled a novel and revolutionary idea. Although a lot of authors of the (post-)Enlightenment period are associated with civil society thinking,² I restrict myself here to discussing two: Georg W.F. Hegel and Alexis de Tocqueville. I discuss these authors because the most fundamental conceptual contributions of civil society have been attributed to them in the popular discourse. Our present

¹ Of course in those days democracy meant as much as what we now understand by aristocracy. Moreover, only adult male Athenian citizens that had completed their military training were allowed to vote.

² See for instance also Immanuel Kant, John Locke, John Stuart Mills, Adam Ferguson.

understanding of civil society can be traced back to these two canonical authors, but I will come to that later on in this paragraph.

Hegel attributed a different meaning to civil society than how it was understood before him, and it changed the way people thought about it. Before Hegel, civil society meant as much as a certain *type of state*. This was a society where everyone fell subject and was equal to the law, including the ruler. This was, as Kaldor points out, “a social contract agreed upon by the individual members of society.”ⁱⁱ Hegel saw it differently. He argued in the beginning of the nineteenth century that civil society was something of a place or space in between the state and the family or individual – an intermediary realm. The individual could become a public person through associations and “reconcile the particular with the universal,” or, mediate his private interests with what was going on publicly. As pointed out by various authors, Hegel’s new conceptualization of civil society also included the market.ⁱⁱⁱ

A second contributor in the development toward the modern concept of civil society was Alexis de Tocqueville. As a student of American society, he was the first to point out that civil society plays an important role in *democratization*. He believed that “the democratic character of the political culture or of social and political institutions” had to be maintained by an active citizenry, in other words the people needed to practice with their rights as citizens in order to keep political culture healthily democratic.^{iv}

Both Hegel and de Tocqueville thus significantly contributed to the change in understanding of civil society. Hegel was the first to state that civil society is conceptually detached from the state, and de Tocqueville drew attention to the necessity of an active citizenry in keeping up the democratic character of the state.

Contemporary Civil Society

Civil society at present is variedly interpreted. However, the contemporary debate is dominated by a mainstream strand that is heavily influenced by canonical authors such as Hegel and de Tocqueville. This has led it to be presented as with universal meaning. However, the following perspective shows how these and other past thinkers form the basis of contemporary thought and reveal that there are also alternative conceptualizations of civil society. Thus both the mainstream and alternative strands are presented, allowing a more nuanced picture of civil society to emerge. This section reiterates the importance to remind oneself of the contextuality of civil society, but more importantly it highlights its diversity. I furthermore argue that it is important to recognize the normative character of conceptual debates for analytical purposes. I conclude with a working definition.

Frank Trentmann (2004) objects to the liberal democratic reading of most contemporary authors on the history of civil society, is critical of the selective use of ‘popular’ canonical authors such as Hegel and de Tocqueville,³ and offers an important warning. According to Trentmann, civil society in the discourse of North-Western Europe of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century was “divinely bounded.”^v He argues quite effectively that (Protestant) Christianity at the time was pervasive in society, and that civil society was seen to be held together because of fear of God and obedience to the ruler, without both society would not exist. Tolerance and democratic values as we understand it

³ Trentmann (2004: 27) self-admittedly crudely summarizes, albeit entertainingly, the popular reading of Locke, Smith, Kant, Hegel, de Tocqueville and Marx in roughly ten sentences.

today were scarce if not non-existent. People were first of all expected to be good Christians, whereas minorities (in North-Western Europe) such as “[d]issenters, Catholics and Jews continued to be excluded from the polity and from many professions [...]”^{vi} Therefore, Trentmann warns for associating civil society with the rise of liberal democracy in that time. In fact, while associational life expanded and democracy rose in the second half of the nineteenth century, references to civil society in theory waned. Civil society, in short, was not as actively conceived by people during, nor as associated with, the rise of democratic Europe as we sometimes attribute it to have been. However, oddly enough this historical reading is at the basis of the most common perception of civil society in the West.

The mainstream, or dominant view of civil society is by no means unambiguously applied as a concept. However, civil society is above all else understood to be associational – groups of people with converging interests that organize themselves – and situated between family or individual and state, following Hegel’s legacy. Furthermore it is viewed as a vital part of the maintenance of a healthy democratic system, following de Tocqueville’s legacy. This is echoed by Cohen and Arato (1992), whose first attempt at a coherent theory of civil society is both influential and characteristic of the mainstream strand. The authors observe the reemerging use of civil society as a concept because of the political (democratic) changes that happened at the end of the Cold War. They focus on the concept’s relation to Western institutional mechanisms, its uses for expanding democracy and its relevance for all kinds of contemporary societies. They define civil society as:

“a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication.”^{vii}

Howell and Pearce (2001) distinguish various views on civil society and group them in raw categories called ‘mainstream’ and ‘alternative’ conceptualizations of civil society. They accept the different connotations of civil society right off the bat, and argue that within these categories there are also many differences. The contemporary enthusiasm surrounding civil society in academic, political and economic spheres can be attributed to the rise of neo-liberalism in the 1980s. Combined with the end of the Cold War at the end of the decade, the 1980s heralded the supremacy of the market over the state and liberal democracy as the best kind of political organization.^{viii} Liberal democracy and capitalism are the two core principles of the mainstream view of civil society. Economic development brought capitalism and prosperity, but also divisions of labor and social inequalities. Civil society, in the mainstream perspective, is the public sphere of associational bonds that can mitigate the tensions brought about by the development towards democracy and capitalist driven prosperity.^{ix}

On the other hand Howell and Pearce identify an alternative conceptualization of civil society. This strand is based on a different set of intellectual roots, although they think it is under-theorized and more heterogeneous than the mainstream approach. Instead of building on liberal democratic norms and economic development reasoning which partly flow from neo-liberalism, it is based on the ideas of Antonio Gramsci. He argued at the beginning of the twentieth century that civil society was a realm of culture, ideology and political debate that was used by the powers that be to persuade people to accept the trend toward liberalization and capitalism.^x The alternative strand developed as a reaction on the mainstream approach in the 1980s and its main function is to criticize

popular assumptions of civil society. Both developments signify the reemergence of civil society as a popular conceptual tool at that time. It also reiterates that civil society is not a universal concept, although the prevalence of the mainstream strand can make one falsely believe that it is a clear cut phenomenon.⁴

Notwithstanding the alternative conception, civil society's common understanding *is* built on the canonical authors of late eighteenth, early nineteenth century Europe. It is built on the assumption that it is a crucial sphere of mitigation between the various spaces of public and private life. Civil society is presented as a necessary field to mitigate the inherent contradictions and tensions brought about by expanding capitalism, such as social stratification and concentration of power.^{xi} Civil society is regarded to be associational and voluntary, but important differences do remain. Mary Kaldor (2003) defines civil society as: "the process through which individuals negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with the centers of political and economic authority."^{xii} She emphasizes civil society as a process of change, whereas Cohen and Arato's definition mentioned earlier emphasizes that various components of life make up a sphere of civil society wherein action is embedded but is not its primary form.

Finally, it is important to recognize the normativity of the conceptual debate. By defining civil society as a sphere or place, scientists such as Cohen and Arato approach the subject descriptively, whereas Kaldor bluntly acknowledges the normative character of her definition. However, both definitions are normative because they point to a desired type of state. This is a state that allows the liberty of different spheres of associational organization in the first place, thereby accentuating liberal democratic norms. I do not wish to argue that defining civil society ought to be stripped of normativity. Instead I argue that our contemporary understanding of civil society is normative, and it is important to recognize it as such. This would shield academic, political and public debates from the pitfall that comes from presenting civil society without normative nuance: there is more than one form of civil society and they are easily overlooked in analyses – for example where liberal democratic development did not coincide with economic progress but where civil society is a force nonetheless, such as in China. This is what Howell and Pearce call distinguishing between civil society as a normative concept and an empirical reality.^{xiii}

My main argument about civil society can be summarized as follows: It is crucial to remember that the civil society debate of Western or post-industrialized states developed along very specific historical and cultural lines and should not be presented to have a universal meaning or form that is readily applicable to other regions or localities that lack said historical and cultural conditions. I do however see it as a universal phenomenon: civil society can be identified anywhere and at any time, if one is sensitive to the specific context and open to different forms. In that sense, one has to distinguish between civil society as a normative concept and an empirical reality. Furthermore I have shown that civil society is connoted to some kind of process of change. Therefore, I combine Cohen and Arato's definition with Kaldor's to propose my own:

Civil society is a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority.

⁴ Howell & Pearce's analysis drives them to warn for the dangers in portraying civil society to be a universal concept. I will address some of these in Chapter 5 in relation to the field material.

I propose, in contrast to Kaldor, not to limit the centers of authority to political or economic ones. Since doing so would by definition lead to the exclusion of one or another kind of authority, it in turn would exclude that phenomenon from an analysis of civil society. As other authors have also indicated, this is analytically undesirable.^{xiv} Subsequently this definition is least likely to potentially discriminate against or exclude aspects from empirical analysis.

Civil Society and the State

Now that I have treated civil society on its conceptual merits, I briefly highlight its relation to the state before proceeding to analyze the role of civil society in post-conflict situations. In the conceptual discussion civil society is often related to the state. How this relation should be regarded is another point of contestation. For some there is a clear dichotomy between the two, while others argue that presenting it as such is an oversimplification.^{xv} Whether a dichotomy or not, it shows that civil society also has a political dimension. Since the 1980s, the Tocquevillian notion – which emphasizes its democratizing potential – has gained prominence and came to shape the mainstream perspective. There is widespread consensus that well functioning societies exist because of the merits of a well functioning civil society. For instance, the differences between the dynamic and democratic Western societies and former Communist societies are attributed in large part due to the presence of the former's (strong) civil societies and the latter's previous lack thereof. Likewise, Parekh (2004) argues that “a varied and vibrant civil society can provide the state with moral depth and political vitality [...]” Hence, the argument goes that in order to have free, vibrant and democratic well-functioning states, these must have a civil society.^{xvi} These analyses have led to a school of thought that places civil society at the heart of what is regarded to be good statehood. Subsequently, this notion is applied in the following to strategies on engaging in post-conflict situations.

Strategic Level: Post-Conflict Situations

This section establishes the relationship of civil society to post-conflict situations and its role in peace-building. The analysis suggests that civil society is fundamental to building a durable peace, and that still much can be gained by better stimulating its development in current peace-building practices. In order to get there, I first scrutinize the manners of international engagement in post-conflict situations as it has developed since the 1990s. This entails reviewing the policy of democratization and three schools of intervention practice. Special attention is paid to how intervention strategies envision civil society in such contexts and its role in the arduous task of building peace. Then, using a critical framework that is proposed by various authors on the nature of conflict, of the state and of state-society relations, a fundamental role of civil society is revealed in the peace-building process. In sum, this section's purpose is to link the concept to its eventual practical usage, ultimately providing a framework for understanding the purpose of civil society development in Kosovo.

Firstly, as the old antagonisms that accompanied the bipolar world order subdued with the end of the Cold War, the impasse in international cooperation was breached and the international community took a new direction in conflict intervention. This allowed the United Nations (UN) to increase its role in conflict situations in the 1990s, a time when conflicts increasingly became of an intrastate nature. It was also the time that democracy came to be taken for granted as the only legitimate political system able to address the rifts in societies that were previously submerged in civil war.^{xvii} Because the merits of democracy were axiomatic at the time, peace operations in the

1990s all pursued the strategy of democratization.^{xviii} Then UN Secretary-General (UNSG) Boutros Boutros-Ghali called democratization “a process which leads to a more open, more participatory, less authoritarian society.” The idea was that democratic processes and institutions could channel the competing interests of formerly warring parties, minimizing the risk of resuming conflict. In order to stimulate this process, he advocated a comprehensive peace-building policy that besides the common top-down measures would include bottom-up assistance to develop a democratic political culture through civil-society building.^{xix}

Thus, civil society in Boutros-Ghali’s peace-building policy takes up a prominent role as it was required to develop a democratic political culture. The development of this ‘culture of democracy’, as he also called it, was to be at the start of any democratization process. Boutros-Ghali defined it as “a political culture, which is fundamentally non-violent and in which no one party or group expects to win or lose all the time,” and it was to be built on a consensus in society about “the process and framework of democratic political life.”^{xx} However, he did not substantiate what civil society is, how it would be ‘built’ through international and domestic support, nor how civil society would then develop a democratic political culture.⁵ This can be regarded as a gap in the underlying reasoning of the policy. The potential of civil society was attributed with rather mythical proportions and assumptions about its causal effects on democracy. Effects that, as was established in the first section of this chapter as well as by other authors,^{xxi} are not entirely evident. After all, although civil society is necessary for democracy to function well, it does not necessarily produce a democratic culture. The popular belief in the discourse of policy and academia that civil society does produce a democratic culture is a norm rather than a law of nature and can very well be at odds with the empirical, especially in contexts different from where the concept originated.

Not surprisingly, democratization as part of peace-building did not always work out as planned in practice. Moreover, as Marina Ottaway (2007) states, the process of democratization in countries where intervention took place since the 1990s took on a coercive character, “regardless of existing conditions and/or citizens’ preference.”^{xxii} It turned out that the democratic model as it functioned in well-established democracies was exported to other contexts (those of conflict areas) that lack necessary preconditions for democracy, while the approach to develop such a system in these different contexts was immaturely substantiated. Transitional periods prove to be tumultuous and conflictual, especially with weak governmental institutions that are characteristic of conflict-ridden societies.^{xxiii} International support for democratization generally took on the form of security assistance, constitution drafting and electoral support, while support to civil society – although paradoxically it was regarded as essential in the popular discourse to facilitate democratization – was restricted to grant and training programs for civil society organizations (CSOs). Commentators call attention to the adverse effects of these policies, some noting that democracy assistance can give rise to semi-authoritarian regimes,^{xxiv} with others casting serious doubts over the long-term future viability of these newly established democratic systems.

In fact there is intense debate going on between academics and policymakers, producing what can generally be distinguished as three different schools of intervention and peace-building practice –

⁵ At one point he mentions institution-building for democratization (as apart from electoral assistance), which could be taken to also include civil society building. However, Boutros-Ghali goes on to stipulate that “it is a newer and wider area of international activity which [...] lacks a precise organizational focus (Agenda for Democratization, A/51/761, paragraph 51).”

with differing implications for how they approach civil society. These schools are characterized by Hampson and Mendelhoff (2007) as: fast-track democratization, security first, and slow democratization. Each is founded on a different *leitmotif*.⁶ Fast-track democratization operates on rationalist assumptions of traditional liberalism that every people, regardless of particulars, has an intrinsic yearning for ‘freedom and democracy’. Thus, by creating political stability and guaranteeing opportunities through external political and military pressure, a new society will emerge based on democratic principles. In other words, a ‘culture of democracy’ already lies dormant in every society and the task of international interventions is to awaken it. Civil society is seen to successfully consolidate democracy. However, this school does recognize that the task is challenging and requires extraordinary levels of commitment, including the development of the rule of law and the nurture of civil society.^{xxv}

The second school, security-first, is critical of the ‘fast-democratizers’ presumed exportability of democracy. They operate instead on the assumption that conflicts bring disorder, fear and distrust and societies undergoing these terrors will turn to anyone who provides political order, democratic or not. Intervention forces should set guarantees for physical security and social order as their priorities, as those create the conditions for a transition from conflict to a new political order without a coercive element by external forces. However, in this view authoritarianism might actually be preferred as that system can enforce strict limits on society to safeguard order. Not much, if any, attention is paid to the function of civil society in the peace process as the creation of a new, collective (democratic political) order is not the measure of success.^{xxvi}

Thirdly there is the school of slow democratization. Although the belief in the potential of democracy to address the problems in post-conflict situations is shared with ‘fast-democratizers’, this school disagrees with them on the means and the extent of support that is required to achieve a successful process. For one, democratization is regarded as a process of cultural, social and political development that needs to incubate. It takes a great deal of time, effort, and continued assistance to succeed. Most important is to build an effective administrative state apparatus, without which there can be no progress. Democracy does not spring up from the ground, as the first school suggests, but is also dependent on the right local historical and political conditions. Therefore, if not already existent, a civic culture that adheres to it must first be developed.^{xxvii} This relates to the ‘culture of democracy’ mentioned earlier.

Although the preceding provides for an analytical distinction, intervention and peace-building practice usually portray mixed elements, and do not operate solely within the static boundaries of the respective schools. Conversely, authors and policy makers have proposed combined strategies. Two examples hereof are Roland Paris (2004) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) (2008). Both strategies rely first and foremost on developing effective state institutions capable of delivering services to the citizens without which, they argue, other processes – such as, but not limited to, democratization – have

⁶ For further interest into the philosophical foundations of each of these three schools, please note the following. Fast-track democratization builds extensively on the heritage of liberalism and natural rights, and can be described as typically Lockean. Security firsters on the other hand are in a sense new Hobbesians, using the state of nature as a guiding principle. The slow democratizers’ school is founded on the ideas of John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty*, among others, where he voiced a principal concern with the possibility of a ‘tyranny of the majority’ that democracy could produce.

little chance of success.^{xxviii} They differ in approach and in how they view civil society in their strategies. Paris sees an active civil society as a requirement for democracy. However he fails to substantiate how to produce 'good' civil society by restricting his treatise to a warning against producing 'bad civil society'⁷ through developmental efforts.^{xxix} The OECD/DAC strategy on the other hand avoids the term civil society, focusing instead on state fragility that:

"arises primarily from weaknesses in the dynamic political process through which citizens' expectations of the state and state expectations of citizens are reconciled and brought into equilibrium with the state's capacity to deliver services."

It points to what they call "the social contract" which embodies this reconciliation of expectations.^{xxx} This conceptualization is very close to my analysis of the role and function of civil society. Nonetheless the OECD/DAC seems to take the existence of the state for granted, which can be problematic in some cases as will be suggested hereafter.

Notwithstanding the merits of the schools and strategies provided above in operationalizing peace-building, my analysis of the literature suggests that a crucial step seems to be structurally overlooked: the legitimization of the state itself. In order to explain we have to take a step back and first look at the essence of what a (civil) war is by means of Paul Richards (2005). Essentially, Richards contends that in order "to understand war we must first deny it its special status [as opposed from peace]," and that it is "a social project among competing social projects."^{xxxi} He means that, essentially, what is happening during civil conflict is a contest between groups in that society and a realignment of the societal order related to the state – and this is a process that is also ongoing in peace time. What happens when the international community intervenes in a conflict is that it also intervenes in such a process and effectively freezes it, leaving it unresolved *if left unaddressed*. Thus, the means and the ends of peace-building have to be understood with reference to that specific social context. Ultimately this suggests that – apart from the necessity of reconciling state-society expectations with regard to service delivery from previous examples – most important is reconciling the legitimacy of the state for all groups that are to be incorporated under its administration in the period post conflict. This importance is most salient when attempts are made to create entirely new states in the aftermath of a conflict, with Kosovo being a prime example, because a legitimate and inclusive basis of the state did not exist before.

Furthermore such processes, which form the foundation of the state, have historically required vast amounts of time to play out and crystallize for well-established states. Those periods were also extremely violent. But as commentators have noted, the international community's capacity is not endless and closure of peace missions is looked for almost immediately after they have started, as the scarce and precious resources that are needed to sustain them are also needed elsewhere.^{xxxii} This places contemporary peace-building at odds with the manner in which well-established states came to be themselves. The OECD/DAC recognizes this difficulty. They take note of common political criticism that the expectations from the north on the south are unrealistic, because the latter is expected to avoid the violent centuries of European and American state formation.^{xxxiii} They point out that state-building ought to be based on a context-specific analysis of historical and contemporary processes. However, OECD/DAC seems to take the starting point for state-building

⁷ Paris (2004: 160) adopts 'bad civil society' from Chambers & Kopstein (2001) and formulates it as: "private political activity that rejects the liberal principle of toleration."

with an already existent, albeit fragile state which can then together with ‘society’ start negotiating over mutual expectations that ought to end in the establishment of a new *social contract*.^{xxxiv} But when a new state, including new boundaries and a different balance of groups, is (coercively) created, you principally have to begin at the beginning: to legitimate the new state to all its subjects. The operational tendency to sideline this important step seems to have problematic consequences. It is critical to recognize that without re-legitimizing the state for all groups, societal intergroup tensions will likely remain, with all the adverse consequences for the other elements of the peace process that come with it.

Hence, in order to build peace a social contract must be negotiated anew, which is where civil society can play its most important role.⁸ This entails a radically different way of approaching peace-building, as Béatrice Pouligny (2004) suggests. The foundations for a new political order in a post-conflict situation should be assumed neither externally – like the debate on the three schools of fast democratization, security-first and slow democratization revealed – nor internally (as homogeneity is non-existent), but rather carefully analyzed based on the conceptual roots of social and political life. She warns that societies emerging from conflict generally witnessed a destruction and transformation of previous social and political foundations.^{xxxv} And like she and Amartya Sen^{xxxvi} have stated, such insecurity drives people to turn to their communities seeking some kind of refuge or safety. Subsequently, social and political foundations need to be re-forged. Indeed, areas emerging from war are most likely to have previously been governed by a different system than the one that is in the process of becoming in the period post conflict. Pouligny highlights this as the most important problem, and it has to be remedied by “a long, contradictory process of defining a new social contract.”^{xxxvii} By conceptualizing *civil society as a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority*, as I proposed in the first section, it is uniquely suited to facilitate the transition to a new social contract. This should be the ultimate focus of any peace-building strategy.⁹

In order to support civil society in post-conflict situations, Pouligny highlights three aspects, for which it is imperative that those are anchored within their locally-owned, normative framework. Much depends on the way life is organized in the localities. She emphasizes that homogeneity does not exist in any society, and looking for it or operating on the assumption that it does risks reducing the diversity of social life and thus also civil society. Consequently, (1) it is crucial to take account of local knowledge, information and resources, (2) outside interventions should be scheduled in a way that emboldens local processes, and (3) interveners need to accept that the local support for these processes is uncertain because of the asymmetric, patronage style relationship with local civil society.^{xxxviii} Thus, operating with consideration for the conceptual roots of local contextualities is tantamount for civil society to be an effective force in the peace process. This means also that local politics are an integral part of civil society: the inclination to exclude radical or uncooperative elements will likely be counter-productive. Those elements can represent large portions of the population and excluding them can imply many missed opportunities. Furthermore, peace-building cannot be reduced to technical dimensions which is characteristic of the over-systemization of intervention policies. Taking heed of the points above allows for a radically different approach to

⁸ But not its exclusive role, as I shall stipulate in the third section of this chapter.

⁹ However, defining this new social contract does not guarantee that full legitimacy of the state will be achieved. This depends on many contextual factors that cannot possibly be incorporated in any theoretical framework.

peace-building – one that is based not on stability as the main motive (although a relative stability of the security situation is undeniably important), but on an approach rooted primarily in terms of change and transformation.^{xxxix} Naturally the particularities and specifics of each peace-building process should vary on a case by case basis. But I propose, in line with the authors I built on, to ground civil society development in a careful contextual analysis that applies the theoretical framework and strategic focus I presented here.

Tactical level: Third Party Intervention

After we have established the conceptual and the strategic framework for civil society (development) in post-conflict situations, this section covers the tactical level. Broadly, what I understand by tactical level is the operational framework: the means to achieve the development of civil society – in other words: the how's, the who's and the what's. Therefore, this section begins with distinguishing between official and unofficial third party intervention. Then, within the category of unofficial third party intervention, the spectrum of development practice is explored. This involves discussing some of the concepts of peace-building practice today, such as capacity building, advocacy, ownership and the generation of social capital. The section concludes with a discussion of the environment in which unofficial third party intervention takes place that considers the relationship between international and local NGOs, and the roles of donors and states. There is truly a plethora of actions available that all (attempt to) contribute to civil society development. Therefore this section can in no way be comprehensive but it nonetheless offers an initial scope of development practice and covers some of the salient issues that lie before peace-building practitioners, which will subsequently be used in the analysis of fieldwork data in Chapters 4 and 5.

Official and Unofficial Third Party Intervention

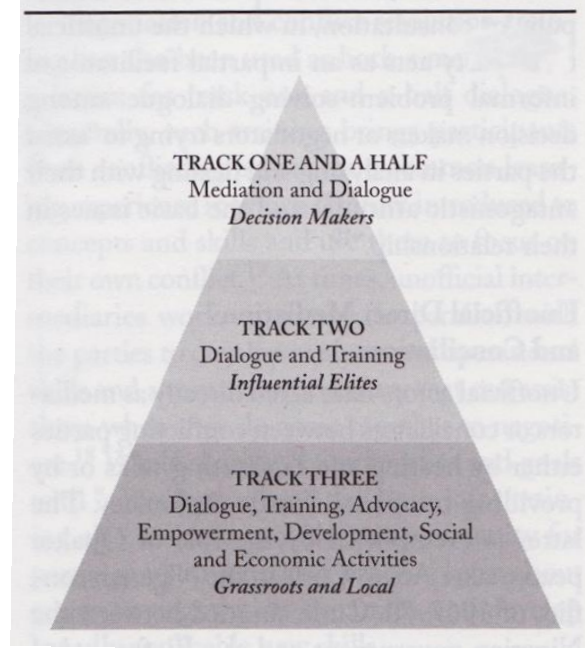
When we talk about post-conflict peace-building, we also talk about states. States are the main actors on the international stage. International interventions in conflicts are led either by states or by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) where states are party to. Official third party intervention¹⁰ thus means the actions and efforts of governments or IGOs (such as the UN, the OSCE, the African Union) in interventions. 'Track-one intervention', as it is also called, covers a variety of tools at the disposal of states or IGOs, such as mediation, facilitating communication between former belligerents, but also coercive or forceful measures ranging from diplomatic pressure to sanctions and military force. Peace operations as of late, such as those in Kosovo or East-Timor for example, have brought about an expansion from the traditional peace operations. The operations in these examples incrementally increased responsibilities for track-one intervention.^{xi} In Kosovo for example the United Nations took over day-to-day governance of the territory, effectively creating an internationally administered protectorate. This is a monumental change in the way official third parties intervene in conflicts compared to peace missions in the earlier 1990s and before.¹¹

¹⁰ Sometimes the phrase 'track-one *diplomacy*' is also used, but *diplomacy* is more descriptive of measures that do not include actual force and is therefore less favourably as a collective term in my opinion.

¹¹ UNMIK started on 10 June 1999.

The official track-one third party intervention is set apart from a typology covering three tracks of unofficial third party intervention that will briefly be explained here. According to Diane Chigas (2007) this typology is designed to emphasize that peace-building cannot occur solely at the elite level nor aim at peacemaking alone, but instead requires a wide range of activities at multiple levels, including the grass roots level. The first track, track-one-and-a-half, encompasses unofficial actors that work with government officials to promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict. The actions undertaken are mostly characterized by mediation and dialogue and are performed by high profile decision makers. Track two diplomacy has a consultancy character. It is performed by influential yet unofficial elites from all sides of the conflict in concordance with

Figure 1. Three Tracks of Unofficial Third-Party Intervention



Source: Chigas, D. (2007), p. 555.

unofficial intermediaries, and focuses on the improvement of ties between former belligerents. Finally, track-three activities are those occurring at the grass roots and local level, performed by unofficial actors that according to Chigas are embodied by nongovernmental organizations.^{xli} This typology is useful to distinguish between various actors and processes in post-conflict reconstruction.

Track three of this typology will be further explored here since it carries most relevance to this project's performed field work. This is not to say that neither official nor unofficial track-one-and-a-half and track two interventions cannot or do not contribute to civil society development in post-conflict situations. Rather, since this particular research is centered around a local NGO as a case study, substantiating unofficial third track intervention will enable an analytical framework tailored to it. Later on in Chapter 5 official and unofficial tracks' effects on civil society development will be brought in relation to NGO performances.

Thus, the following is a deliberation of the approaches that NGOs can and often do take to achieve civil society development in post-conflict situations. Since civil society is seen here to be *a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority*, developing civil society entails efforts to increase the potential of groups in society to formulate problems and engage in discussions and negotiations with the ultimate goal that this process can be locally-owned and requires little to no outside help afterwards. Theoretically this has the overall advantage that, when successful, the executed civil society development is sustainable. The mere existence of NGOs does not equate a vibrant civil society. Therefore it is important to take account of the practice of these organizations in developing civil society instead of stopping short at accounting for their presence. Since "conflict is increasingly seen as multi-causal, multi-dimensional and contingent,"^{xlii} it is difficult and perhaps even redundant to generate a general theory of specific NGO practice. This is especially true when

you take into account that any intervention should be context-specific, as argued above. Therefore, instead of generating theory I limit myself to shortly explaining what I understand under four of the more important aspects of civil society development, which are (1) capacity building, (2) advocacy, (3) ownership, and (4) the generation of social capital.

Firstly, capacity building should be directed at local communities in the context of civil society as a process. In this sense it entails encouraging, assisting, and supporting the formation of local formal organizations and informal groups of individuals. After formation such groups subsequently need to develop ways how to express themselves and their plans coherently and need technical support in order to make communication with centers of authority possible. Advocacy, the second aspect, is therefore directly related to capacity building in the sense that when local capacity exists, that can lead to more effective advocacy. When people increasingly advocate for themselves and their communities, this should have a direct positive effect on civil society. After all, when former belligerent groups find ways to express their concerns and interests to each other, this in effect embodies the process. Thirdly, ownership means that processes in the post-conflict period are for the largest part carried out by and generated from within the subjects in question – the localities. This seems a logical aspect not even worth mentioning, but in peace-building practice external forces can portray a persistent tendency to ‘push-and-pull’ local groups and communities to participate, thus implying a lack of local intrinsic motivation. Therefore it is highlighted here as a crucial element of civil society development.

The fourth element, the generation of social capital, deserves some extra explanation. Robert Putnam (1995) defined it as “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.”^{xliii} The scholarly discourse is generally in consensus about its importance for all societies to prosper, both at micro and macro level processes. On a macro level for example, social capital can enhance the trust and organization among individuals to team up and produce initiatives in the political or economic arena. On the micro level, increased ties among individuals can aid the formation of a sense of community and perhaps even build bridges between members of different communities who live close to each other but formerly had little contact, fostering the growth of tolerance and acceptance.

However, although prosperous societies require social capital, this does not imply that social capital always has a positive effect. Needless to say, especially in the context of (post-)conflict situations, communities can also have malignant goals towards others and social capital can facilitate them in reaching those goals more easily. Granovetter (1973) therefore distinguishes between strong and weak ties in social capital, arguing that the latter provides for more inclusive benefits than the former. Weak ties enhance communication patterns and support collective action. Likewise, various authors have made distinctions between different forms of trust. Particularized trust exists among and for members of the same community and helps to attain group goals, whereas generalized trust is a phenomenon between communities and helps to trust strangers.^{xliv}

Putnam himself introduced another distinction within social capital which, resembling in part the discussion above, is especially interesting when ties between different communities are under pressure or severed in whole – such as in (post-)conflict cases. He distinguishes between bridging social capital and bonding social capital. The former arises from interactions between communities whereas the latter is produced via exchange within communities. Bridging social capital, according to

this view, “is believed to instill tolerance and acceptance of otherness, one of the foundations of civic virtues.”^{xlv} This assumption suggests that the increase of bridging social capital is beneficial for societies emerging from civil war. NGO projects centered around ‘inter-ethnic cooperation or communication’ are built on the idea of increasing this as essential regarded resource. However, the Collaborative for Development Action-Collaborative Learning Projects (2006) revealed certain ambiguities with this assumption. They conducted a study for the CARE international group on the effectiveness of peace-building in Kosovo, as part of an evaluation following the March 2004 riots.¹² Interestingly, bonding social capital proved to be more effective at preventing inter-ethnic violence. The study concluded that bridging social capital, although it was assumed to have been created via previous projects focusing on inter-ethnic cooperation and dialogue, was not thoroughly developed but was actually rather shallow and relied mainly on interpersonal ties. Those interpersonal ties, the study postulates, were not truly equivalent to social bridging capital.^{xlvi} These findings provide strong warning against ready assumptions that inter-ethnic dialogue and cooperation lead to bridging social capital or, conversely, that bridging social capital is a suited means of conflict resolution. This will receive detailed attention in the analysis of the case and field material in Chapter 5.

The Environment – International and Local NGOs, Donors, and States

The following section sets out the environment of different actors associated with civil society development. Broadly, it highlights the relationship between international and local NGOs, the role of donor institutions and that of states. Firstly, the relationship between international and local NGOs is examined because it is both competitive and mutually beneficial, but also asymmetrical and as such has a profound impact on civil society development. Both groups of NGOs operate in the field and compete for similar resources and symbolic space, but this competition is unequal. The international NGOs (INGOs), with their head office often based in a northern country, are better staffed, better equipped and better financed than local NGOs. When the international community intervenes in a conflict, INGOs are part of the invasion and often occupy much space in the capitol, thereby also affecting the local economy, such as commodity prices, wages and rent.^{xlvii} Also, they compete with local NGOs for subsidies and funding with donor institutions and states. Furthermore, due to INGOs’ access to funding from their home state, they have become an important resource for local NGOs to help fund their own programs. Even though the help to fund local projects is essentially positive, this can create a patronage style relationship with INGOs, where the latter obtain “the power to define.” This tends to lead to defining the priorities and programming of local organizations. There are also facets of the relationship where both groups of NGOs can and often do benefit from each other. Local NGOs have the advantage that they are more familiar to the native population and local problems, and usually have already established networks. This makes them a key resource for INGOs in getting access to parts of society that could otherwise be harder or impossible to reach. Conversely, INGOs can help local organizations overcome a “climate of suspicion following from the conflict.” As such, Gemma Van der Haar (2006) made the important observation that INGOs, apart from their contributions in strengthening, are also implicated in re-structuring and constructing the arena in which civil society development takes place.^{xlviii}

¹² In March of 2004, after years of reconstruction, peace-building efforts and relative calm, a fervent violent riot sprung up that was directed mainly by the Albanian community at the Serb community in Kosovo. It was believed that, following rumors that were sensationally broadcasted in the media, Serb youth drowned Albanian youth in the Ibar river, though the rumors later proved to be unfounded.

Secondly – and this aspect was briefly highlighted above – donors play an important role in shaping the environment in which civil society development takes place. This is because an important condition for the sustainability of such development is its material basis: funding.^{xlix} Especially in post-conflict situations the conditions for individuals and organizations that are non-commercial or non-governmental to fund their activities are dire as state support is often missing and private philanthropy is uncommon. Donors are here considered to be entities that grant funding, such as intergovernmental organizations (i.e. European Union, United Nations Development Program, World Bank), states and other institutions. Although both international and local NGOs are dependent on external funding this dependency is most severe for local NGOs, as their governments generally have little or no budget made available for such activities. This can put an immense strain on the independence of NGOs to decide their own agenda's and work methods. For example, Hulme and Goodhand (2000) show how donor pressure to increase efficiency has led organizations to adopt "risk avoidance, adoption of shorter time frames, a focus on project rather than on program, and a minimization of overhead costs."^l Another example is how donor governments condition their material assistance to NGOs on the basis of support for their official foreign policy.^{li} This environment fosters an inclination of NGOs to adapt their fund requests to the priorities set by donors, instead of requesting funds for programs that have been developed based on their assessment and identification of local problems. Not only does this hollow out the substantive contributions that (local) NGOs can make to a field of operation which is very context specific, but it also endangers sustainable results of civil society development itself. Authors have advocated for donors to allow organizations to create their own strategies and open up the possibilities for longer term funding so that the focus can shift from *project-oriented* to one that is *process-oriented*.^{lii} This would allow activities in civil society development to focus more on societal transformation which is inherently a long term process.

The third and final part of the developmental environment I wish to address is states. By states I mean here not only individual states, but also those forms of organizations that combine the interests of a coalition of states in a conflict area – for example, in Kosovo this is the International Steering Group (ISG).¹³ The literature on civil society development is very limited in relation to states. Apart from their donor roles as discussed above, states are rarely discussed in terms of their influence and (potential) active contributions on the ground. This strikes me as odd, as my fieldwork revealed that states' presence and activities do matter a great deal. This also goes for the government of Kosovo itself. Perhaps it has to do with the fact that civil society has, in the popular debate, been set so strongly apart from the state, indeed almost in opposition to it. Another reason might be that civil society is dominantly associated with (private) associational activity and states have no business there. However, since my approach to civil society is focused on a process of social transformation it is inherently politically charged and, as Howell and Pearce have likewise argued,^{liii} states are part and parcel to that. I highlight their presence and role in civil society development because I will expand on this further in Chapter 5.

¹³ The ISG is a collection of states that decided to recognize and actively support Kosovo's independence. This group is responsible for the International Civilian Office (ICO) that oversees the implementation of the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement (Ahtisaari Plan) by the Kosovo government. A similar example of such a coalition in a post-conflict state is the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, although the PIC also has intergovernmental organizations member to it.

Endnotes – Literature Chapter 2

- ⁱ Kaldor (2003), p. 584.
- ⁱⁱ *Ibid.*, p. 584.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Cohen & Arato (1992), Kaldor (2003), Howell & Pearce (2001).
- ^{iv} Cohen & Arato (1992), pp. 16, 19.
- ^v Trentmann (2004), p. 30.
- ^{vi} *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- ^{vii} Cohen & Arato (1992), pp. viii-ix, 2-3.
- ^{viii} Howell & Pearce (2001), pp. 3-4.
- ^{ix} *Ibid.*, p. 17-31.
- ^x Kaldor (2003), pp. 584-585; Howell & Pearce (2001), pp. 33-34.
- ^{xi} Howell & Pearce (2001), p. 64.
- ^{xii} Kaldor (2003), p. 585.
- ^{xiii} Howell & Pearce (2001), pp. 123-146, 232-233.
- ^{xiv} White (2004), pp. 10-12.
- ^{xv} *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ^{xvi} Parekh (2004), pp. 15, 24.
- ^{xvii} Ottaway (2007), p. 603.
- ^{xviii} Paris (2004), p. 19.
- ^{xix} UN Secretary-General Report (1996), paragraphs 5, 13, 17, 46, 124; Chandler (2004), p. 225.
- ^{xx} UN Secretary-General Report (1996), paragraph 21.
- ^{xxi} Paris (2004), p. 160.
- ^{xxii} Ottaway (2007), p. 603.
- ^{xxiii} Paris (2004), p. 19.
- ^{xxiv} Ottaway (2007), p. 607.
- ^{xxv} Hampson & Mendelhoff (2007), pp. 680-685.
- ^{xxvi} *Ibid.*, pp. 685-689.
- ^{xxvii} *Ibid.*, pp. 689-693.
- ^{xxviii} Paris (2004), p. 173; OECD/DAC (2008), pp. 21, 28.
- ^{xxix} Paris (2004), pp. 156, 160, 194.
- ^{xxx} OECD/DAC (2008), pp. 8, 17.
- ^{xxxi} Richards (2005), p. 3.
- ^{xxxii} Ottaway (2006), p. 605; Paris (2005), p. 217; OECD/DAC (2008), p. 29.
- ^{xxxiii} OECD/DAC (2008), p. 16.
- ^{xxxiv} *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 8, 15,
- ^{xxxv} Pouligny (2004), pp. 10, 12.
- ^{xxxvi} Sen (2006).
- ^{xxxvii} Pouligny (2004), p. 4.
- ^{xxxviii} *Ibid.*, pp. 6-9.
- ^{xxxix} *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.
- ^{xl} Chigas (2007), p. 554.
- ^{xli} *Ibid.*, pp. 555-560.
- ^{xlii} Van der Haar (2006), pp. 23-24.
- ^{xliiii} Robert Putnam, in: Hooghe & Stolle (2003), pp. 3-4.
- ^{xliv} Hooghe & Stolle (2003), p. 5.
- ^{xlvi} *Ibid.*
- ^{xlvi} Collaborative Development Action-Collaborative Learning Projects (2006), pp. 4-5, 50-61.
- ^{xlvii} Pouligny (2004), pp. 5-6.
- ^{xlviii} Van der Haar (2006), pp. 30-31.
- ^{xlix} Howell & Pearce (2001), p. 108.
- ^l Hulme & Goodhand (2000), p. 20, as cited in: Van der Haar (2004) [of 2006?], p. 35.
- ^{li} Van der Haar (2004), p. 34.
- ^{lii} *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- ^{liii} Howell & Pearce (2001), pp. 7, 39-60.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

This chapter serves to motivate the applied research methodology for this project, including the preceding theoretical discussion, the five month fieldwork period in Belgrade and Kosovo and the subsequent data analysis. It covers how I went about answering the central research question, how data was collected, which sources were used and how the analysis was performed that produced the eventual answers, making the circle complete.

First and foremost I wish to stress that the fieldwork methodology for collecting data and approaching the case subject is based on the critical points I identified in the literature with regard to civil society (development). That is also why this elaboration of methods follows the theoretical framework instead of preceding it. These critical points – civil society is always placed in a locally-owned normative framework; peace-building generally operates on biased assumptions regarding the nature and role of civil society and its development; hence sustainable civil society development in post-conflict settings can be achieved only through revolutionizing the current approach by heeding the aforementioned points – beg for a methodology that enables an *understanding* of the case context. I chose this approach because, as I also explained in the introduction, although there are vast scores of literature on civil society as well as civil society development available that identify problems and produce concrete recommendations, oddly enough peace-building practitioners struggle with achieving sustainable results and worry that their investments and efforts do not root independently once they leave. The latter is unavoidable for peace-building practitioners. The anthropological inquiry is well suited to *understand* a social problem foreign to oneself. My early academic career started with a BSc in cultural anthropology and I thus confess my bias towards its wonderful and insightful methods. I supplanted this ready knowledge with thorough theoretical insights from conflict research, which in itself is multidisciplinary. Together, they form an academic alliance that is well suited for understanding the social complexity of developing a Serbian civil society in post-conflict Kosovo.

Research Traditions

Since this project investigates civil society development by placing it at the conceptual roots of social and political life, it is inherently a social inquiry. Social science has a history of three general traditions: empirical-analytical (E-A) research, interpretative research and critical-emancipatory (C-E) research. Although the past was host to a vehement ideological debate between followers of these respective traditions, today researchers approach it more pragmatically.ⁱ This is also characteristic of the research that lies before you: In my research I worked from both the interpretative and the critical-emancipatory tradition. This shall require further clarification.

The first tradition, empirical-analytical research, is positivist. In other words, empirical-analytical research pleads for a methodology that is akin to the natural sciences. The focus is to do objective research by obtaining results that have to be checked by empirical, sensory observations performed in a systematic way. It utilizes a formal methodology that is completely separated from the object of study. This research tradition is nomothetic: it aims to establish solid theory and laws by which the investigated and similar phenomena abide. This further means that empirical-analytical research is atomistic. It sees reality as comprised of the same kind of units that have differing substantive

characteristics and can thus be measured in isolation to each other. However this can lead to a neglect of the relation between such units. This tradition relies on quantitative analysis and often uses statistical data to establish causation or correlation. Although empirical-analytical research is useful in comparative studies so that problem areas are quickly and efficiently established, it is unsuited to investigate substantive perceptions of a social reality. In other words, it cannot go into the meaning of concepts and has trouble computing an understanding of subjective (social) reality.ⁱⁱ

The other two traditions are idiographic instead of nomothetic. That means that both interpretative and critical-emancipatory research approach a given problem in its own right. The outcome does not provide ironclad theory or laws but rather places the studied phenomenon in relation and context to other things. In this sense, it is entirely possible to use the outcome of such research to say something of other phenomena as well.ⁱⁱⁱ Likewise, this thesis is an idiographic project. I studied the sustainability of Serbian civil society development on its own since my theoretical treatise explained it to be situated within a locally-owned normative framework. Thus I do not assume that civil society development elsewhere will proceed identically to my findings. I do, however, expect that what lessons are drawn from this case can say something about other cases as well.

Specifically, the *critical-emancipatory tradition* perceives social realities to be organic and holistic, thereby placing high value on structure within society and often analyzes the macro level. It is critical of society and of science itself, and emancipatory in the sense that it is characterized by societal engagement. It aims to change something based on the identification of a (unjust) problem. This usually leads to the researcher being deeply involved in the case. Critical-emancipatory research is preceded by theoretical-analytical analysis, where it is important to distinguish between different levels of abstraction and theoretical concepts. Since the tradition is critical of both society and science itself, it is important to crystallize the theoretical framework that underlies the empirical study.^{iv} Hopefully this strikes a resemblance to the reader with what is already read. I too reviewed the literature critically and in so doing identified a gap in the literature, and applied three levels of abstraction: the conceptual, strategic and tactical level. Although the fieldwork orientation is centered around a local NGO and the study is relatively small in scale and scope, I approach it as embedded in and in relation to the concrete whole of civil society development in Kosovo. The structure of the theoretical framework is taken as important. The conceptualization of civil society, as well as the role of civil society in post-conflict Kosovo and the specific development practice all matter: it is organical. Thus what can be said about the small says a great deal about the grand. This is the critical-emancipatory side of my research.

The *interpretative tradition* emphasizes that social phenomena cannot be explained by strict observation but have to be interpreted in order to be explained. In other words, the tradition focuses on *Verstehen*, or understanding. Its background is in hermeneutics and phenomenology, the former using a culture's texts to develop an understanding of the social perception, and the latter orientating itself on the essence of a given phenomenon. The interpretative tradition places great importance on explorative participation in the field and obtaining an insider's perspective as that will lead to understanding the local reality better. This involves interpreting your observations.^v During my time in Serbia and Kosovo I participated in civil society development by being employed with a local NGO. I struck up conversations with locals as much as possible and tried to grasp what mattered to them. I also adopted a Serbian lifestyle as much I could, such as labor rhythm, cuisine,

listening to Serbian music and learning the language, thus submerging into what I later on shall call *Serbness*.¹ The interpretative tradition reflects the practical orientation of the fieldwork.

Research Types: Fundamental and Practice-oriented

Another distinction that is commonplace to make is between different types of research, of which the literature identifies two: fundamental and practice-oriented research. First, *fundamental research* uses observations to declare a gap in or insufficient knowledge about a certain subject. Its goal is not to solve practical problems but to increase the possibility to control them by furthering an understanding of the problem. This type of research is preceded by a problem analysis and a review of the state of the art.^{vi} This also corresponds with the theoretical exercise in Chapter 2. Béatrice Pouligny (2004) observed, derived from over twenty years of experience in post-conflict development and civil society, that development efforts were obscured by confusing notions of civil society and too little attention for local contextualities.^{vii} Her observations inform the main theoretical basis of this research project. Thus Chapter 2 can be described as fundamental. I deliberately did not go into the case material unless superficially, since the goal was to establish the gaps of knowledge in our understanding of civil society development in post-conflict situations more generally.

Practice-oriented research on the other hand focuses on concrete solutions or plans for problems that are identified in practice. Its goal is not to formulate or evaluate theory. A research project of this type usually develops a formulation of the problem in concordance between researchers and practitioners. This can entail a long process of negotiation and it can even change during the research. After the problem is formulated a diagnosis of the current situation is necessary. Then the research is designed, executed and evaluated.^{viii}

My research project is similar to the above. After I used Pouligny's observations to formulate a theoretical focus I approached IKV Pax Christi – a well-established practitioner of civil society development in post-conflict situations, based in the Netherlands – with my research proposal. They recognized the problem I proposed and together we started fine-tuning the specific formulation. Moreover they brought me into contact with a Serbian NGO that was to become the local organization I used as a case study. When I arrived in Serbia for the five month internship, the process of formulating the problem was still ongoing. This time next to IKV Pax Christi I also involved the local practitioners working at this NGO. However, little actual negotiation took place mostly because the employees of these two organizations had little spare time. Rather than negotiations, what usually took place was that I used their databases and informal conversations with them to develop a new problem formulation. Then I would present this to them, receive feedback, and adapt accordingly. This also means that I had a freer hand in formulating the problem than when we had worked more intensively on formulating the problem. However, I presented the final focus to both parties well in advance of the actual fieldwork and acquired their approval.

Finally I stress that my research did not operate strictly within the boundaries of types of research or traditions of social science. Rather, I explained them in order to establish how the approach I took was informed and why. I was, in light of how Hart et al. (2003) describe present day social scientists, more pragmatic.^{ix} For instance, although practice-oriented research does not have the formulation

¹ See Chapter 4 for further reference to *Serbness*.

or evaluation of theory as a goal, this project relies on the fundamental type theoretical framework that was stipulated in Chapter 2. The ultimate goal of course being, as also stated in the introduction, to argue for the necessity of civil society development to take place within a local context and framework and that sustainability of such development can only be achieved when it is integrated into local capacities.

Methods of Data Collection

The data for analyzing the Kosovo case was obtained via fieldwork. Fieldwork is, according to Van Maanen (1988), one of the best ways to achieve an understanding of others.^x The fieldwork was performed in the interpretative and critical-emancipatory traditions and was practice-oriented, and as mentioned I went about understanding the context in which civil society development takes place. This entails focusing on the meaning of social relations. I used an anthropological method of participatory observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews. This is an intensive method of data collection. Countless observations need to be noted down and interviews take a long time, and often include a follow up. In addition to the gathered materials I used secondary data sources to develop as accurate a picture as possible. Because the interpretation of the collected information is inherently subjective, it is crucial for the researcher to account for the setting in which the data collection took place. In this section I set out to explain why a substantive method was used, how I collected the materials, and I account for my position as researcher.

Formal vs. Substantive Methodology

Research methodology for data collection distinguishes between formal and substantive methodology, as was also briefly highlighted in the beginning of this chapter. Formal methodology means that the methods are separated from theories or substantive views of the social reality. The rules of formal methodology apply to all research, regardless of which type or which discipline. However, since this research project depends exactly on the substantive views of the social reality of civil society in Kosovo and its development, a formal methodology is unsuitable.

Instead, a substantive methodology is applied since the methods required to be adapted to the constantly changing understanding of the researcher of the subject. Substance and methods are in this project inextricably linked. I will illustrate this with an example. In interviews I posed open questions. I refrained from using words laden with symbolic meaning, and only when interviewees used such words themselves did I allow myself to use them in subsequent questions. This safeguards as best as possible that the interview occurred according to how the interviewee understands his social reality, instead of the researcher pressing on this person his/her conceptualization of social reality. That would result in a more tainted understanding. The result of which is that there was no list of identical questions for each informant in the interview.

Internship

I was accepted for an internship at NGO Fractal after a successful mediation by the Dutch NGO IKV Pax Christi. My internship started on February 9, 2009 and ended on June 24, 2009. NGO Fractal is a Serbian, Belgrade-based nongovernmental organization working amongst others on civil society development.² Most significantly, during my internship I was coupled to a specific continuous project

² For reference to NGO Fractal's mission statement, please see:

http://www.ngofractal.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=63, retrieved on November 30, 2009.

of NGO Fractal called Enclavia. Enclavia focuses on making lobbying and self-advocacy a common and indeed even basic and structural element of a newly emerging political culture in the Serbian communities in Kosovo. This project was initially developed by NGO Fractal in cooperation with IKV Pax Christi from the Netherlands. Each NGO Fractal project is run by a project coordinator. I functioned as assistant to this project.

Overall, my internship facilitated the obtaining of at least a partial insider's perspective. I could make extensive use of NGO Fractal's network for my research ends. Furthermore, I accompanied them on every working visit to Kosovo that my schedule allowed me to. This meant that, although the NGO Fractal head office is based in Belgrade, I traveled with them to Kosovo weekly. The aid of the local NGO staff was indispensable to get the research done. During the visits to Kosovo, they helped translate during interviews or meetings of NGO Fractal with local community leaders. Over time I became a valued member of the team, which increased trust and expanded the research possibilities. The internship enabled an understanding of the challenges and essence of local civil society development practitioners. It provided a valuable practical experience. Since my research specifically focused on Serbian civil society development, I could not have had a better position from which to do fieldwork.

Participatory Observation

The method of participatory observation "reflects a bedrock assumption held historically by fieldworkers that 'experience' underlies all understanding of social life."^{xi} The experience I obtained with NGO Fractal was documented in a diary. In here, I noted my reflections on Serbian culture, on my proceedings in the organization, as well as encounters in the field, and I kept brief records of my research progress. These accounts are cross-referenced in the data analysis with the materials gathered via interviews and secondary data sources to triangulate the position of myself as researcher in this process.

When I accompanied NGO Fractal during work visits, I was introduced to the local Kosovo-Serbs as a trusted coworker of the organization. Trust is a big issue in the Serbian enclaves in Kosovo, and through their experiences the Kosovo-Serbs have generally become reserved towards strangers or avoid contact altogether. Alternatively, although some may not have issues of trusting strangers, the intra-community social control by political hardliners or more radical Serbs can strain the possibility to make contact with others. However, NGO Fractal has been visible within the Serb communities in Kosovo since 2001, and some of their employees even before that. Their reputation is known among the local population as trustworthy and reliable. Therefore the fact that they introduced me as part of the organization made it possible for people to lower their guard so I could blend in a little. I say a little because it was still obvious from my appearance and lack of sufficient command of the language that I was an alien.

Furthermore I dove into normal everyday life. In my daily life in Belgrade I made a habit of getting to know as many Serbs as possible, learning the language as best I could and had time for and indulging in the national cuisine, music and popular pastimes. I mention this because these activities were important in furthering an understanding of Serbian life and world view. For example, the countless animated conversations I had facilitated my understanding of how the effects of the wars in the 1990s are experienced today. Around forty per cent of Serbs in former Yugoslavia lived outside of the Serbian Republic. Because of the wars many of them have had to flee to Serbia itself, resulting in

the large body of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within Serbia's borders.^{xii} This was also indicative of the origin of my friends and acquaintances, roughly a third of them and their families were originally from outside of Serbia, or from Kosovo. I also met many Albanians in Kosovo, and although I did not live there, I spent quite some time among them and spoke with them. This provided a relative counter-balance and reference point which helped to estimate the value of information obtained from Serbs.

Interviews

The interviews I conducted were of a semi-structured character. This means that, as also briefly explained in the section on substantive methodology, instead of formulating a formal list of questions, I developed an interview guide based on the research (sub-)questions.³ Examples of open questions were included. The guide was continuously adapted because it was beneficial to incorporate new insights into subsequent interviews. This allowed for increasingly in-depth conversations and further exploration of the social complexity of civil society development. This interview guide was not followed to the letter as that is impossible in a social encounter. When an interviewee was open to discussing a specific topic but not another – because of the politicization of the topic for example – I had to improvise. Furthermore sometimes a respondent reveals much more detailed and sensitive information if he/she is not interrupted (with questions). In such situations I had to relinquish some control for the sake of a better understanding of a particular topic.

In total I conducted twenty-two formal interviews and hundreds of informal interviews. Formal interviews are those when I had a meeting with a respondent and it was clear that the purpose of the meeting was an interview. With a few exceptions, all of these interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed. The average length of the interviews is an hour, with a range of 20 minutes to 100 minutes. The advantage of formal interviews is the detailed account of what was said and its quite serious and exclusive nature allows for in-depth answers. The disadvantage is that formal interviews can produce socially desirable answers. Informal interviews are conversations I had with respondents in which it was not made explicit that I was interviewing them. These interviews are more casual and were often actually dialogues in which I saw opportunities to pose questions and listen to information that was relevant to my research. The advantage of informal interviews is that respondents are relaxed and less likely to produce socially desirable answers. The disadvantage is that I do not have audio records and they are less accurate because they had to be written down afterwards.

Sources

The interviewees were all people involved in Serbian civil society development in Kosovo. I identified the key actors to be:

- NGO Fractal (as it is the main case study);
- the other major Serbian NGOs in Kosovo;
- intergovernmental institutions: the European Commission Liaison Office (ECLO), the European Union Special Representative (EUSR), the International Civilian Office (ICO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);

³ For reference to the interview guide please see Appendix A.

- international NGOs in Kosovo;
- Kosovo-Albanian NGOs;
- Country embassies in Kosovo;
- Serbian activists and community leaders in Kosovo.

There were no formal criteria used for selecting the sources of interviews. I did not want to exclude possibly valuable respondents. Furthermore, formal criteria do not suffer serendipity, which was crucial in obtaining some of the information I incorporated into the analysis. I made use of the NGO Fractal extensive network to establish contacts, or alternatively used the snowball method to come across other respondents.

The secondary sources are academic publications on Kosovo, reports of various intergovernmental organizations such as the UN, the EU, the OSCE, and reports of the International Crisis Group. Further reference to these can be found in the bibliography.

Limitations

The collection of data in Serbia and Kosovo has not been without limitations. Firstly, the notes I drew up after informal interviews are less accurate than the information I obtained through recorded formal interviews, because the latter were transcribed afterwards and are literal accounts of statements. However, this is unproblematic because notes were not used to quote sources and when the information in notes is used in the text, it has been confirmed by various other sources, including other interviews and secondary data sources.

Secondly, having actual interviews in Kosovo can sometimes be problematic because the indigenous people have quite a liberal interpretation of punctuality and appointments. On occasions, persons would not show up. On others, they would inform me hours before that they had to cancel while I already traveled from Belgrade to Kosovo. Moreover, sometimes the interviews could not be done in English and I was dependent on whether or not I could arrange a suitable translator. Although I learned to speak a little bit of Serbian myself, this knowledge was altogether unsuited for interviews. Finally, some Kosovo-Serbs seem to be enormously busy making ends meet, performing all kinds of jobs to earn a living. That meant they could at times be indisposed for interviews.

Thirdly, apart from references to NGO Fractal, all interviews had to be included anonymously. Many topics in Kosovo become or are politicized, including civil society. I could not run the risk of endangering the position of certain informants residing in local communities. Furthermore, the interviews with key informants working for international organizations in Kosovo were quite sensitive too. These people agreed to provide me with extremely valuable and often highly controversial information on the basis of confidentiality, which I had to respect. Nonetheless, although the informants all remain anonymous, the data obtained in the interviews is instrumental to the research and data analysis, and does not deteriorate any of its substantive value.

Finally, the information that respondents provided during interviews did not always appear to be a 100 per cent accurate. Development actors in Kosovo have a stake at presenting a positive picture of their work, especially when you explain to them that the research partly entails a review of (their) development practice. Therefore the validation of provided information was a meticulous effort. However, since I was embedded in a local NGO I was able to compare the provided information with my own experience, insights, and by discussing the data with other persons in my network in Kosovo

and Serbia. This allowed me to look beyond the face value and assess the information critically, thus mitigating part of this limitation.

Data analysis

In order to answer the main research question and sub-questions, an analytical process is required. Such processes, as 't Hart et al. state, are cyclical and integrated with the process of data collection. I already described this when I referred to the continuous adaptation of the interview guide earlier. Explorative research such as this project mainly makes use of inductive reasoning and the comparative method. Inductive reasoning is when a general finding is produced based on recurring observations and results. The comparative method literally means that various observations of occurrences, meanings and behaviors are compared with one another to signal trends and shared conceptions.^{xiii} In analyzing the collected materials I compared the interviews, observations and secondary data to produce general findings.

Triangulation was applied to validate these generated findings – these were incessantly tested in subsequent interviews and observations, and with the secondary data sources. Triangulation essentially means doing measurements from different angles.^{xiv} Therefore when I present the analysis and results, I only make use of recurring findings in different interviews and other sources. However, in analyzing the practice of civil society development in Chapter 5, there were no other data sources available to involve in the analysis than those obtained by fieldwork.

Some level of coding has also been applied. For instance, one of the standard questions to the respondents was: “What, in your words, is civil society?” Similar comparable aspects are coded in the transcripts and used to produce an overview.

Finally, I reiterate the interpretative tradition in which this project was conducted. In search of meaning and understanding of Serbian civil society and its development in Kosovo, it was necessary to interpret the interviews, situations and observations I experienced. By acknowledging for my position in the field and by means of triangulation in this chapter I have explicated how these interpretations came about and how they provide for valid results.

Endnotes – Literature Chapter 3

ⁱ 't Hart (2003), p. 98.

ⁱⁱ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-101

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid.*, pp. 104, 106.

^{iv} *Ibid.*, pp. 105, 107.

^v *Ibid.*, pp. 102, 103.

^{vi} *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112.

^{vii} Pouligny (2004), pp. 1-2.

^{viii} 't Hart (2003), pp. 125-133.

^{ix} *Ibid.*, p. 98.

^x Van Maanen (1988), p. 2.

^{xi} *Ibid.*, p. 3.

^{xii} Detrez (1999), p. 55.

^{xiii} 't Hart (2003), pp. 281-284.

^{xiv} *Ibid.*, p. 270.

Part 2 - Results and Analysis

Chapter 4 - Sketching *Serbness*, Pinpointing Its Conceptual Roots

The framework of concepts and theories of Chapter 2 established the following: civil society can be described as a universal phenomenon but with a context-dependent form. Hence its development should connect with the conceptual roots of local social and political life. The analysis that is presented here goes into this accordingly. This chapter sketches an outline of Serbian society from those two angles, thereby contributing to an understanding of the context in which a sustainable civil society development process can take place. Such an outline is not a fully detailed ethnographic account, as neither the scope nor the practicality of such an endeavor is desirable for two reasons. For one, ethnographies are much better suited to provide such accounts and there have already been authors publicizing on Serbian culture,ⁱ making the need to do it here less pressing. Therefore I draw on my own experience in Serbian society to present an embedded perspective and supplement it with other authors' impressions and accounts. Second, the research is based on the assumption that it is feasible, contrary to the beliefs of many intervention practitioners, to create a tailored approach to civil society development in post-conflict situations in a limited timeframe that is also context-specific and context-sensitive. This chapter intends to attain this goal by shedding light on certain key concepts of *Serbness*¹ so that the reader may understand the context in which civil society development takes place. One of the sub-questions will be dealt with here: *What are the conceptual roots of social and political life of Serbs in Kosovo?* The analysis is designed to present a comprehensive picture of Serbian society in Kosovo that rests on the pillars set out in Chapter 2's argumentation, namely political and social life.

The premise of this research project, namely that civil society should be developed within a locally-owned normative framework, is actually very simple. That is also the beauty of it and it is where the opportunities for progress lie. The global experience with modern interventions is young and the approach to civil society development has been under-conceptualized as has been stated in Chapter 2. As a consequence civil society development practice has often been (partly) ineffective. As Béatrice Pouligny (2004) states, the peace that intervention actors attempt to 'build' can be meaningless if:

*"[w]e largely deprive ourselves of the means necessary to understand how, in what circumstances, with what means local people try to answer fundamental questions of life and death, good and bad, their past, present and future."*ⁱⁱ

I agree with Pouligny, and would modestly like to add what she implies but leaves unsaid: that it is thus imperative when developing civil society in a post-conflict situation to take the fundamental

¹ With *Serbness* I mean that what makes a Serb feel Serbian, the essence of its identity. Anzulovic (1999) coined it *Serbdom*, referring to the insatiable belief in Serbian society in a restored Serbian kingdom or state encompassing historically claimed territories that is prominent in Serbian identity. However, I prefer *Serbness* as it is less charged with ready connotations to a desire for geographic expansion, instead focusing on 'what it means to be a Serb.'

concerns of communities utterly serious. The following treatise starts by explaining the dominant national myth and continues by setting out what I deem the central conceptual roots. It is and cannot be exhaustive for the scope of this thesis does not allow that, but it goes a long way in illuminating Serbian consciousness to outsiders. After first delving into the general conceptualization in Serbian society of its national narrative, this chapter subsequently goes into the conceptual roots of political and social life.

A Narrative Thread

There is a conceptual construct that runs as a narrative thread through the Serbian worldview. This is the mysticism of Serbian Orthodoxy and the intertwining of the national history, the national religion, and the national identity, or what Branimir Anzulovic (1999) dubs the myth of 'Heavenly Serbia'.ⁱⁱⁱ According to the latest census in 2002 approximately 84% of the population in Serbia is Orthodox.^{iv} Unfortunately data about Kosovo wasn't included in the 2002 report and the latest census from that region dates back to 1991. However, these numbers testify to the pervasive presence of religion in Serbian society and the ready applicability to Kosovo can be assumed. More so, Kosovo in Serbian is referred to as '*Kosovo i Metohija*' – Kosovo and the land of the Church. Although an accurate and up to date census does not exist, in my own plentiful encounters with Serbs from Kosovo and Serbia proper non-believers were an exception and almost every person is on some level committed to Orthodoxy and its teachings.

'Heavenly Serbia' is according to Anzulovic the dominant national "myth."^v If true then his analysis offers a concrete insight into the mindset of Serbs and is imperative in understanding the conceptual roots of social and political life. A short intro: This "myth" or national narrative is intertwined with the battle for Kosovo of 1389 that Serbia lost against the Ottoman Empire and after which began a period of outside cultural domination. The military defeat of this battle is presented as a Serbian commitment to the heavenly kingdom and the choosing of moral purity over military victory. Anzulovic quotes a Serbian Orthodox bishop, according to whom the

"general orientation toward, and in critical situations definite commitment to, the Heavenly Kingdom, and not an earthly one, must be pointed out as a special characteristic of the spiritual life of Orthodox Serbs."^{vi}

When speaking to Serbs about their country's recent history, many lament over past losses and they also see themselves as victims of the – in their eyes – brutal and disproportionate aggression of operation Allied Force: the NATO bombing campaign to force Serbia's surrender in Kosovo, which lasted from 24 March to 11 June 1999. This Serbian defeatism is not only the despair it seems at face value but also embodies the promise of better times as embedded in their national narrative. In this light, Serbia stood up to defy a vastly more powerful adversary in defense of their land. Though defeated, many Serbs, including progressive individuals, silently believe that they will retake Kosovo in the future.^{vii}

Moreover, the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) is seen by Serbs to have originated from *Kosovo i Metohija*. Kosovo is thus host to a vast part of Serbian religious and cultural heritage and the Church takes up an important role in people's lives. As one of the respondents explains:

"The Serbian Church had autonomy [during Ottoman rule], because the Turks didn't want to have any kind of impact on the Serbian Orthodox Church. And for 500 years the Church was a

keeper of the Serbian identity. And I think this thing is now perceived as a myth about Serbian Orthodox Church and the context of Kosovo. The Church is also perceived as someone who is taking care of the people, and protecting Serbian national identity and national interests.”^{viii}

Kosovo and the Serbian identity are profoundly connected. In a geographical sense there are many Serbian Orthodox monasteries and churches there, some of which were unfortunately destroyed in the recent twenty years. And conceptually Kosovo is placed at the center of the national narrative and the religious identity, together making for a strong national identity of the Serbs. Moreover, the Church is documented to have supported Milosevic’s policies in the early 1990s, as it saw in it the possibility of realizing a Greater Serbia, a Heavenly Kingdom, on earth. Nowadays, the SOC has a considerable influence on Serbian politics, for instance it is said that the SOC is consulted before the adoption of new laws by parliament.^{ix}

Serbian Political Life

“Everything is politics, and we have bad leaders” – quote illustrating how many Serbs see politics

Rather than diving into all the aspects of politics in Serbia – which anyone who has visited the Balkans knows can take months to begin to fathom – this section restricts itself to the conceptual constructs underlying political life itself. This section is divided into two overarching conceptual themes, namely the transitional stage of the Serbian political system which goes far to explain the challenges people face on the ground in Kosovo, and the culture of apathy of the Serbian body politic which partly results from the former and delves into the mindset of Serbs as understood from an external position. Both conceptual themes, or roots, are supported by a variety of factors that are designed to create an insight into the Serbian mindset, or *Serbness*. The conclusion at the end of the chapter ties the following treatise on political life in the first section to the exposition of social life that is found in the second section.

A System in Transition

Without reverting to a lengthy history lesson one could summarily state that not only has Serbia gone through almost a decade of wars in the 1990s, but also that its governance and entire system have been experiencing a period of intense transition. These events have had a profound impact upon the country and its people. To some degree this already started when Marshall Tito (Josip Broz) died in 1980. The period after his death was one of insecurity that, according to Detrez (2003), was actually heralded by the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution. That document increased federalization within the Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and made coherent decision making between the republics almost impossible. Slobodan Milošević ascended to power by using a staged incident in Kosovo which displayed the grievances of Kosovo-Serbs in 1987 to kindle nationalist sentiments in his support, after which he became president of Serbia’s Communist League. As president of Serbia since 1989, Milošević was opportunistic in consolidating his power and expanding his influence.^x His policies became increasingly autocratic and borderline dictatorial, and violent. In the period after Tito’s death, the Serbian Republic changed from Communistic to autocratic rule under Slobodan Milošević and in the new millennium – after massive protests that later resulted in his resignation on October 7, 2000 – transitioned into a fledgling democratic system a decade later. These have been

times of significant upheaval and transition and, since they have not crystallized, continue to this day.

Transitional phases of states from one system of governance to another are widely recognized to be challenging in many respects. For example, in the field of conflict studies, Mansfield and Snyder (1995) have warned for the dangers inherent in one type of transition that is analogous to Serbia: democratization. According to them, in such periods the institutions are still imperfect and partially democratic, creating opportunities for elites to exploit their power through control of the political agenda or shaping the information in the media.^{xi} Rudy Teitel (2000), a philosopher of law, describes transitional periods as carrying with them profound legal dilemma's where the continuity of justice and government is caught between past and future. Incumbent governments that come to power after a dictatorial or autocratic ruler – as for example happened in 2000 in Serbia, or in Iraq in 2003 – have difficulty coming to grips with actions of their predecessors, for instance when reviewing past laws for their injustices or prosecuting instruments of the former regime.^{xii} The state is expected to still be accountable for the past, while the government has changed. Such a situation breeds uncertainty and ambiguity over former and future policy: the rules of the game are unclear. These are but two fields of study where scholars concur that transitional periods are unstable environments where opportunities for exploitation are abound, and where the process of transition can even suffer reversals.

The effects of transition on the political life of Kosovo-Serbs have been severe. For one, genuine political representation on the local level has been poor due to the slow transition that has maintained a state of political limbo of the region since the international intervention in 1999. With both Serbia and Kosovo state institutions claiming sovereignty over the territory, while simultaneously Kosovo has been an international protectorate under UNSC resolution 1244, the holding of elections and the attribution of political authority over governance are ambiguous, have been strained, and multiple structures continue to be upheld in parallel, also by the international community. There are Serbian state run structures, Kosovo state run structures, and an UNMIK transitional administration that is downsizing but formally is still in place. Concerning the Serbian municipal structures, political figureheads have traditionally been appointed by the government in Belgrade to their stations in Kosovo since the Serbian authorities have held few local elections there. These local figureheads reportedly have a history of abuse of their position. With state money pouring into Kosovo in an attempt to retain control over the territory, these people have had the opportunity to develop systems of patronage, attributing state funds along party lines and thus buying political support.^{xiii} This practice, which is well established throughout the Serb communities in Kosovo, debilitates the common person as political subject: he or she is robbed of unstrained choice because of a dependency on these patronage networks. To illustrate: a respondent reported a case where a Serb in the Shtrepce municipality wanted to participate in the local Kosovo (not Serbian) elections. Once this was public, he experienced harassment such as phone calls by anonymous Serbs. Eventually he got a message saying if he didn't forfeit his candidacy, his wife would lose her teaching position at the local school and thereby also a substantial part of the family income.^{xiv} With the state as the largest employer for Serbs and unemployment at soaring heights, the ability of such local leaders to decide who gains (or loses) state employment are powerful tools of manipulation.

A second effect of the transitional period is people's lack of experience with the democratic model, which leads the mechanism of democratic accountability to fail. Before May 2008 – when local elections were held in Serbia proper and Kosovo – the last local elections in Kosovo were held in 1994. However, before 2008 political officials were always appointed to the Serbian municipal structures. Thus, even though they voted, Kosovo-Serbs have had little experience with voting and accountability. The May 2008 elections concerned both local and national elections. These were not free of coercion or manipulation, but it was the first time in fourteen years that Kosovo-Serbs were able to vote for direct local Serbian representation. While the pro-European Democratic Party (DS) party of current president Boris Tadić won at the national level, the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) and Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), parties which are more nationalist and traditionally have a strong presence in Kosovo, won at the local level in the disputed territory. After the elections, the new municipal leaders in Kosovo appointed many new employees to varying public positions, often creating jobs out of thin air, thereby increasing the number of municipal employees in Gracanice – a central Serb enclave south of the capitol Pristina – to 900.^{xv} Subsequently, this anomaly was noted at the national level, and state funds to the Gracanice municipality were frozen, while those responsible were replaced pending investigation. This also affected normal people with state-financed jobs as they too did not receive any salary. Now for the first time the people elected to power were held accountable for these actions. A Serb respondent originally from Pristina illustrates:

"[...] they chose idiots, and for the first time they felt the consequences of their own voting behavior. They voted for a guy who screwed them up. That's great, it should be like this. Next election there is no way this guy is going to get votes."^{xvi}

Although it remains to be seen whether the voting behavior of people in the next elections will reflect the colorful optimism of the respondent, this example illustrates the scope of inexperience of Serbs in Kosovo with democratic accountability. They did not foresee the consequences of their voting behavior. People generally voted on lines of party loyalty in May 2008, electing traditionally strong parties in Kosovo. The result was that many voters were left disappointed, but for the first time that was in part due to their own voting behavior.

Furthermore, although small numbers of Kosovo-Serbs participated in elections in Kosovo other than those organized by the Serbian state, such as UNMIK authorized transitional authority municipal elections in 2000, 2002 and 2007 and central elections in 2001, 2004 and 2007,^{xvii} and recently the Kosovo municipal elections of 15 November 2009, these have not helped to increase democratic accountability within the Kosovo-Serb political mindset either. This is because of two reasons. Firstly, an overwhelming majority of Serbs did not take part in these elections. People indicate they don't feel those elections are theirs, and Belgrade politicians' calls to boycott have been answered.^{xviii} Secondly, there is no continuity, but rather an overlapping of different political systems. The lack of continuity becomes apparent in light of the institutional rollercoaster ride that Kosovo has been on. The UNMIK mission was designed to replace the previous political system(s) in Kosovo, which consisted of a Yugoslav-Serb structure as well as a parallel ethnic-Albanian structure (since 1981), by setting up a new transitional administration under UNSC resolution 1244 mandate. After holding five local and central elections, responsibility was increasingly transferred to Kosovans themselves

following the recommendations of the Ahtisaari Plan² in 2007. Since the unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) of Kosovo in 2008, elections are held under the banner of Kosovo state authorities, de facto discontinuing previous UNMIK authority over the elections. Put more simply, Kosovo-Serbs went from Yugoslav-Serb authority, to (UNMIK) transitional authority, to independent Kosovo authority – two significant shifts within the course of a decade, while the Serbian system was also kept in place. All the while though, Kosovo-Serbs feel they live in Serbia and do not recognize the legality of the Kosovo system. The described turn of events is further complicated by the continuous mandate of UNMIK as transitional authority in Kosovo, opposed to the current 69 recognitions of Kosovo as an independent state,³ and Serbia's sovereign claim over the territory, making it an almost impossible exercise to determine responsibility, authority, let alone accountability.

Thirdly, the fact that Serbia's political system is in transition burdens the consistency of Serbian government policy. One easily forgets that Serbia is a relatively new sovereign state itself, even though its full autonomy and right to secession as a republic within the Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia were firmly established in the Constitution. It has a legacy of Communism and autocratic governance and has only in the last two decades begun its experience with the democratic system. Serbia's modern democracy is not ideal. Its politics can be characterized as populist and polarized as those techniques ensure votes during election periods. The above results in elements within government branches not being on the same page regarding their national policies, indeed often having diametrically opposed views on the means to reach the goals set out to achieve. Moreover, since the Kosovo question is so close at heart to the Serbian identity – the national narrative mentioned earlier – it is a policy area of internal discord and utmost sensitivity. Serbian officials in Kosovo and in Belgrade are intertwined in a game of manipulation over power and control. For example, even though some within the Belgrade government are proponents of a more pragmatic approach they are being counter-acted by hardliners in both Serbia proper and Kosovo who instigate emotional responses from the public on the question of Kosovo. As such pragmatists' hands are tied and they are forced to downplay their cooperation at the risk of otherwise losing substantial parts of popular electoral support.

Fourth, the transitional period has had its effect on the Serbian institutions on the ground in Kosovo. These are expensive and the financial crisis has severely weakened Serbia's capacity to fund them, although they are still maintained.^{xix} The upholding of these institutions makes it possible for Serbia to claim its continuing state presence in Kosovo, but they are not functioning well. This is recognized by Kosovo-Serbs themselves, and many worry about the adverse effects. For instance the high salary payments for civil servants such as doctors, teachers and public officials in Kosovo – government employees receive a double salary – are combined with a lack of quality control. This results in a deteriorating quality of the performance of state institutions in Kosovo.^{xx} Nonetheless, these institutions are regarded as the people's own and the only ones that can be relied on, even though their performance is deteriorating. Meanwhile, outsiders regard the Serbian institutions in Kosovo as a nuisance that hampers the Kosovo peace process. The institutions have been dubbed parallel institutions by many commentators, often to the dismay of Kosovo-Serbs. To the majority of them

² For reference to the Ahtisaari Plan, see Chapter 1 – Introduction, p. 15.

³ At the time of writing 69 countries recognized Kosovo, but this number changes over time. For an up-to-date number, see: <http://www.kosovothanksyou.com/>.

these represent what they see as their (Serbian) government in Kosovo and naming them parallel can alienate people who feel this way. As a Serb formerly from Pristina stated:

*"I don't like the term parallel structures. (interviewer: **Maybe Serbian state run structures?**)⁴ Or people's elected structures. Linguistics is very important, because if we have a right word for it, we use the right term. Parallel is, parallel to what? Parallel to guy without support and funds (This person here refers to Kosovo municipal authorities instead of Serbian authorities, whose funds are little compared to Serbian funds for the communities and who enjoy little to no support from the local population), parallel to him, or to their structures?"^{xxi}*

A crucial point is made here. If one puts normativity aside, the Serbian institutions are the only validated functioning democratic institutions in the majority of the Kosovo-Serb mind's eye. They are the sole example of a stable system in an otherwise rocky transitional period, even though said period has had its effect on their functioning. The opposing views of legitimate versus parallel structures create a burdening paradox in Kosovo. It prioritizes the necessity for Serbs to stand up for their institutions, instead of considering alternatives. It drives Serbs away from interacting with the International Civilian Office (ICO) and the Kosovo institutions.

In sum, the aspects of political life are shaped by the transitional nature of the Serbian political system. The change to a democratic system is recent. Many uncertainties and ambiguities concerning the reconciliation of past and future policy still exist. Local political representation in Kosovo is marked by exploitation while local governance systems overlap, creating a confusing and challenging situation. Also, people are still unaccustomed to the mechanism of accountability. Furthermore, traces of the old regime linger while the Kosovo issue remains a salient and politically charged theme, thus challenging the consistency of Serbian government policy. Finally, though the quality of Serbian institutions declines, they represent a legitimate democratic system for Kosovo-Serbs. Meanwhile, precisely those institutions are regarded as parallel (and thus illegitimate) by outsiders, thereby driving Kosovo-Serbs and outsiders with important roles in Kosovo, such as the ICO and the Kosovo government, apart. Thus, overlapping systems, inexperience, inconsistency and ambiguous legitimacy make a confusing political landscape for Kosovo-Serbs. This should be taken into consideration regarding the expectations of them.

Culture of Apathy

Possibly the most noticeable feature during my participatory observations was the lack of interest in ordinary political proceedings, even though (seemingly) paradoxically people were easily rallied around the emotionally charged theme of the political status of Kosovo. This observation was also indiscriminately shared and recognized by the various respondents, whether Serb, international, or Albanian. This section is designed to begin to understand the reasons that underlie this phenomenon. Thus, apart from the transitional nature of the Serbian political system which created a confusing political landscape, the events of the past two decades have also left their mark on society's morale, thereby hampering political participation. Furthermore, the political situation of Serbs in Kosovo can be described as a duality that is seemingly contradictory: They are both locked in and locked out of political life. It is near impossible for the common person to escape from this

⁴ This term was suggested to me by another respondent.

situation, as will later be set out in more detail. These combined factors feed a collective apathetic political attitude that is detrimental to the development of a healthy Serbian civil society in Kosovo.

The impact of the 1990s on the whole of Serbian society is described by Gow and Michalski (2005) as the “desiccation of society.”^{xxii} By putting forward the analogy that society’s political sphere has dried up, they refer to the loss of spirit and morale. There is a lack of fresh ideas and people⁵ to resupply the political ranks and take over from older Milošević era politicians that still linger. (Kosovo-)Serbs identified greatly with Yugoslavia and the wars during the course of its break up proved to be a deception that “robbed them of their identity and [had] broken their back.” The events of the 1990s and ensuing isolation had dissipated most traces of optimism.^{xxiii} Presently, many refugees are returning. They state that they generally felt that the situation (in 2009) had changed positively enough to “come back and do something for Serbia.”^{xxiv} However, when the topic of discussion turned to politics, a statement I heard without exception was: “We just have bad leaders,” and complaints that “everything is politics.”^{xxv} There still is not a real sense that societal movements can spur change and alter the mandates of politicians. It came across to me as if these politicians are regarded as untouchable. Troubles are often blamed on leaders, rather than the whole of society for acquiescing to bad leadership. People still seem to wait for a reformer who will step forward and lead them to a better future. It seems as if traces of the political mindset of Communism still linger in society and people are not fully accustomed to the principle of the democratic system, which derives its legitimacy solely from the mandate of the people.

On the positive side, although it is still a relatively new development, I found that people of the generation of adolescents during the 1990s felt society’s climate was changing for the better; refugees are starting to return and people feel they can be a part of Serbia’s future again. But it will take more time before the political situation has normalized and society recovers its spirit and morale, all the more so since Serbia still faces enduring challenges, such as its cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) which is inextricably tied to its future accession to the European Union, its resistance to Kosovo’s independence, the continuing practice of political chauvinism, and more. The political landscape appears divided, also within the strata of society, concerning the aforementioned political topics. With much of the old clique still in politics, it will take considerable time until a significant replenishment of new blood fills the political ranks and societal movements are formed that are driving forces of change on political topics.

Kosovo: Locked In and Locked Out of the Political Process

Turning to Kosovo specifically, the situation of the political sphere is more worrisome. I will present a duality of Kosovo-Serbs being both locked in and locked out of political life. This affects the development of *a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority*, the definition of civil society as proposed in Chapter 2.

Kosovo-Serbs are locked in, meaning that it is difficult to escape from a system of politics that has crystallized in Serbian society that on the negative side has a legacy of corruption and ties to the

⁵ During the 1990s, an estimated 200,000 people fled the country, while an influx of an estimated 700,000 Serbs from neighboring former Yugoslav republics and 330,000 from Kosovo created one of the largest IDP communities in the world in Serbia. The body of IDPs has according to commentators put a strain on society (Gow & Michalski (2005: 153)).

mafia, ethnic politics, nepotism and local power abuse. The dual conditions of war and sanctions throughout the 1990s created a vacuum that was filled by a body of crime, which developed strong connections to the former regime, the economy, and the military. Infamous mafia figures formed paramilitary groups that were widely recognized to have been instruments of the former regime.^{xxxvi} The pervasive patchwork of “mafia fiefs”^{xxxvii} has led a commentator to state in 2003 that “Serbia did not have its own mafia, but rather its mafia had its own state.”^{xxxviii} At present the mafia retains a large influence on society, especially relating to the economical sphere where it has almost monopolized certain branches of industry. Indeed during the five months of field work people complained without exception about the criminal situation in (Serbia and) Kosovo. Organized crime is most apparent in the north of Kosovo. Capitalizing on the chaotic institutional and security situation and general lawless environment, crime bosses use practices of asking for ‘protection money,’⁶ and furthermore resort to smuggling, theft and trafficking activities across the ambiguous administrative border between Serbia proper and Kosovo. Interestingly, there have been numbers of reports that Serbian and Albanian mafia cooperate in a lucrative business venture. The Serbian National Council (SNC), a Serbian political movement in northern Kosovo, is identified to have intimate links with organized crime in the north. Marko Jaksić and Milan Ivanović – often referred to as ‘Milan Marko’⁷ – are prominent figureheads of the SNC and control key institutions in the north, thereby having established a system of patronage with which they are able to exercise a large amount of influence and control over the Serbian community.^{xxxix} Under these circumstances, it is difficult for ordinary people to engage with politics free of criminal involvement. The initial disregard of the rule of law under Milošević and the progressive criminalization which went unchecked worked against the growth of democratic institutions and failed to create a legitimate political system, discouraging people to engage politically and contributing to “an atmosphere of political apathy.”^{xxx}

Furthermore, Serbian political culture has old traditions and customs that keep the ordinary person as a political subject locked in a self-perpetuating system. Deep rooted corruption is one of those. A contemporary example of corruption concerns the government funds for Kosovo which does not reach its destination in full. Although decreasing now due to the global economic crisis,⁸ Serbia had kept up its Kosovo budget at approximately 500 million Euro a year since June 1999. However, reports,^{xxxi} and multiple respondents testify that much of this money is “lost along the way.” Since Serbia cannot de facto exercise sovereign control over Kosovo, it has to transfer the money via civil servants who are reported to detract percentages of the transfers here and there, thereby evaporating substantial amounts of the original sum.^{xxxii}

The other factors are a tradition of political infighting, and the pervasiveness of ethnic politics which took its rise in conjunction with the ascension of Milošević. Firstly, political infighting is identified by

⁶ Especially from Serb IDPs who mostly settled in Mitrovica city where they run small shops and kiosks (International Crisis Group (2005: 12-13)).

⁷ Dr. Jaksić is chief ideologue of the SNC, he works in the Mitrovica hospital and sits in the Zubin Potok assembly on the Serbian DSS party ticket, while Mr. Ivanović is the SNC deputy president in the Zvečan assembly and leads the regional Mitrovica hospital.

⁸ A source from the European Council Liaison Office (ECLO) quoted the Serbia Helsinki Committee that government budget for Kosovo was to be cut with 60% to 300 million Euro, while a Serbian CSO employee stated it was more in the range of 360 million Euro.

Tim Judah (2000) to have been embedded in Serbian political culture for centuries.⁹ Serb politicians are famous for this practice. Differences usually come to the fore after a group, movement or party attains more power or popularity which then needs to be shared, leading to political infighting.¹⁰ Such infighting perpetuates a malignant rather than a constructive political atmosphere, and keeps the political arena a challenging space.

Finally, Serb politics is typically polemic and the practicing of ethnic-nationalism is commonplace. The Milošević era, in which 'ethnic politics' dominated the political landscape, created a chauvinistic climate that hasn't waned.^{xxxiii} Nationalistic political goals are formulated that are derived from the narrative of a 'Heavenly Serbia,' with which the present day Kosovo issue is strongly connected. Contemporary Serbian politics can still be characterized as populist and polarized as these modes ensure votes during election time. Since the Kosovo question is so close at heart to the Serbian identity it is a policy area of internal discord and utmost sensitivity. Serbian officials in Kosovo and in Belgrade are intertwined in a game of manipulation over power and control. For example, proponents of a more pragmatic approach are countered by hardliners in both Serbia proper and Kosovo who instigate emotional responses from the public on the question of Kosovo. As such, pragmatists' hands are tied: current president Tadić is a prime example. Since the DS-led coalition won the national elections in May 2008 on a pro-European agenda, it has had to struggle for control over Serbian institutions in Kosovo. Those institutions were dominated by another party, the DSS, and to some extent the SRS, who in their effort not to relinquish control would accuse the DS of selling out on Kosovo-Serbs and national interests to obtain European approval.^{xxxiv} This theme endures today and locks Serbs into a discourse that is difficult to break out of.

Locked Out of Political Life

Though Serbs generally are locked within their own political customs and culture as exemplified, and which thus debilitates common participation, Kosovo-Serbs have an additional external influence that directly affects their political lives. This is the political process of Kosovo's transition to an independent state. Serbia's opinion on the matter of Kosovo's independence was essentially bypassed by the Ahtisaari Plan and when Kosovo's Provisional Institutions for Self-Government (PISG)¹¹ unilaterally declared independence from Serbia. This has had a defining impact on Kosovo-Serbs' perception of their political reality. Since Serbia does not recognize Kosovo, most Kosovo-Serbs refuse to participate in its state structures and institutions. This effectively locks them out of their (Kosovan) political reality. It can be said that this exclusion is self-imposed, which to a certain degree is obviously true as the majority chooses not to recognize, and in fact actively resists the roll

⁹ Judah goes as far back as the rule of Stefan Nemanja at the end of the 12th and beginning of the 13th century, which ended with his abdication. Afterwards, two of his sons, Stefan and Vukan, quarrelled endlessly over their succession rights, even though Stefan was made the new sovereign.

¹⁰ Recent examples of this are the breaking up of the oppositional block led by Djindjić and Drašković after Milošević was defeated in October of 2000. Similarly, the Serbian Radical Party (SRS) was split up in the fall of 2008 because of a feud between Tomislav Nikolić, then party president, and Vojislav Šešelj, party leader but indicted and detained in the ICTY facility in The Hague. Nikolic together with other party prominents formed a new political party which was later named the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and drew a substantial amount of SRS followers, leading Šešelj to call them traitors and instruments of "Western intelligence services to break up the SRS (*South-eastern European Times*, 24-09-2008, http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/newsbriefs/2008/09/24/nb-04, accessed 01-03-2010.)."

¹¹ The PISG were set up in the aftermath of the NATO intervention in accordance with UNSC resolution 1244, with the help of the UNMIK administration.

out of the 'new born'¹² state. However, they feel that they had no choice in the matter other than to accept the Ahtisaari Plan. This was not perceived by the people as a real choice. Even more so since the UN Security Council did not endorse the Ahtisaari Plan, Kosovo independence is regarded to be pushed through by the Albanian lobby and the pro-independence coalition of the International Steering Group (ISG). This is the Kosovo-issue through the eyes of an average Kosovo-Serb.

The supervised accession to independence of Kosovo from 2 February 2007¹³ to independence on 17 February 2008 and the incremental process toward political adulthood of Kosovo onwards is consistently declared by the Kosovo government and the ICO as the irreversible "new reality."^{xxxv} Both actors are necessarily adamant on this issue for it would otherwise undermine their own *raison d'être*.¹⁴ On the other hand, the Kosovo-Serbs are adamant on their position that *Kosovo i Metohija* is a province of Serbia. The ICO and the Kosovo government continually call for Kosovo-Serb political participation. However, their position that the process is irreversible effectively denies Kosovo-Serbs the status of political subjects *prima facie*, as the status of Kosovo is the defining issue of everything political for them. The position shuts out the salient and important political opinion of the Kosovo-Serbs that it is not an independent state. These positions are severely at odds. In turn, this produces a stalemate inside Kosovo that is most severe in the Serb 'world' or reality.

Meanwhile, Kosovo institutions with the ICO's assistance continue the political process and are making considerable progress. Important political decisions are made on a daily basis by Kosovo governmental institutions. This happens in large part without Serb representation, but not entirely. There are various independent Serb politicians participating during the elections and there is an active political party. This party, the Independent Liberal Party (SLS), is Serbian not in name but in composition: It is effectively a Serb political party in Kosovo, operating within the Kosovo state structure. Moreover, the SLS currently participates in the Kosovo government and supplies two ministers.¹⁵ Although minority representation¹⁶ is guaranteed in the Kosovo constitution,^{xxxvi} the SLS only receives a few thousand votes at national elections, many of which also come from homogenous ethnic Albanian areas because they vote strategically (i.e. to keep other Serb politicians out).^{xxxvii} It thus cannot be said that the SLS has a popular Kosovo-Serb mandate.

Finally, although the status neutral UNMIK cannot conclude its mission and disband until the UN Security Council decides to – which due to the Russian Federation's support of the Serb position hasn't happened yet – it is downsizing its mission and increasingly transfers responsibilities to other international bodies, both those that are technically status neutral (EU institutions, OSCE) and those that are proponents of Kosovo's independence (ICO). These events air the impression to the Serbs that it is not internationally validated procedure that dictates the rules, as it is contradictory to the

¹² The term 'new born' is a reference to a statue consisting of the same words that was placed in the center of Pristina in celebration of independence.

¹³ The official date that the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement, in short: Ahtisaari Plan, was issued.

¹⁴ The ICO is charged with, first helping the PISG's accede to independence, and after independence helping the Kosovo institutions fulfil the conditions as set out in the Ahtisaari plan. Its legitimacy and mandate is embedded in the Kosovo Constitution, Chapter 14.

¹⁵ Currently, Mr. Saša Rasić is Minister of Community and Return, Mr. Nenad Rasić is Minister of Labour and Social Welfare (source: <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,43>).

¹⁶ Minority representation is benchmarked at twenty out of a total of 120 Assembly seats, ten of which are guaranteed for Serbs (Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, Chapter 4).

formal UNSC decision. Instead, a feeling among Serbs predominates that might makes right. This situation has even led some Kosovo-Serbs to declare that “people are not in control. Maybe Albanians are, because they are majority. Everything here [in Kosovo] is decided by international community. The most important decisions are in their hands.”^{xxxviii}

Taken together, the analysis that Kosovo-Serbs are locked within their system of politics and customs and simultaneously feel they are locked out of political processes in Kosovo has an adverse effect on people’s perception of the political landscape: the feeling predominates that it is almost impossible to control one’s own situation. This lack of ownership has led to what can be described as emerging political apathy among the general populace. And though it is true that Kosovo-Serbs in the past have rarely had the opportunity to behave freely as political subjects (decisions have customarily been made on their behalf), the fact that they are presently restrained from within and outside their own community to do so is regrettable. Caught between their own leaders and outsiders, Kosovo-Serbs seem unable to truly capitalize on the invasive changes of the past decennium. Curiously, the sentiment of apathy among the Serbian population in Kosovo was widely recognized by the respondents, both Serbs and internationals as well as Kosovo-Albanians, though most could only hope for improvement. Hopefully, the above analysis on the origin of this sentiment provides the necessary insights, because understanding a phenomenon goes a very long way in addressing it most effectively. The subsequent chapter combines an analysis of current Serbian civil society with the insights on the conceptual roots of Serbian life elaborated here to determine how to improve the development of Serbian civil society in Kosovo.

In sum, Kosovo-Serbs are surrounded by political processes they feel they have no control or ownership over. This breeds apathy and discourages political assertiveness. Society’s morale was desiccated in the events succeeding Tito’s death: a wobbly transitional phase, a decade of wars, sanctions and international isolation. On the one hand, corruption, ethnic politics and patronage lock people into a self-perpetuating system of Serbian politics that is difficult to escape from. On the other hand, Kosovo-Serbs are locked out of the political processes in Kosovo as a state as these occur on the premise that independence is the irreversible new reality. Excluded from choice, the basis that defines them as political subjects in Kosovo is effectively denied *prima facie*.

Serbian Social Life

This section identifies three main aspects that are deemed most relevant to an understanding of the conceptual roots of social life of Kosovo-Serbs: (1) The *structure* of social relations, (2) the nature and composition of Serb *communities*, and (3) the *situational experience* of Serbs in Kosovo, which is dubbed *social ‘lockdown.’* Whereas much of the conceptual roots of political life could be constructed drawing on firsthand experience *and* secondary data, Serbian social life in Kosovo specifically is far less documented in the literature. The presented analysis will thus mostly, though not exclusively, rely on first-hand experiences from working and living in the field.

Overall, Serbs are kind and hospitable people. They share their hospitable and generous character with the other Balkan nations. Foreigners have often been amazed by the degree to which Serbs can welcome relative strangers into their homes and offer them virtually any kind of food, drink, or even lodging. Serbs are fond of social conversation and have the reputation to enjoy a glass of the

(in)famous *rakija*¹⁷ in the meantime, while delaying a parting as much as possible. Furthermore, bravery, martyrdom or self-sacrifice and the intimate connection of the religious and national identity of the majority of the Serbs are part of the Serbian self-image and are pervasive elements in society. These values, as you can call them, are celebrated in a rich tradition of music and storytelling. Folk music is immensely popular among all generations, including the youth that has also had more modern media influences. Song, dance and sociability are important elements of life.^{xxxix} Note that, although the above concerns Serbian culture specifically, the similarities with other Balkan nations are vast. This also applies to the Kosovo-Albanian culture and social life. Even though the following focuses solely on Kosovo-Serbs and thus does not go into Albanian culture, their commonalities continue to provide hope for the possibility of a future true reconciliation. Now, after this general sketch of *Serbness*, the following focuses on the more specific aspects of structure, community and social lockdown.

Structure of Social Relations

A crucial aspect of society is the structure of its social relations. Social relations are the culturally or nationally defined and accepted rules that govern how persons interact with each other. Explaining the social relations of a group helps to understand the behavior of persons and enables outsiders to deal more effectively with them, for example when attempting to develop a civil society. The ones that are discussed here are patriarchy, hierarchy and seniority, patronage, and nepotism. The latter two have already come to the fore in the discussion on political life, which also shows the impact of social relations on life generally.

Although Yugoslavia was Communist for at least thirty-five years and it has long since transitioned to a democratic system, Serbian society is and remains patriarchic. However, this does not mean that Serbian women did not resist the traditional roles that were expected of them and female entrepreneurs continue their attempts to shake off this social stigma. During the Milošević regime, politics became increasingly conservative, but women continued to pursue political goals instead of adhering to the role of child bearer and homemaker that was expected of them. According to Biljana Bijelić (2005), patriarchic social relations survived due to a failure to achieve gender equality during socialism, the preservation of traditional values, and the militarization in society in the 1990s.^{xl} The public domain is still overtly male-dominated. The public and entrepreneurial positions of higher rank, status and prestige, such as political leaders, managers but also directors of NGOs are overwhelmingly male-dominated, though there are exceptions.¹⁸ For example, apart from the main case study NGO Fractal, I visited an additional eight NGOs in Kosovo to gather data for this research. Of all of these, three were led by a woman. Two of those were Albanian NGOs, while the other was a Dutch NGO with a locally staffed auxiliary in Kosovo. Nevertheless, there were ample female employees at the NGOs and they worked in positions with large responsibilities, for instance supervising core projects of the organizations. However, peace NGOs working with international organizations¹⁹ are in a more progressive atmosphere than the small enclave communities in

¹⁷ *Rakija* is the collective term for the various types of brandy that is brewed in the whole of the Balkans, and it is a very popular drink.

¹⁸ Though the leaders of Serbian political parties are all male, two prominent NGOs based in Belgrade – the Humanitarian Law Center and the Helsinki Committee – are led by women: Nataša Kandić and Sonja Biserko respectively.

¹⁹ Local NGOs in the Balkans always have dealings with international organizations, as these NGOs for instance are fully dependent on foreign funding and thus at least work with donor organizations.

Kosovo. This was evident from the composition of attendees at various community debates which I attended in the Serbian enclaves: 80-90% of the participants were men, and the women that were present rarely spoke.

The second aspect, hierarchy and seniority, entails the relations between social strata. Serbs are very respectful of authority in public, and will hold in awe the hierarchy that confirms this principle. As such, the social relations are structured more vertically than horizontally. It is customary not to refute or openly disagree with a person that is higher in the hierarchy. Such authority can be derived i.e. from age, wealth, influence or power. That means it is difficult for persons of lower authority to openly signal an error or flaw of a superior, and partially helps to explain why reform can be a lengthy process in Serbian society. These observations are derived from first-hand experience. These were also shared by a Dutch diplomat in Kosovo, who described Kosovo-Serbs as “traditional and authority-abiding people.”^{xli} However, within a social stratum or among persons of equal authority or position, Serbs can be considered a direct and assertive people. It is challenging to have an open discussion among Kosovo-Serbs when there are participants of their community present that are of higher authority than the others.

The third and last aspect is a combination of patronage and nepotism. Serbian society is saturated with these two phenomena, which in turn are intimately bound with the presence of corruption. Patronage was also discussed in relation to politics in Kosovo. There are various occasions where prominent Kosovo-Serb figureheads in politics, business and public institutions use their status and influence to bind people to them through networks of patronage, guaranteeing an amount of necessary support. Especially in Kosovo, where unemployment is at soaring heights and there are significant levels of insecurity, this practice proves to be very effective. Nepotism is closely related to this. Nepotism has helped Serbs supply relatives and friends with employment in the difficult economic times of the 1990s, and reportedly it was already widely used before that in the Communist system. In fact, during the time of Yugoslavia, the term *veza i protekcija* – connections and protection – was widely known and used,^{xlii} indicating the pervasive use and embedded function of nepotism and patronage in society at large. Its usage has dwindled little and remains a contemporary fact of life in society.

In sum, the above sets out the structure of relations in Serbian society in general which is to a large degree shared by Kosovo-Serbs. More so, since Kosovo-Serb areas are less developed and more remote from the bustling Serbian urban centers, and thus experience less dynamism, Kosovo-Serbs can be characterized overall as more traditional and conservative. Social relations are male-dominated and vertical, and patronage and nepotism play an important role in society as survival mechanisms. These observations place important nuances in an understanding of *Serbness*, and sequentially in identifying the challenges in developing a Serbian civil society.

What of Community?

One of the most important insights obtained in the field regarding *Serbness* was that Kosovo-Serbs do not necessarily make up a comprehensive ‘Serbian community’ in Kosovo. This contrasts a commonplace assumption in much of the literature that Kosovo-Serbs are a unified group with shared interests. In actuality, there are significant differences. These originate from two main factors, namely (1) the geographical dispersal of the Serb enclaves, and (2) the changed composition of the local population resulting from the movement of people caused by the conflict. The

implications hereof are significant because it strains the Kosovo-Serbs' ability to advocate for their common community interests in the rapidly changing environment of Kosovo.

The differences between the Serb dominated north – the municipalities of Zvečan, Zubin Potok and Leposaviq, and the part of Mitrovica municipality running north from Mitrovica city – and the rest of the Serbian population who live in scattered enclaves to the south has created a diverging geostrategic situation. Rather than accumulating to a common Kosovo-Serb position, Serbian localities employ different strategies based on their physical location and thus weaken the advocacy of the group as a whole. Serbs in the north, adjacent to Serbia and clustered together in relatively tight proximity, are emboldened in portraying a more radical and hard-line position towards Kosovo institutions and pro-independence stakeholders. These areas can avoid contact with Kosovo-Albanians and instead travel to and trade with Serbia proper directly as they are the region's majority. In contrast, the enclaves to the south are surrounded by the Kosovo-Albanian population. To people from these locations, travel and trade and other forms of mobility imply at least some degree of contact with the outside. As such, they cannot permit themselves a similar hard-line or radical position for it would risk agitation of the ethnic Albanian majority which could difficult their lives. Interestingly, a study by the International Crisis Group (2009) has shown that Serbs in Shtërpce municipality²⁰ operate more pragmatically towards the Albanian population and Kosovo institutions, albeit still moderately. Tensions there appear less than in the north: there is an inter-ethnic market and Albanians make use of Serbian facilities, among others.^{xliii} Though the latter is but one example, Serbs in enclaves south of Mitrovica city generally portray a more pragmatist attitude. The empirical evidence thus shows diverging attitudes between the clustered Serbs in the north and scattered Serbs to the south. However, the Serbian government institutions charged with representing the interests of Kosovo-Serbs – the Ministry for Kosovo and Metohija in Belgrade and the Coordination Center for Kosovo and Metohija (CCK) in Kosovo – cannot reflect the situational necessity of a more pragmatic stance of Serbs to the south in their policy, for they deny the legitimacy of cooperation with Kosovo-Albanian dominated institutions.²¹ This puts the comprehensive representation of Kosovo-Serbian interests at great difficulty. Conversely, the Serb community's interests are overwhelmingly represented on a local level. Local leaders from the north and the south have diverging shorter term visions, which take the grander picture of a common representation hostage, to the general detriment of the group in Kosovo.

The other differentiating factor within the body of Kosovo-Serbs is the demography on a local level (town/city/enclave) which is made up of original inhabitants and IDPs. The latter have had to move from their original living places to the enclaves in search for relative safety. These IDPs were described in an interview to be more prone to radicalism and more vulnerable to manipulation and patronage by local politicians and mafia. Furthermore, the considerable amount of IDPs that settled in enclaves strains the already burgeoning employment market and other already scarce provisions

²⁰ Shtërpce is a municipality in the south of Kosovo, bordering Macedonia. Its population consists of approximately 60% Serbs, 35% Albanians and 5% of other minorities. It is surrounded by almost homogeneous Albanian municipalities.

²¹ Interestingly, however, on March 19, 2010, Oliver Ivanović, State Secretary of the Serbian Ministry of Kosovo i Metohija, for the first time mentioned the necessity for indirect cooperation of Kosovo-Serbs with Kosovo institutions in Pristina when attending the first Serbian Orthodox Church service in Prizren after it had been burned down following the March riots of 2004. These developments should be closely watched for they can have far reaching implications for the representation of Kosovo-Serbs' interests in the future (*VIP Daily News Report*, 22 March 2010).

in Serb areas, potentially increasing intra-community discord. In Mitrovica city, IDPs' most popular form of economic activity is the exploitation of small kiosks that are set up illegally on sidewalks and streets. The mafia reportedly demands forms of 'protection money' from these kiosk proprietors, and ensures their political support for local hard-line politicians. This is a source of great frustration among parts of the population.^{xliv} The situation exemplifies a small but significant rift between original inhabitants and IDPs within Mitrovica city. More studies on the effects of IDPs in Serb enclaves are required, but similar situations can be expected in other places as well.

In sum, on a Kosovo-wide level, the geographical dispersal of the Serbian populace in Kosovo has resulted in different forms of interaction of localities with the Kosovo-Albanians. This is translated on a political level into diverging political stances, where the clearest division has taken shape between the Serb dominated north and the scattered, but more numerous, Serbian population to the south of Mitrovica city. On a more direct, local level, there are examples of social division within localities between original inhabitants and IDPs that create social tensions inside the communities. All in all, a comprehensive Kosovo-Serbian policy that takes on daily issues concerning the community inside Kosovo itself is lacking. Serbs are de facto unrepresented as an interest group in the wider Kosovo processes, instead keeping diverging strategies in dealings with Kosovo-Albanians and Kosovo institutions, leading me to conclude that it is difficult to speak of a Serbian community inside Kosovo.

Social Lockdown

This section concerns the social life in Kosovo that is dictated by the situational experience of Serbs: feelings of fear, a lack of information on the situation in the enclaves and problems with transportation that limit their mobility, which result in debilitated social activity on a Kosovo-wide scale. In essence, their lives are timid and experienced as if locked down. Although there are many more difficulties, these three are highlighted for their bigger impact on social life compared to technical issues such as property rights or cultural heritage, because it directly relates to the ability of people to move as social beings in the space and place that is the Kosovo-Serb 'community.' The section relies on first-hand experiences and impressions that were obtained by simply walking the streets in enclaves, observations of and striking up conversations with people. Where possible, arguments are supported by secondary data.

Since it is the perception of security and the accompanying feelings that determine people's behavior, the focus here is purposefully centered on fear rather than the (objective) security situation. Firstly, fear of violent retribution is a theme among Kosovo-Serbs that has existed since the days of Yugoslavia. In the early 1980s, for example during the 1981 riots, stories were circulated of the persecution of Serbs by Albanians. Although actual incidents of violence did occur, inflated rumors were far more numerous. These rumors were presented as the cause for a large number of Serbs leaving the province, while in fact most of them left for economic reasons.^{xlv} However, in the wake of the NATO intervention that ended Serbia's control over Kosovo in June 1999, there were numerous cases of Albanian revenge attacks on Serbs. There were serious events of looting, arson and killing, among others,^{xlvi} in retribution to Serbia's rule over Kosovo. The Serbian media and politicians – which often worked hand in hand – revived the memory of the past violence (in Yugoslavia) and sometimes manipulated an image of insecurity by skillfully linking past events to the violent incidents that occurred now. This helped to create an image of persecution of Serbs as if it had cycled for decades in Kosovo, in turn giving rise to a resilient experience of fear. As such, this fear of Albanian retribution was firmly established in the mind's eye of ordinary Kosovo-Serbs.

At present fear persists, though it is diminishing slowly in light of the absence of large scale incidents. The perception that Serbs outside Serb areas in Kosovo are unsafe is based on both imagined stories and real events. Violence has continued since 1999 with the most severe example being the March 2004 riots.²² Although smaller incidents take place each year, rumors of (atrocious) crimes against Serbs are more numerous and actively contribute to feelings of fear and insecurity. The result of this general fear has a paralyzing effect on Serbian life in Kosovo, and makes it difficult for the minority to communicate with each other and experience the positive changes that are also happening in Kosovo, including those between Albanians and Serbs. Instead, most Serbs travel little outside their enclaves, are reluctant to interact with and generally mistrust Albanians, even to the point where Serb employees at the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) refrain from stopping Serbs committing minor offences in Mitrovica city, because they would then have to go to the minor offences court in Vushtrri in an Albanian dominated area to the south.^{xlvii} These examples help to exemplify that movement in the social space and life is severely limited.

Whereas fear is a predominately psychological cause for the social lockdown across the Serbian community in Kosovo, there are also more material/physical challenges abound that contribute hereto. These are the problems surrounding mobility and information. Mobility is strained because of the poor state of public transportation between enclaves in Kosovo and the high costs involved. There are only few lines of public transportation that connect Serb areas in Kosovo. Apart from bus lines that run once or twice a day from Prizren and Shtërpe to Belgrade – and stop along the way in Gracanice and Mitrovica, there aren't many other options. The problem is especially strenuous considering that substantial amounts of people live in smaller residential pockets that are not connected to these bus lines at all, although a few privately run Serb bus companies are flexible and willing to make detours to collect people from these places. Furthermore, the price of a bus ticket runs between ten and twenty Euro's, which is substantial on a Kosovo-Serb salary and with unemployment levels varying between 35 per cent and 80 per cent.²³ There are Kosovo run public bus lines, but Serbs are reluctant to use them. The other alternative is travelling by car. Although Serbs use cars to get around, their usage is limited because people are susceptible to attack when traveling in small numbers, because car ownership is limited, and because it is also expensive. Moreover, Kosovo-Serbs on numerous occasions complained of discrimination by Albanian employees of the KPS: they frequently stop and fine cars driven by Serbs with original Serbian plates for the smallest of reasons. Their stories were confirmed by my own experience when driving the Belgrade-based vehicle of our NGO through Kosovo.²⁴ Because Belgrade and Pristina institutions require car owners to have different types of license plates, documents, and insurances and there is

²² After several Kosovo media ran a story on the killing of three Albanian youth by Kosovo-Serbs who chased them with dogs into the Ibar river, large numbers of Kosovo-Albanians took to the streets and assaulted pockets of Serb residences and enclaves. Nineteen people were killed, 900 injured (not all casualties were Serb, as UNMIK personnel and Albanians were also targeted but in lower numbers), and extensive damage was done to property in the largest single event of inter-ethnic violence since the war had ended. The riots were real, whereas the story the media ran was not (CDA-CLP (2006: 26-28)).

²³ The International Crisis Group reports that in Shtërpe, a southern Kosovo municipality with a Serb majority, unemployment is between 35 and 60 per cent (2009a: 2), while Serb peace-building professionals reported to me that some enclaves have up to 80 per cent unemployment.

²⁴ Serbian car license plates start the sequence with two letters signifying where the car is from. In the case of Belgrade this is signified with 'BG,' while all Kosovo cars have 'KS.' On each trip to Kosovo in our BG-plates car, we were stopped and often fined for minor violations such as crossing a running line, which in our experience hadn't even been committed.

no working agreement between the two governments on such issues, and because the adoption of Kosovo license plates by Serbs can be translated as a political act of the recognition of Kosovo's independence, many Kosovo-Serbs continue to drive with Serbian plates.²⁵ Therefore they cannot leave the enclaves with their cars. Thus, this practical problem contributes to a social lockdown as people often (feel they) cannot travel between enclaves.

The third problem is a lack of sound information on the conditions and daily events in the enclaves, which contribute to a sense among Serbs that they live in an isolated locality. Radio Television Kosovo (RTK) is almost exclusively broadcasted in Albanian, which many people do not understand. Instead, Serbs get most of the news on Kosovo, Serbia and the rest of the world via Serbia-based media companies such as Radio Television Serbia (RTS), Pink TV, B92 and other Serbian stations, Serbia-based newspapers, radio and sometimes via CCN or BBC. However, because these stations operate from Serbia or abroad, their coverage is mostly of a generalized nature and rarely covers the specific details of the many different enclaves and settlements where Serbs live. Moreover, a majority of Serbian media can be said to be biased against Kosovo's independence, thereby contributing little to nuanced or objective news coverage. Alternatively, there are radio and TV stations that operate from some of the larger enclaves, such as Shtirpce (Herz TV) and Mitrovica city, but their broadcasting range is limited to the locality and does not span the whole of Kosovo. RTK1, the Kosovo run public media station, does feature Serbian language coverage. However, the airtime is restricted to a daily fifteen minute news program and a weekly one hour background story, while the broadcasting schedule is inconsistent. To complicate matters further, Serbs first have to disconnect their TVs from the Serbian cable and hook it up to the Kosovo cable in order to receive RTK, which few people do every day as it is quite elaborate. Plans for creating an RTK2 that caters almost exclusively to the minorities in Kosovo have existed for years, but its implementation is delayed because enclave-based media and local leaders bicker to control it, and because the financial infeasibility of the plan coupled with the global economic crisis have not made it possible yet.^{xlviii} This shortage of news at the least keeps people uninformed on their actual situation, while at the most it restrains the forming of a Kosovo-wide Serbian agenda that could contribute to a sense of Kosovo-Serbian community, thus restricting their social lives.

The adverse effects of this lack of sound information and updates became clear during a meeting of NGO Fractal with a group of former participants of a program, with whom they try to keep regular contact.²⁶ This group thus consists of alumni of one of the NGO's programs. All are Kosovo-Serbs from different parts of Kosovo south of Mitrovica city. These people are known and mostly respected in their communities, and hold relatively good positions in society. Among them are business owners, NGO directors, lawyers and students. Due to the lack of information available, the little bits of news that members of the group had picked up in their own localities on various processes only formed a partial picture. The ensuing uncertainty made them supplement the picture with exaggerations and rumors, invoking hefty emotional responses. Only after the NGO employees completed the whole picture with the news and information they had could members of the group be calmed down. Without complete information, Kosovo-Serbs cannot represent their opinions on the changes performed by the Kosovo government and other actors, making a group effort

²⁵ However, a noticeable shift can be observed: Increasing amounts of Serbs also adopt Kosovo license plates, especially south of Mitrovica city, as it enables them to travel through Kosovo to for example Serbia (field notes).

²⁶ This group will receive further attention in Chapter 5.

ineffective. Moreover, as was explained the Kosovo-Serbs have little means of coordinating a response as a community to such processes.

In sum, the social life for Serbs in Kosovo is experienced as if it is in a *lockdown*. This has to do with three main factors which were presented. First, there are the violent retributive incidents committed by Albanians on the Serbian population and there is a practice of spreading exaggerated rumors, which together maintain a perpetual sensation of fear that refrains many from moving about. Furthermore, the poor possibilities of public transportation coupled with the relatively high costs, the expensive and insecure means of car transport, and the technical problems between the governments of Belgrade and Pristina combine to limit mobility between enclaves and with Serbia proper. Finally, the lack of a Kosovo-wide system of media coverage on the situation in the Serb enclaves contribute to a sense that Serbs live in an isolated world, for the most part uninformed and unaware of events in other parts of Kosovo. Social life is thus often restricted to the localities themselves – the enclaves and settlements where Serbs scarcely get out of. It suggests the near impossibility for people to get the idea that they are part of a Kosovo-Serb community, unable (imagined or real) to travel to, work with and socialize with each other in different parts of the region. Actually doing so would take considerable amounts of courage, expenses and effort, and thus happens little. The sense that Serbs are part of a community in Kosovo suffers from it.

In Conclusion

The implications of the hitherto established conceptual roots of political and social life for Serbian civil society development are explained here. Subsequently, this forms the basis for evaluating and analyzing the practice of civil society development in Kosovo in the next chapter. In order to arrive there, the presented outline of Serbian society must be linked to the definition of civil society from Chapter 2. In other words, an answer shall be offered to the question: what are the implications of the conceptual roots of Kosovo-Serbian political and social life for the development of a *process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority* in Kosovo? It must be emphasized that the following is but an outsider's analysis based on theory. It merely establishes what, according to the findings in Chapters 2 and 4, would be the reasoned manner of conducting sustainable civil society development. The next chapter will go into the matter based on the empirical data that was collected. Thus combined a distinction is made apparent between the theoretical and the empirical reality and subsequently the most valuable lessons can be learned.

Accordingly, the structure of this conclusion follows the structure of Chapter 2. First, a discussion of the implications on a conceptual level is presented, whereto the forging of a new social contract for Kosovo-Serbs is central. Second is the strategic level, where it is argued that group participation is essential in achieving the goal of civil society development. Finally, the practical implications are presented in the tactical level analysis, setting out the means to achieve the ends.

Conceptual Level

In order to develop a Serbian civil society in Kosovo, there has to be a process that Kosovo-Serbs feel they can be a part of. This is the ultimate base condition, without which there can be no meaningful development. As reasoned in Chapter 2, central to the development of civil society in a post-conflict situation such as Kosovo is the legitimation of the (new) state itself. More so, Kosovo is unique in this regard, because it is the most advanced example of a case where a new state was created by force

from an existing country with previously recognized borders. Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo were involved in the social project of a realignment of the societal order before and during the war. This social project was in essence no different from what occurs on a daily basis in all societies in the world. It was dissimilar from peaceful processes because of its violent character, of which can be said that it is actually a mere physical characteristic. With the international intervention and occupation of Kosovo, this process was essentially frozen. Reinitiating it in the post-conflict period through peaceful means can be done through the merits of civil society.

We have seen that the ICO and the Kosovo government present the current situation as an irreversible new reality. Practically, there is probable truth in that statement. Conceptually however, international support for Kosovo's independence was based on the arguments also set out in the Ahtisaari Plan that Kosovo was a unique case that deserved a unique status settlement. This argumentation is severely at odds with their treatment of the Serbian community in Kosovo. If Kosovo was a unique case where independence was warranted, then one cannot expect Kosovo-Serbs to acquiesce to this new reality as if Kosovo is akin to normal societies. Instead, the minority must then also be treated as if in a unique situation, and their concerns must be taken seriously. All the more so since Kosovo is framed in the Serbian world view as essential to the Serbian identity. This implies the necessity to take their denial of Kosovo's independence into account. This differs from ceding to them and abandoning support for Kosovo as a sovereign country. Instead, by recognizing there are two realities – namely a Serbian reality and a Kosovo(-Albanian) reality, instead of just the latter – an opportunity would be created to open a dialogue between the two peoples and their supporters. Only under such conditions can a genuine space be created that has room for authentic disagreement, negotiation and debate concerning the redefining of the social contract and the societal order in Kosovo.

One can rightfully state that the aforementioned proposition is inherently paradoxical. After all, how is it possible to leave the dispute over Kosovo's status in the middle, while engaging with Kosovo-Serbs to involve them in the development of a civil society in Kosovo? The latter already implies the legitimacy of a sovereign Kosovo in which a civil society is developed apart from a civil society in Serbia. Although it is paradoxical, one would be wrong to characterize it as undesirable and infeasible. Indeed, the new reality in Kosovo is essentially imposed on the Serbian minority and although the improbability and undesirability of a reversal of the new reality can be made apparent, it is nonetheless desirable to involve Serbs in the Kosovo peace process. The alternative is a superficial process with great risks to its overall sustainability. Doing so does not necessarily imply the acquiescence of Kosovo-Serbs to an independent Kosovo. By involving Serbs on their terms, there is a higher chance of tackling the root problems between Serbs and Albanians than the current attitude of the pro-independence stakeholders. This is because in both cases the actual situation is similar (the new reality), but the framework in which the situation is presented is fundamentally different. Furthermore, although it is a paradoxical proposition, it is nonetheless a feasible one. After all, the transitional stage which the Kosovo peace process is in can wholly be described as paradoxical. There is for instance no continuity of government either. In fact, (Kosovo-)Serbs and Albanians have a commonality regarding the transitional nature of their systems. The existence of ambiguities does not imply infeasibility.

The transitional phases of both Serbia and Kosovo are unstable and paradoxical. Both parties have a short experience with democratic governance. Seeing that a reconciliation of the societal order has

yet to take place, and seeing that civil society is an ideal instrument in facilitating such a process, it is sensible to invest in its development and patiently build up the experience of the peoples with civil society, before further advancing the political process inside Kosovo. Conceptually this proposition is sound, although the practicality hereof is dependent on many more factors, including the will and support of the international community, which are essential because of the needed resources and influence on the respective peoples it can provide. In all likelihood the processes of civil society development and democratization will produce tensions when both unravel simultaneously, because the disagreement and debate in the sphere of social interaction can find its physical expression in elections. Meanwhile the expectations on the peoples of Kosovo to act as model citizens of a democracy should be tempered, and patience with and support for the democratic institutions required.

Strategic Level

Having conceptually established how to frame the context of Serbian civil society development in Kosovo, this paragraph establishes the goal. The goal is the involvement and participation of the Serbian minority in processes in Kosovo. The presence of Serbs in Kosovo and the importance of Kosovo for the Serbian identity are facts. Thus, it can be said to be in the interest of both the majority in Kosovo (Albanians) and the Serbs themselves to act on these facts. In other words, the Serbs are unmistakably a part of Kosovo as much as the Albanians are a part of it, whether either side likes it or not. To ignore the troublesome circumstances in which a minority lives in a country's early stages of statehood – with which come responsibilities – and conversely to deny a new reality taking shape all around, will perpetuate a tense situation that is possibly flammable because the core problem is avoided. This means that the representation of the Kosovo-Serbs' group interests in Kosovo processes must be advanced regardless of any future scenario.

The Serbian government is often regarded as part of the problem of integrating Kosovo-Serbs, due to its uncompromising stance on Kosovo's status and its policies of upholding Serbian state structures in Kosovo. Serbia is the source of identification of Kosovo-Serbs. Therefore it is part of the problem, but it is likewise a part of the solution. Despite its flaws, Serbia is struggling to make a successful transition to a democratic country. It was severely isolated and sanctioned in the 1990s which made it possible for criminals to establish a strong foothold in society. Mafia, corruption and patronage networks are still present in government institutions, but the government is working to reduce them. Serbia has resisted the secession of Kosovo by peaceful means and in that regard can play a positive role model of democratic behavior to the Kosovo-Serbs, even though the position itself is at odds with an independent Kosovo. Kosovo-Serbs will, at least in the immediate future but probably indefinitely, continue to identify with Serbia as their country, and this cannot be simply ignored or forcibly changed. Conversely it is unrealistic of the Kosovo-Serbs to act as if there is no need to involve themselves with the political and development processes in Kosovo. They are a readily recognizable group and they are a part of Kosovo. Because Kosovo-Serbs identify with Serbia, Serbia can as no other actor aid in forging the Kosovo-Serbs into a coherent body acting in unison to improve their quality of life in Kosovo. Unfortunately polemics and ethnic-nationalism are part of the political climate in Serbia, so that pragmatism towards the Kosovo problem is often explained as weakness and even treason. Nevertheless, the oversimplified black-and-white frameworks of pro and con independence help little to understand the delicate context and further the post-conflict peace process.

There are also challenges to the consistency of the Serbian community in Kosovo. For one, this chapter evidenced the lack of political activity of Kosovo-Serbs to the point where many can be described as apathetic. Furthermore, the diverging strategies of Serbs in the north on the one hand and those south of Mitrovica city on the other do not connect well with the importance of forming a Serbian community capable of representing its group interests. Because regular Serbian language media coverage on Kosovo is scarce and rarely nuanced or objective, Kosovo-Serbs are poorly updated and often have little sound knowledge of their situation, making it impossible to coordinate a response on the processes that are happening all around them. The overall strategic level analysis shows a division and disorientation within the body of Kosovo-Serbs, which strains their involvement and participation as a group in the region.

Tactical Level

How to reach the goal of developing a Serbian civil society in Kosovo is analyzed here. The implications that can be deducted from the conceptual roots of political and social life are numerous. First of all, there is the question what can be identified as the *centers of authority* with which Kosovo-Serbs can engage in the process of civil society. Arguably, these centers entail all actors, including the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Serbian and Kosovo government, the ICO and other international organizations (IOs), and local leaders. However, since the theoretical framework established that civil society should be free of external normative priorities, it can likewise be argued that Serbs should be left to identify the centers of authority themselves. The latter approach allows the space for Kosovo-Serbs to start developing a civil society and get accustomed to *the process of moving in spheres of social interaction* on their own terms and from an intrinsic motivation, thus increasing ownership. Still it is a conundrum as this does not guarantee interaction with the *Kosovo* centers of authority.

All things considered, the first step should be to increase the ability and capacity of Kosovo-Serbs to par-take in the process of civil society. This implies the need for improving the development of information dissemination in and between the enclaves and other Serb settlements in Kosovo, and increasing the ability for safe and low cost transportation free of technical institutional difficulties. These material objectives, though seemingly unrelated to a social process, are nevertheless crucial in facilitating the development of civil society because it can further a sense of community for the Kosovo-Serbs. Increasing, nuancing and simplifying the access to the flows of information can also help combat the ominous feelings of fear that incapacitates Serb movement in Kosovo. Increased movement and mobility can also bring the policy differences between Serbs in the north and those to the south closer together. This can facilitate the formation of a group position on a range of practical issues besides the position on the status of Kosovo that all Kosovo-Serbs share.

Secondly, civil society development needs to be encompassing of all strata of society, including hardliners and radicals. These people are largely present and influential in Kosovo-Serbian society, so that continuous efforts must be made to draw them into dialogue and debate. Disregarding them also entails excluding their supporters, whom are needed in the development of civil society. There must be room for such genuine disagreement. When engaging with civil society development, outsiders should take note of the provided account of cultural traditions that organize social relations in Serbian society. For example, if a person present at a community level debate is both of high authority and has a radical position, the other participants are less likely to speak up. This is due to the hierarchical, vertical structure of social relations among Serbs. Alternatives can be found, such

as a principal level debate aside from a community level debate. Identifying and distinguishing principals from lower classes is an arduous task and requires connections and trust between outsiders and community members. Thus, large scale and intensive investment in relationships on the local level between the various stakeholders and the communities is needed. Regarding the influence of patronage networks, nepotism, corruption and mafia groups in Serbian society, these challenges are best left to the Serbs themselves to tackle, if they are perceived as problems by the communities. This has the advantage that Serbs in Kosovo can achieve results and break the culture of apathy. Otherwise, when such issues are sternly and forcibly dealt with by outsiders, it runs the risk of creating further circumstances of a lack of ownership, learning and progress – which in turn would further distance the Kosovo-Serbs from the post-conflict processes. Active engagement and support by outsiders however can help the communities to identify and formulate such problems in society themselves.

Endnotes Chapter 4 - Literature

- ⁱ For reference, see for instance: Judah (2000; 2010); Ramet & Pavlaković (2005); Detrez (1999).
- ⁱⁱ Pouligny (2004), p. 9.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Aleksandar Petrov, as cited in: Anzulovic (1999), p. 5.
- ^{iv} The census only reports the number of orthodox religious people in the Republic of Serbia. The census considered four Orthodox churches: Serbian, Rumanian, Macedonian and Russian. Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia, Books of Census 2002 Results, Communication SN31, No. 295, December 24, 2002, retrieved from: <http://webzrzs.stat.gov.rs/axd//en/popis.htm>, on December 18, 2009.
- ^v Anzulovic (1999), p. ?
- ^{vi} *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
- ^{vii} Informal conversations, notes from the field.
- ^{viii} Interview 7, 13 March 2009.
- ^{ix} Ramet (2005), p. 258; Interview 7, 13 March 2009.
- ^x Judah (2000), pp. xii, 160-162, 298.
- ^{xi} Mansfield & Snyder (1995), pp. 5-7.
- ^{xii} Teitel (2000).
- ^{xiii} International Crisis Group (2009b), pp. 3-6.
- ^{xiv} Interview 20, 10 March 2009.
- ^{xv} International Crisis Group (2009b), pp. 9-10.
- ^{xvi} Interview 11, 8 May 2009.
- ^{xvii} UNMIK at a Glance, <http://www.unmikonline.org/intro.htm>, accessed 18 February 2010.
- ^{xviii} Washington Post, 23 October 2004 (D. Williams: Serbs Boycott Kosovo Elections), from: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/192/38704.html>, accessed 19 February 2010.
- ^{xix} International Crisis Group (2009b), p. 16.
- ^{xx} *Ibid.*, pp. 16-19; interview 6, March 13 2009.
- ^{xxi} Interview 11, 8 May 2009.
- ^{xxii} Gow & Michalski (2005), p. 153.
- ^{xxiii} *Ibid.*, pp. 153-156.
- ^{xxiv} Various observation notes of researcher, February to June 2009.
- ^{xxv} *Ibid.*
- ^{xxvi} Pavlakovic (2005), p. 255.
- ^{xxvii} Judah (2000), p. 255.
- ^{xxviii} Panoram, Zagreb, 19 April 2003, p. 27, as cited in: Pavlakovic (2005), p. 40.
- ^{xxix} International Crisis Group (2005), pp. 12-13, 16.
- ^{xxx} Pavlakovic (2005), p. 22.
- ^{xxxi} International Crisis Group (2009b), p. 13.
- ^{xxxii} Interview 3, 26 March 2009; Interview 9, 27 March 2009; Interview 11, 8 May 2009; Interview 13, 12 May 2009.
- ^{xxxiii} Pavlakovic (2005), p. 27.
- ^{xxxiv} International Crisis Group (2009b), pp. 7-14.
- ^{xxxv} Interview 9, 27 March 2009.
- ^{xxxvi} Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, Chapter 4.
- ^{xxxvii} Interview 21, 13 February 2009.
- ^{xxxviii} Interview 15, 26 March 2009.
- ^{xxxix} Detrez (2003), p. 57.
- ^{xl} Bijelić (2005), pp. 288, 296.
- ^{xli} Interview 10, 9 June 2009.
- ^{xlii} Judah (2000), p. 149.
- ^{xliii} International Crisis Group (2009a).
- ^{xliv} Interview 15, 26 March 2009.
- ^{xliv} Judah (2000), p. 156.
- ^{xlvi} Collaborative Development Action-Collaborative Learning Projects (2006), p. 24.
- ^{xlvi} Interview 3, 26 March 2009.
- ^{xlvi} Interview 13, 12 May 2009.

Chapter 5 - Developing a Serbian Civil Society in Kosovo

This chapter analyses the empirical development process of a Serbian civil society in contemporary Kosovo. Also, the sustainability of this process will be queried. The preceding chapters serve as instruments in gauging this empirical reality: Chapter 2 provides the framework of theories and concepts concerning civil society and its development in post-conflict situations, Chapter 3 motivated the manner in which the fieldwork was conducted based on theory, and Chapter 4 pinpointed the conceptual roots of Kosovo-Serbian society, concluding with their implications for development practice. The empirical analysis presented here is structured as follows. First, this chapter looks at the current situation of a Serbian civil society in Kosovo, then it focuses on what are the optimal types of approaches that nongovernmental organizations can take to achieve a sustainable development of civil society, and concludes by sketching the environment in which development efforts are embedded.

When all these elements are combined, they provide a multifaceted overview of civil society development practice in Kosovo. However, it has its limitations. Encompassing all factors of post-conflict practice in Kosovo is extensive, and proved an impossibility in the thesis. Instead, the approach taken in this document is to advocate for rooting civil society development in a sound theoretical framework and careful contextual analysis of Serbian life. The following is an explorative overview of practice, with careful and detailed attention to the best strategy in developing a sustainable Serbian civil society in the second section of the chapter. Despite its limitations, it should be highly informative for academics interested in the Kosovo case and challenging to the stakeholders of the peace process in Kosovo. Moreover, the findings on the types of approaches to civil society development suggest that a rigid reevaluation of practice in Kosovo is in order, and may subsequently inspire the debate on civil society development on an international scale.

A Contemporary Serbian Civil Society in Kosovo?

Thus, firstly the current state of Serbian civil society is ascertained as it is understood within the framework of this thesis, pursued by two examples of premature Serbian civil society that can be further developed. Hereafter, the perception of civil society held by development practitioners and Kosovo-Serbs is portrayed to ascertain how the concept is understood among the subjects of this case study and what implications this has for development efforts.

What does Serbian civil society in Kosovo look like? This question is approached from two angles: (1) people's perception and (2) a theory-based analysis of fieldwork data. It will reveal how the perceptions of civil society held by Serbs and other actors in Kosovo are influenced by civil society as a normative concept derived from the mainstream understanding, and to what extent this resembles the empirical reality. We begin with establishing contemporary Serbian civil society. It was already implied in the conclusion of Chapter 4, but will be further explicated here. The data is analyzed within the theoretical frame and definition of civil society in this thesis. To recap:

Civil society is a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority.

First and foremost, the condition of civil society cannot be established with statistical data. Because civil society has here been approached from a conceptual angle, and accordingly is defined as a process, it doesn't render itself to numerical measurement. Moreover, such statistics weren't gathered in the course of this research and it is doubtful whether such variables could even be operationalized.¹ Instead, the instrument of analysis is level with and derived from the conceptual discussion. Thus, in order to analyze civil society's state or condition, a number of issues are considered: the capacity of individuals to partake in this kind of social interaction, the availability of the required facilities to do so, and the degree to which it occurs.

Firstly, Chapter 4 evidenced that the capacity of Kosovo-Serb individuals to interact with centers of authority is restricted externally, in the sense that these are factors that are outside the control of the individual. The prevalence of patronage networks that create dependency, the presence of mafia and its relation with local leadership in parts of Kosovo that restrain free movement in social and political spheres, and the transitional nature of the system of governance all bare down on the individual Kosovo-Serb's capacity to interact. These environmental determinants, together with a lacking status as political subjects *prima facie*, have accumulated to an apathetic culture within much of the populace. It can be said that such widespread apathy is the opposite of civil society: without popular participation it is inert. Moreover, there are intrinsic limits to individuals. The experience of Kosovo-Serbs with democratic accountability and with personal involvement in societal and political processes is very young.² Meanwhile the feelings of fear that run deep in society debilitate individuals' involvement with Kosovo-wide processes. However, the potential of individuals to discuss, argue, agree or struggle is inherently human, regardless of inhibitions and external factors. Therefore we can be optimistic that such challenges to Kosovo-Serb participation can be overcome.

Secondly, there is a structural lack of means of transportation – meaning the availability of public transport, people's resources to facilitate mobility, and institutional clarity between Belgrade and Pristina on technical issues surrounding car ownership among others – and information gathering, making it difficult if not impossible for the majority of Serb individuals in Kosovo to prepare themselves for substantive discussion in the process of civil society. The means to organize and facilitate a civil society process embedded in community ownership itself are scarce, and heavily dependent on outside support and aid.

Thirdly, although there are numerous constraints, the occurrence of a civil society process in the Serb community exists. It is however a conundrum how to factually ascertain the occurrence of a process. One could count the number of NGOs and other organizations – in other discussions dubbed civil society organizations (CSOs) – their activities and establish their effects. However, I argued previously that CSOs do not necessarily equate a civil society.³ In fact, the argumentation of this research is based on the assumption that it is not organizations that make a civil society, but rather that it is a process of social interaction that relies on the efforts and participation of

¹ However, CIVICUS is an organization that is involved in charting the state of civil society in the world through its Civil Society Index. But CIVICUS uses a specific definition and concurring indicators to measure civil society statistically. Their method and the approach in this thesis therefore do not compare. For more information, please see <http://www.civicus.org/csi/phase-one/csi-methodology>.

² This could also be linked to the earlier (Chapter 2) mentioned Tocquevillian notion of democratic learning through civil society.

³ See Chapter 2, page 29.

individuals. Therefore determining the presence of CSOs does not suffice, for these organizations could also be strictly service-oriented, thereby being detached from the substantive process of civil society itself. Rather, the following ventilates two accounts from the field that serve as examples to indicate the occurrence of a premature Kosovo-Serbian civil society process.

Examples of a Serbian Civil Society

The following examples are provided to concretize to the reader how civil society is conceptually understood – meaning a process among individuals. These are (1) the voluntary meetings of alumni of a program of NGO Fractal and (2) a community organized football tournament in the Gracanice enclave. Both cases evidence that there is capacity and a desire among Kosovo-Serbs to become involved in Kosovo as a whole. These cases ought to illuminate to development practitioners and stakeholders in Kosovo that there are ample opportunities for engaging with Kosovo-Serbs in creating a sustainable civil society among them.

The first example is that of a group of individuals that share previous participation in the Enclavia program of NGO Fractal.⁴ After participation in the program has ended, the alumni form a voluntary informal group. The attendees come from various enclaves to the south of Mitrovica city. This group on average meets once or twice a year and one or more employees of NGO Fractal join in to moderate the discussion voluntarily. Each individual is tasked with gathering information on Kosovo-Serbs' situations in Kosovo, especially in the locality of the respective group members, and this information is shared among the group during such meetings. In this manner they inform each other and are able to supplement what gaps there are in information they gather themselves. The latter is an essential component in completing the information that is available to individuals, because due to the limited availability of objective news sources, group members at times are seduced to believe rumors and distorted information. Therefore, the moderators also periodically intervene in the discussion to refrain the group from acting on and taking for granted false or incomplete data. In this manner a self-sustained, self-owned and comprehensive picture of the Kosovo-Serbs' situation emerges. This in turn spurs action by the group itself. For instance, the group identified the lack of opportunity for youth in the south of Kosovo to travel to Mitrovica city, where the only Serbian language university in Kosovo is situated. Accordingly, the group formulated a policy proposal directed at the Kosovo Ministry of Transportation to request aid in setting up a bus service to transport the youth to this institution.ⁱ

The second case is perhaps a less self-explanatory example. It concerns a yearly recurring football tournament organized in Gracanice in commemoration of the killing of a Kosovo-Serb youth by Kosovo-Albanians in 2006 in the enclave. This tournament is a fully community-owned initiative. Fundraising is done collectively and also the responsibility for organization is shared among inhabitants of the enclave. However, participation in the tournament is open to all. The tournament has taken on an international character and the number of participating teams continues to expand, including teams from all over Europe such as professional clubs from the Netherlands.ⁱⁱ Throughout the years, the Kosovo-Serbs from Gracanice were able to establish contact with these clubs, and many attend each year. The emphasis of the event is placed on camaraderie and commemorates the killing of the youth. Interestingly, it is not anger but sorrow that dominates, and the unfortunate

⁴ In the second section of this chapter, the Enclavia program will be set out in more detail, specifically on the type of development approach. For now, the example here is restricted to civilian civil society activity, instead of focusing on NGO development activities.

event that inspired the tournament is regarded as wasteful and an act of useless violence. When such incidents occur in Kosovo they usually herald protests which can escalate into inter-ethnic violence. However in Gracanice things have remained relatively calm. The perpetrating Kosovo-Albanians have since been trialed by the Kosovo judiciary and put to justice, which likely contributed to defusing tensions in the aftermath. But the tournament allows the community to channel their feelings and opinions every year anew. Although it is not explicated by the organization, commemorating the 2006 incident is an action directly related to the situation of Serbs in Gracanice, within the wider Kosovo context. The community works constructively to organize a football event that combines powerful elements, such as processing grief, having fun, and building a sense of community. Moreover, the Kosovo-Serbs are ecstatic about the foreign teams that come to participate, which helps them break out of the isolation of living in the enclave, if only for the duration of the tournament.

When one understands civil society from the theoretical point of view as *a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority*, the relevance of the provided examples above is apparent. In both the case of the recurring meetings of concerned alumni and the case of the football tournament, there are individuals from the communities that interact to discuss or by the act of commemoration put an incident under discussion. Moreover, the alumni direct their attention directly at the Kosovo authorities, whereas the football tournament places the Gracanice Serbs in the context of Kosovo. Also, although the memory of Serbs of the violent incident around which the tournament is centered is perhaps too fresh for Kosovo authorities to start engaging with the community in Gracanice – analogous to attendance of German representatives to World War II commemorations in other countries decades after that war has ended – support for the evolution and further development of such initiatives by development actors stimulates community-owned initiatives, and could positively affect the development of a Serbian civil society in Kosovo. After all, Kosovo-Serb participation in civil society can build on the capacities that are developed during events such as this tournament. Both examples imply that there are viable, constructive and lively cases of processes occurring in Kosovo that spur optimism concerning the current state of Serbian civil society, and at least evidence ample opportunities for development practitioners to capitalize on in their efforts to develop a civil society. However, the examples were provided to illustrate how to analyze civil society based upon the theoretical framework of this research, and does not necessarily relate to the perception of civil society by different actors on the ground.

The Perception of Civil Society in Kosovo

Next is an overview of the perceptions that development practitioners in Kosovo and Kosovo-Serbs have of civil society. The perception of practitioners is a determining factor in how their approaches to civil society development are informed, and reveals the influence of the mainstream understanding of civil society. Conversely, the perception that Kosovo-Serbs have of civil society determines their stance toward it. Subsequently the differences between the developed theory on sustainable civil society development and practice can materialize.

First the perception of development practitioners is presented here. In order not to influence or steer informants' answers the open question '*what is, in your words, civil society*'⁵ was posed in

⁵ See also the Appendix A: Interview Guide.

interviews. Accordingly, the answers varied widely, but an attempt is made here to offer an understandable overview. Eleven persons answered the question. There were two internationals and nine local NGO employees, of which two Kosovo-Albanians and the others (Kosovo-)Serbs.

The most salient outcome of this query was that none of the interviewees was able to formulate a definition of civil society. However, the respondents did go about describing what is included in civil society. There was absolute consensus that government is excluded from civil society. Four also stated it is a “critical controlling mechanism,” one included that civil society is related to “democratic learning,” three answers entailed specifically “civil society organizations” and five indicated that civil society is explicitly connected to the “community.”ⁱⁱⁱ These answers are to a high degree derived from the mainstream liberal-democratic reading of civil society: the public sphere of associational bonds that can mitigate the tensions brought about by the development towards democracy and capitalist driven prosperity.^{iv}

Chapter 2 motivated that the mainstream conceptualization of civil society was specific to the Western-European context and biased against the development of civil society elsewhere.⁶ Meanwhile all of the interviewees of a non-Western origin (nine out of eleven) answered in line with the mainstream understanding of civil society. This suggests that the perceptions of local development actors are shaped by the contact with Western donors and development organizations. Meanwhile local forms of civil society like the two examples provided above have largely remained invisible to the international community in Kosovo. Moreover, it seems from the answers that were given that the concept is conceptually blurred as all respondents gave non-conclusive descriptions rather than definitions. This hints at the ambiguity surrounding the concept of civil society and suggests the relevance of reaching a consensus on a definition of the subject, and at least exposes a necessity to increase and disseminate information about it in Kosovo. This is especially peculiar considering the high degree of importance that is placed on civil society within the international development discourse in general and the popularity of the term in Kosovo in particular. The above analysis reveals the influence of the mainstream strand on local perceptions and exposes a significant gap with the theory produced here. The mainstream conceptualization, with its normative emphasis, can obscure local, alternative forms of civil society like the examples provided above, from an analysis. That would be a missed opportunity.

Concerning the perception of civil society of ordinary Kosovo-Serbs, matters are a little more troublesome than the conceptual confusion among development practitioners. Being direct subjects of civil society development, the perception of Serbs is shaped by their experiences. Two factors dominate their experiences and have come to characterize the widely held view of civil society in Kosovo-Serbian life: (1) the unbalanced criticism from Serb organizations in the post-war period that are associated with civil society, and (2) the questionable results in the past decade of myriad obscure NGOs in Kosovo, whose numbers mushroomed right after the conflict in 1999. This has led Kosovo-Serbs to be ambivalent towards and generally mistrust the connotation of ‘civil society.’ The implications hereof are far reaching and strain the efforts of both local and non-local actors to engage with Kosovo-Serbs in developing a civil society.

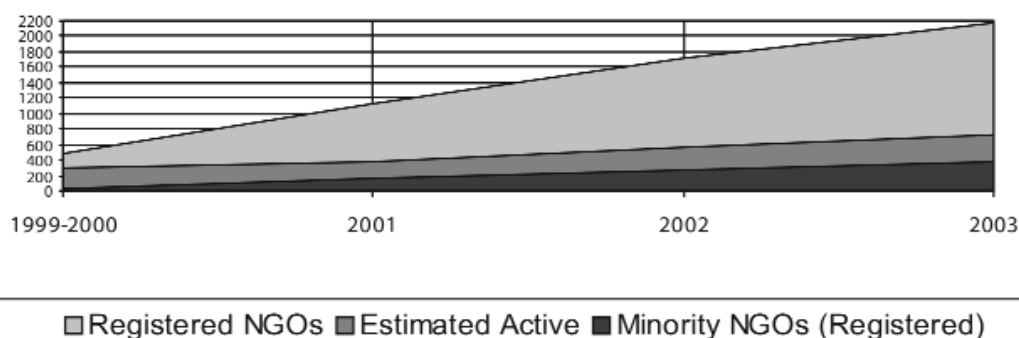
Neither Serbia, nor Kosovo-Serbs, have had much past experience with civil society or NGOs originating from their own community. However, there were a few Serbian organizations that were

⁶ See Chapter 2, page 19-22.

very active in the immediate post-war period, most notably the Humanitarian Law Center and the Helsinki Committee. These organizations reported critically on Serbia's behavior during and after the 1990s, especially related to human rights abuses, for which they received a substantial amount of publicity and international support. For instance, the Humanitarian Law Center and the Helsinki Committee supplied information to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) on indicted Serbs. As there were few other known Serbian NGOs, these organizations and their supporters came to embody to Serbs the relatively alien concept of civil society at the time. Kosovo-Serbs feel and perceive that the activities by these Serbian NGOs have not been reciprocated by organizations from the Kosovo-Albanian community. Meanwhile, because of Serbia's responsibility in the wars of the 1990s, the numbers of investigations and convictions of Serbs are much higher than of Kosovo-Albanians. To Kosovo-Serbs, it appears as if the excessive activity of the aforementioned Serbian NGOs, while the Albanian civil society lacked active critical reflection, was responsible for this.^v In other words: the majority of Kosovo-Serbs associate civil society with the (in their eyes) unbalanced prosecution of war crimes on both sides of the conflict to the disadvantage of Serbs. The association has given civil society a bad reputation in general and Serbian civil society organizations are distrusted because they are held partly accountable for the war crime prosecution of Serbs.

The second factor that determines the perception of civil society held by Kosovo-Serbs also influences it negatively and has to do with the produced results of countless NGOs in the post-war period, or rather the lack thereof. In the aftermath of the conflict the 'international community' poured into Kosovo and made base. Among them were, apart from the NATO peacekeeping forces (KFOR) and UNMIK, also EU institutions and countless other international bodies that made large amounts of financial support available to the peace process.^{vi} Because civil society development was a focus area,^{vii} the funds for NGO projects were bountiful. Meanwhile there was a structural lack of economic opportunity and economic security in post-conflict Kosovo, which led many people to search for opportunities to tap into the international community's funds. That combination led to a proliferation of local NGOs. According to the UNDP Human Development Report (2009) this resulted in the founding of an estimated 3,000-4,000 NGOs, which "killed community work, activism, and the opportunities for people that didn't have an NGO."^{viii} Unfortunately, most of those NGOs of the immediate post-conflict period in Kosovo never produced relevant (visible) results, but instead were used by individuals as vessels to grab a piece of the international pie. This practice is widely known,^{ix} also among Kosovo-Serbs, and has thus made them extremely skeptical about the intentions of NGOs and the civil society they claim to represent. It further contributes to the bad name of things associated with civil society in the Serbian communities.

Graph 1. NGO sector growth, 1999-2003. Based on official registration data.



Source: KIPRED 2005: 13.

The portrayed confusion about civil society in Kosovo has been identified by other organizations and reports as well.^x Development practitioners ranging from international civil servants to international and local NGO workers have trouble providing a clear definition or framework of civil society, but are able to describe it in some manner. The data reveals that these descriptions are mostly informed by the mainstream conceptualization of civil society as a sphere between family, state, and market, as associational and also concerned with democratic learning and the scrutiny of government activity. On the other hand, the perception of Kosovo-Serbs of civil society is not academically formed, but based on experience. They connect NGOs with civil society. Thus, civil society is associated with prosecution of Serbs on the one hand and with a large but unproductive NGO sector in Kosovo in the immediate post-conflict period on the other hand. Consequently, civil society is distrusted and regarded as an ineffective sector that does not deliver on its promises and is therefore not worthy of investing energy in. This makes the task of engaging with Serb communities and gaining their trust in civil society development projects and programs difficult.

In sum, many challenges to Kosovo-Serb participation in civil society have been established. An apathetic culture in Kosovo-Serb society and limited experience with self-advocacy, combined with lingering fear inhibit the movement of individuals in political and social spheres and discourage interaction in civil society. Meanwhile the facilities for transportation and information gathering are rather poor and create physical challenges to Kosovo-Serb participation in Kosovo processes. Despite these odds, there are examples of early Serbian processes taking place, even though these are different from what one would expect by the mainstream understanding of civil society. However, reckoning the theoretical framework developed in this research provides the means to identify alternative forms of Serbian civil society in Kosovo. Taking into account the profound conceptual confusion among development practitioners, it is crucial to establish clarity and coherency on their understanding of civil society in order to avoid overlooking such alternatives. And since civil society has a troublesome reputation among Kosovo-Serbs that is shaped by their experiences, it seems warranted to pursue both results that provide benefits to their communities as well as coherence within the development discourse in Kosovo.

Development Practice: Approaches and Results

It has previously been established that in order to develop civil society it has to be integrated within a locally-owned, normative framework. Sustainability of such development efforts can be achieved when the potential of a group to identify and formulate problems and engage in discussion and negotiation on it themselves is realized. Furthermore, the sustainability would be final if this process occurs without the need for outside resources and aid.⁷ Although relatively simple within the safety of conceptual discussion, practical implementation hereof is vastly complex. This section offers a detailed analysis of third party intervention actors' efforts work out in practice. The following sets out the approaches of generating two types of social capital and how the subsequent results affect the higher aim of sustainable civil society development. Note that the focus here is placed on the *approach* to civil society development, whereas the development *environment* is dealt with later. Central attention is placed on how NGOs gain access to the communities in order to implement projects and programs, what are the motivations behind their approaches and the differences between projects focusing on bridging and bonding social capital. Thus, this study mainly focuses on the tactical level implementation of civil society development.

Although I here acknowledge the organizations that are included in this research, there is no mention made of them later on, with the exception of NGO Fractal as it is the main case study. This is because the intent of this research is neither to review specific NGOs and scrutinize them, nor to put them in unnecessary jeopardy seeing as development practice can be quite sensitive in Kosovo. Instead, this section aspires to critically and scientifically scrutinize the optimal ways of attaining civil society development. The main case study is a local unofficial third party intervention actor, the Serbian NGO Fractal, with a central though not exclusive place for its program 'Enclavia.' Inputs from other considered local third party actors are, on the Serb side: 'Center for Civil Society Development,' 'Center for Peace and Tolerance,' and on the Albanian side: 'Partners Kosova' and 'Community Building Mitrovica'. International third party intervention actors are 'CARE Kosovo,' 'World Vision Kosovo,' and 'SPARK' who have offices in Kosovo, and 'IKV Pax Christi' from the Netherlands that does not have a permanent physical presence, but which plays an important role in partnership with many local NGOs in Kosovo.

Gaining Access

In order to instigate civil society development programs actors have to overcome Kosovo-Serbs' negative perception of civil society as set out above, specifically when those programs focus on (increasing) their active participation. Thus, ideally actors need to show that they are not pursuing criminal justice, nor that their programs are primarily motivated by personal financial gain. Serb NGOs generally have the least difficulty of gaining access, as they obviously do not face an ethnic bias and are trusted more readily. However, Serb NGOs do face severe difficulties as they face constant accusations by hardliners that their activities support Kosovo's independence. Especially Serb NGOs that use the language of tolerance and stress the benefits for Kosovo-Serbs when they are pragmatically cooperative with Kosovan and international institutions can certainly expect counteraction. Both employees are targeted as well as organizations as a whole. These can range from threat letters and anonymous phone calls to persons, to actual sabotage of NGO vehicles, beatings, or media smear campaigns.^{xi} It is important to realize that, although these actions originate from a relatively small portion of Serb hard liners and do not necessarily represent the wider Serb

⁷ See Chapter 2, p. 29-30.

community's opinion, their influence on Kosovo-Serbs can be substantial due to their patronage networks and integration into local power structures.⁸ Serb NGOs with a proven track record at the local level are most able to counter accusations and maintain a level of trustworthiness, despite attacks on their reputation.

Non-Serb NGOs, such as Albanian NGOs and international NGOs (INGOs), do not have the ethnic advantage. However, when Albanian NGOs enjoy a level of respect because they have a longstanding presence and recurring projects or programs with relatively visible results, they thereby partly overcome the suspicion of being one-day-fly organizations erected for personal financial gain. Nonetheless it is very difficult for Albanian NGOs to find entrance to Serb communities in general.

The INGOs that were visited portrayed more mixed results. INGOs in Kosovo often hire locals as the bulk of their staff, which enables them to break through the language barrier and bypass part of the ethnic bias. However, like all visited INGOs, most international NGOs in Kosovo are based in the capitol Pristina. As almost no Serbs live in Pristina, local staff is mostly, though not exclusively, comprised of Kosovo-Albanians. This impedes on their ability to create trust at the local (Kosovo-Serb) level, maintain updated knowledge of local developments, and subsequently to identify problems specific to Serb areas. As one international employee said: "It is so easy to forget about the Kosovo-Serbs as they are less visible to us."^{xii} Some INGOs mitigate this problem with auxiliary offices inside or in the vicinity to Serb enclaves, which are Serb staffed.^{xiii} However, there is a visible trend of downsizing organizational capacity and the closing of field offices due to a decrease in available funding from the main office based in developed countries.^{xiv} The INGOs without field offices in Serb areas generally had severe difficulty maintaining an operational level of access to Serb communities despite of their Serb employees.^{xv} Also, Serbs employed at INGOs face similar counteractions by hard liners as Serb NGOs do, but to them this is more difficult to combat as their organizations are less visible in Serb areas.^{xvi} Finally, some INGOs mitigate their difficulty to gain access by (also) operating on the basis of partnerships with local Serb NGOs.

Civil Society Development Practice in Kosovo

The analysis that is presented here deserves some preceding explanation. It cannot be stressed enough that the viewpoint on civil society as advanced in this thesis is that of a societal process. Accordingly, the focus here is placed on programs that aim to increase the occurrence and quality of this process, carried and owned by the communities themselves. It is specifically the manner in which development strategies are implemented and the character or nature of the programs that entail said development which are scrutinized. NGOs by themselves, whether local or international, as well as what others call civil society organizations (CSOs), are regarded principally as *facilitating the development of civil society*, not per definition as categories of civil society itself.⁹ This viewpoint has the overall advantage that it is closer to the intrinsic nature of civil society than formal organizations are. In other words, as Chapter 2 also explained, civil society is more about what it does than the tangible aspects it is comprised of. On a side note, this viewpoint leaves ample space

⁸ Also see Chapter 4, p. 46, 48, 51, 57.

⁹ Hence the term civil society organizations can be a misleading term. If these organizations act in conformity with what is generally regarded as civil society, such as a watch dog's role toward the government, but their activities do not reflect the opinion of the local constituency they claim to represent, then which civil society do they represent, actually? Their activities in this case are involved in the civil society process, but not representative of civil society as a locally owned process.

for other forms of actors that are outside the Western context from which the concept originated. It broadens the spectrum of actors that can be considered to include for example states, thereby upholding an inclusive, non-normative prism that sensitizes non-locals to understand differing local contextualities. It is a massive challenge to capture the highly organic and fluid development practice in Kosovo in a rather strict analytical form, but the following aspires to rise up to this challenge.

The following analysis is structured as follows. First the main case study NGO Fractal is briefly introduced. Afterwards an in-depth analysis of two main programs of NGO Fractal provides data for comparing development and the respective effectiveness of two development approaches. These are (1) Enclavia, a program that I identify as producing primarily *bonding social capital*, and (2) European Integration and the Western Balkans (EIWB), a program focusing on *bridging social capital*. The approaches to developing, subsequently, bonding and bridging social capital are meticulously presented and carefully compared. It ends in motivating the implications of the presented findings on the development of social capital and its effects on sustainable civil society development.

Fractal

Fractal is a Belgrade-based, Serbian nongovernmental organization. Its mission “is to work towards better communication and cooperation of people with different backgrounds,” and it focuses the majority of its activities on the Western Balkans, in particular Serbia and Kosovo.^{xvii} The organization actively identifies the incongruity on legitimacy in the minds of Kosovo-Serbs and Kosovo-Albanians as an ongoing active conflict, and aims for (cognitive) conflict transformation.^{xviii} Employees of the NGO have been active in Kosovo since before the conflict, and the organization was formally established in 2001. Furthermore, they have strong partnerships with some Western-based organizations, most notably IKV Pax Christi from the Netherlands, a peace development NGO.

Because Fractal is a Serbian organization and has been visible in Kosovo since almost a decade, it has gained the trust of Kosovo-Serbs. People are familiar with the organization and its employees, and through their experience know that Fractal’s programs do not pursue criminal justice nor that their efforts are motivated by personal financial gain. Accordingly, Fractal is able to bypass part of the suspicion of the Serbian community towards what they associate with ‘civil society’. But the determining factor is the central philosophy underlining their programs and the message this communicates to the Kosovo-Serbs. They communicate that, regardless of opinion, Kosovo is enveloped in a process which Kosovo-Serbs cannot escape from and are even a part of. In effect, this approach embodies the elsewhere identified necessity to recognize the existence of both Serb and Albanian realities. Their programs are designed to inform Kosovo-Serbs on developments concerning their situation in Kosovo and offers help in developing capacity to participate in and influence this process *on their own accord*. Fractal employees do not consider the organization to represent Kosovo-Serbian civil society itself.^{xix} By presenting further action by individuals from the communities as optional, while stressing the importance of keeping their knowledge of the situation up to date, the NGO becomes a valued relatively neutral resource to the communities. Rather than picking side, it aims for facilitation of civil society development and places the responsibility for participation in civil society with their target group.

Bonding Social Capital: the Enclavia Program

The Enclavia program was established by NGO Fractal in 2006 in close cooperation with IKV Pax Christi, in recognition of a need in the Serbian enclaves to develop and increase the capacity of

Kosovo-Serbs to self-advocate and lobby for their community's interests at relevant decision making institutions. That way the Kosovo-Serbs can be involved in Kosovo processes. The program has been organized on a yearly basis since its conception in 2006. The framework of the Enclavia program is as follows: in the Spring three rounds of community debates are organized in various larger enclaves throughout the region south of Mitrovica city. The debates cover a range of topics about the developments that concern Serbs in Kosovo. Participation is open to anyone from the Serb communities. After this round of debates, an invitation is issued to a selection of participants at the debates to form a lobby group of five persons. This group receives at least two intensive training days in lobbying and problem formulation, during which time concrete topics are substantively formulated within the group that are most relevant to all Kosovo-Serbs. Finally, the lobby group visits the Serbian government, the Kosovo government and the European authorities in Brussels as well as the Dutch authorities in The Hague in consecutive visits accompanied by NGO employees.

The essence of the Enclavia program is that it facilitates Kosovo-Serb participation in civil society through the development of *bonding social capital*. Central to the debates and subsequent problem formulations is not an emphasis on inter-ethnic cooperation per se, but on the shared needs of Kosovo-Serb localities which are identified by the community members collectively. The discussions during debates originate from within the communities and individual contributions rest on personal views. This entices participating Serbs to transform their passive position in Kosovo due to the restraints explained in Chapter 4 – such as being locked within their political life – into an activated role that is taken seriously. After all, all kinds of contributions in the debates are acceptable and will be engaged with. Participants listen to the information on recent developments in Kosovo that Fractal and other participants provide. During the discussions Fractal employees act as moderator and stimulate participants to not only be angry but look past their frustrations to think of ways to influence and change that which they are angry or frustrated about. This stimulates participants to think of their problems within the context of Kosovo as a whole, and indirectly already engages them in civil society. The direct engagement follows when the lobby group is eventually formed and tasked with representing the outcome in all of the community debates at the relevant centers of authority: the Kosovo government, the Serbian government, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and European Union institutions.

The Enclavia program fills a number of gaps that were identified in the analysis of the conceptual roots of Serbian political and social life in Kosovo, namely: it provides information on the situation of Serbs in different parts of Kosovo, the increased knowledge in effect combats rumors and relieves fear, it actively shapes a sense of community as the debates focus on discussing pan Kosovo-Serbian problems and not merely local or personal problems, and it is the epitome of ownership as the outcome of debates and performance of the later lobby efforts is their own responsibility. Moreover, the Enclavia program's participation is open and views are not discriminated against, including those of hardliners. There are participants who are thus able to share their more radical points of view. This draws unconstructively opinionated Serbs to the debates, albeit in smaller numbers. Besides the inclusionary benefits of these important elements in Kosovo-Serbian society in the debates, it has the added advantage that their opinions can be openly discussed and, if based on false data, refuted. This information is also taken in by the other participants, thereby increasing their knowledge of the different versions of truth that circle about, enabling them to nuance between the range of pro-independence and con-independence positions and the spectrum of points in between. Moreover, participants are stimulated to look past formulating problems on the

basis of viewpoints but instead construe them in a context that is practical and not politically charged. This creates a realistic understanding of the practical needs of Kosovo-Serb communities with the attendees.

Unfortunately the Enclavia program has its limitations. Fractal's capacity and funding is limited. Therefore, they cannot organize more than three community debates, which together can only facilitate a limited number of participants, a few training days and one lobby group a year. Enclavia is thus a relatively small scale program. Moreover, the program's funding does not allow for creating a high level of continuity by following up intensively on community debates, or binding lobby group participants in a formal alumni network. Also, Fractal employees' crucial role in supervising the debated content in the Enclavia program is time and labor-intensive, for which they cannot obtain additional funding. The reasons lie in large part with donor priorities, which will be discussed in the third section of this chapter.

Nevertheless the Enclavia program is of crucial value to the communities on the relatively small scale it operates. Moreover, the program does more than merely activate participants to think realistically and pragmatically about their situation. It also produces valuable spin offs. For one, because different lobby groups have been visiting these centers of authority throughout the past four years, various individual Kosovo-Serbs in diverse geographical locations in Kosovo have been able to establish contacts with these institutions. The effect hereof is that the opportunity for and capacity of Kosovo-Serbs to communicate with very influential international organizations in Kosovo such as EULEX, the European Union Liaison Office (ECLO) and the International Civilian Office (ICO), as well as the Kosovo government, have increased compared to before. Before Enclavia existed such communication between Kosovo-Serbs and said institutions was almost non-existent.^{xx} A second spin off of the Enclavia program is that participants become inspired and start to organize themselves on a local level in NGOs that tackle local community problems. A handful of Serb NGOs have already been newly founded in for example the east and south of Kosovo. Not only do these NGOs develop programs themselves, but they also grow into a network of NGOs in Kosovo together with Fractal. Through this network local NGOs and other initiatives are able to share information and work together, while stimulating their localities and participants of their own programs to become involved in Enclavia. This increases the overall outreach to the Serbian communities in Kosovo.

Bridging Social Capital: An Inter-ethnic Focus

Regarding the development of *bridging social capital*, two different types of development approaches are considered. This requires further explanation before different examples are presented and analyzed. Strictly speaking, social capital is the "connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them,"^{xxi} as was also explained in Chapter 2. Developing bridging social capital thus suggests to be realized by programs facilitating participants from more than one ethnic group. On the one hand, this entails programs whereof the participants are multi-ethnic, such as truth-telling days or inter-ethnic activities such as youth camps. On the other hand however, there is a specific program that is not evidently inter-ethnic but does aim to create a form of bridging social capital. This concerns a program with mono-ethnic group participation, but in which the content is primarily focused on confronting the group with an international perspective that is often associated by Kosovo-Serbs with pro-independence support. The latter is to many Kosovo-Serbs interchangeable with a pro Kosovo-Albanian stance. In other words, the program's content is designed to create inter-ethnic

understanding even though participation is mono-ethnic. The program's nature thus prioritizes the cognitive realization of group perspectives in Kosovo to open up opportunities for creating bridging social capital. The latter variety is represented by one component of the program 'European Integration and Western Balkans' that is organized by Fractal.¹⁰

The first types of approaches to bridging social capital development are those that are inter-ethnic at face value. One example is a truth-telling event. In such projects, an organization brings people from the Serbian and Albanian community in Kosovo together to share their stories of the conflict. They are designed to create awareness of the sorrow and hardship that were suffered equally on both sides, thus aiming for a realization between members of the two groups that their experiences which fuel the fear, distrust and resentment of the 'Other' are actually similar. Such initiatives are idiosyncratic and ad hoc, involving individuals in localities, and happen without the endorsement of the Kosovo and Serbian governments.¹¹ Unfortunately, the empirical impact of such initiatives does not resemble the intention of the project's design. As one NGO worker explains:

"Truth-telling is very personal issue. I know of one example. [...] Some persons were talking about how during the war they had Serbian neighbors and he was coming home every day covered in blood. And they find out he had huge refrigerator with Albanian people in it and that he was eating them. You know, X-files stories. Serb participants were like: 'come on now, that was very funny.' Of course there is some truth. But people like to exaggerate. And both communities like to present themselves as victims. You can't have two victims, that is the problem. They need to deal with the picture they have about themselves first."^{xxxii}

In the example we see that, although the story told at the meeting likely came from genuine trauma experienced by the story teller, the participating Serbs found it so absurd that they dismissed it as "funny." Moreover, I heard of an exact replica of this story told by a Kosovo-Serb who was unrelated to this truth telling, but where it featured an Albanian cannibal: a role reversal. This suggests that rumors and exaggerations continue to be a factor of significance in Kosovo, and that they can play a dominating role in such projects.

The other example concerns inter-ethnic youth camps. Development practitioners in Kosovo consensually identify the rigid mono-ethnic discourses (our truth is right, theirs is wrong) that prevail in the respective communities: communities are entrenched in their own discourse. Youth is especially prone to story manipulation by elders. Youth have little opportunities in Kosovo, which leads to frustration. Their adolescent minds often cannot resist the weight of their own community's entrenched version of the truth. Thus, in order to surpass the story trench war, NGOs seek out different surroundings to organize inter-ethnic activities. As this NGO worker explains:

¹⁰ This program is part of a joint project between SPARK, CCSD and Fractal, and is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It targets 25 Mitrovica university students. The total program consists of three modules: lectures in Mitrovica, academic skill training, and a study visit to international experts and institutions in The Netherlands and Brussels. The latter component is facilitated by Fractal.

¹¹ The Serbian and Kosovo governments refuse to cooperate together in fact finding or criminal justice, because there is a conflict over the legality of Kosovo independence between them. Thus such 'truth-tellings' happen without the consent or endorsement of both governments.

“And this is like the general recipe here in Kosovo, if you want to take Serbs and Albanians to get together, you move them out of Kosovo, out of the context, out of the story, and they become best friends.”^{xxiii}

The general picture with youth camps is very positive: ethnic Serbs and Albanians get along well and seem to connect. This of course provides a valuable lesson to the youth that inter-ethnic cooperation and coexistence is possible. However, when the camp ends the youth return to their own community. It is then difficult to maintain the inter-ethnic contact. For example after one camp the participants enthusiastically set up a Facebook¹² page through which they keep contact. But the medium is then also used to vent the righteousness of their own community's discourse, and it does not lead to initiatives to meet again on their own behalf.^{xxiv}

The other variety of developing bridging social capital is the earlier mentioned EIWB program of NGO Fractal. EIWB is an education component of a wider program in Mitrovica north aimed to expand the information of Serb students to include the international perspective on Kosovo, which is in part lacking in the Mitrovica community discourse. Mitrovica and the Serb north of Kosovo are, as I also explained in Chapter 4, most resistant to the imposition of an independent Kosovo. As this respondent illustrates:

“Do not question the willingness of the Serbian community in Mitrovica north to stand ground on any violent attempt from EULEX, UNMIK, Pristina government to impose Pristina reality in northern Kosovo. March last year [2008] showed us that.”^{xxv}

The EIWB program is designed to nuance the information Serbs get from their own community with the aim to open them up to bridging social capital. However, each year there is quite some difficulty with getting enough applications to fill all places in the program. After a series of lectures, a smaller group of the most motivated students is taken on a field trip to Brussels and The Hague to visit institutions such as the European Parliament and the ICTY. An NGO worker illustrates:

“What these young people hear is not something they like, but for them it is facing of the truth. During these visits I talk with them a lot and they are very glad they are offered the opportunity to find out the truth. In that moment, they are telling me that they started to change their opinion. They started to accept the reality they are living in.”^{xxvi}

However, upon return from the field trip the students reenter the Mitrovica community, and the achieved results appear to be rather shallow. They cannot share their experience with their friends and family, and they quickly revert back to the entrenched ethnic discourse because it is much easier for them in Mitrovica:

“I remember with this last generation, a few weeks after the study visit, we went to Mitrovica for drinks. I was devastated. The things they were talking about, actually the way they were talking about was just like in the same way they were talking before the study visit and maybe at the beginning of the course. It is the problem of the community they live in. I think it is really hard to stand up in such radical community and surroundings, and to say: ‘those things we are thinking about, about Kosovo and about our lives are actually the lies. We need to stand up and fight for

¹² Facebook is an interactive internet network and communication medium: www.facebook.com

our future, we need to cooperate with the Albanians. We need to do this and that.’ It’s very hard to say that in such context.”^{xxxvii}

Thus, students increase their knowledge of the different ethnic sides in Kosovo and the perspective of the international community, contributing to filling gaps in their information on their situation that can be regarded as essential in overcoming inter-ethnic tension. However, the positive effects seem to be overwhelmed and crowded out upon reentrance in their own community’s discourse.

An Analysis

What are the implications of the above? In the following the examples of bonding and bridging social capital presented above are analyzed in relation to the literature. Chapter 2 revealed that different studies attribute ambiguous merits to social capital. On the one hand, theory postulates that ‘bridging social capital’ is more advantageous in overcoming rifts between communities in post-conflict situations. On the other hand, the study by the Collaborative for Development Action-Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA-CLP) on the 2004 riots in Kosovo revealed that bonding social capital was far more effective in preventing inter-ethnic violence, while the attempts at creating bridging social capital were ineffective, producing superficial results that were unfit to act as bridges between communities.¹³

The concerns in the literature with the development of bonding social capital were that it might kindle malignant goals of one ethnic community toward the other,¹⁴ in this case stimulating Kosovo-Serbs to grow more hateful or frustrated with Kosovo-Albanians. However, we see that this specific concern is without ground in the Enclavia program. Through the active mediation and the safeguarding of the nature of the debated content by Fractal, community-based needs are actually formulated within the context of Kosovo, while simultaneously being motivated from within the Kosovo-Serbian community. Instead of kindling ethnic tension, it seems to emancipate individual Serb opinions and activate them as people that are a part of developments in Kosovo.

On the other hand the theoretical assumption that bridging social capital can be a resource in overcoming inter-ethnic tension is not disproven by the examples provided. The data reveals that the inter-ethnic projects do produce positive results, but that these were unable to take root, much like the outcomes of the CDA-CLP study. The bridging social capital that was created was shallow in nature. This at least suggests that development practice is severely challenged in realizing that theoretical assumption in empirical reality. Moreover, the inter-ethnic projects are far less effective in developing capacity among Kosovo-Serbs to par-take in civil society as a process, whereas the *intra*-ethnic program Enclavia activates them to broaden their view on the situation as a minority in Kosovo by identifying community-based problems, needs and even solutions.

When we broaden the analytical framework by combining the presented empirical data here with the findings in Chapter 4, it is possible to advance a more holistic picture. The Kosovo-Serb sense of community is severely underdeveloped, while the material base conditions for a sense of community and their participation in civil society – such as transportation and access to sound information – are very poor. Furthermore there is a lack of sense of ownership that feeds a culture of apathy. Meanwhile both the CDA-CLP study and the NGO approaches that were reviewed here revealed that

¹³ See Chapter 2, p. 31.

¹⁴ See also Chapter 2, p. 30-31.

bridging social capital development in Kosovo is largely superficial, whereas bonding social capital development produced profound effects. It either helped to mitigate inter-ethnic violence (in the 2004 riots) or stimulated Kosovo-Serb group emancipation (Enclavia program). So what is the differentiating factor? The findings imply that Kosovo-Serbs cannot yet benefit from bridging social capital development because their communities are faced with substantial amounts of structural needs that remain to be insufficiently addressed and remedied. With myriad problems within their own community life, they are reluctant to open up to the 'Other,' the Albanian community. The uncertainty in Serb areas in Kosovo originates from problems in their political and social life, which maintains an unstable community environment that must first be mended before bridges can be built. Meanwhile we see that when the focus is relayed to *intra*-community development through programs focused on bonding social capital development, the effects take better hold. There is ownership and self-initiative, albeit on a small scale.

These findings hopefully stimulate an elaborate rethinking of development approaches among all relevant stakeholders in Kosovo in particular, and provide ample suggestions for further research on civil society development in general.

The Development Environment

Here the environment in which civil society development takes place is reviewed. However, one has to acquiesce to the fact that, if the civil society development in Kosovo is to be sustainable, then that development must originate from the population it is targeting. In the case of this research that means it has to come from within the Serb communities. Therefore, the organizations that behave as development actors have only a very modest role to play in the process, but an important role in its facilitation. The importance of the environment of stakeholders and structural incentives and obstructions was also emphasized in Chapter 2.¹⁵ That is because these organizations, whether NGO, donor, state or intergovernmental organization are the primary actors that can supply the necessary funds, knowledge and technical assistance to maintain the level of facilitation of civil society development that is necessary to make headway. The scope of this thesis does not allow for an in-depth analysis into all aspects that make up the development environment as it isn't its primary focus. Instead, this section aims to offer a bird's eye view of the relationships between the (1) local and international NGOs, (2) donors, and (3) states and intergovernmental organizations that makes up the environment of civil society development.

The Relationship between International and Local NGOs

Both international and local NGOs in Kosovo operate in the same development arena and accordingly benefit as well as restrict each other in their work. Kosovo was one of the most underdeveloped regions in the former Yugoslavia, which itself lacked a well established culture of civic activism and NGO operations. The breakaway region thus had no preexisting active (Serbian) NGOs and especially the Serbian communities had to create nongovernmental organizational capacity from scratch.¹⁶ Since Serbian NGOs are a relatively new phenomenon, the INGOs play an instrumental role in the creation of an indigenous arena of NGO activity. The more serious Serb

¹⁵ See Chapter 2, p. 30-32.

¹⁶ This was a little different for the Kosovo-Albanian community, who since the early 1980s had already organized itself in parallel structures from the Serbian Republic. As such, nongovernment organizations were involved in civic activity to promote independence and service delivery (mainly) for the Albanian population in Kosovo. After the intervention, the NGO culture could advance itself from that starting position.

NGOs working in Kosovo have the advantage of understanding local contextualities, speaking the language, and gain locals' trust more easily. International NGOs on the other hand are more professional, being better equipped, funded and more technically advanced, while simultaneously understanding the international actor's way of operations better, making it easier for them to 'speak the international language' and thus tap into the international resource pool more easily. In practice the two types of actors benefit and constrain each other at the same time.

True benefits arise from cooperation between local and international NGOs based on a more or less equal partnership, where both parties contribute different sets of unique strengths to a joint project so that they don't compete over competencies. For instance, developing a civil society requires an intense engagement with the local population. The issues that civil society processes (can) deal with are often politically sensitive and of a complicated linguistic nature, making the face to face interaction in the programs with locals work best if performed by local Serb NGOs. In such cases, INGOs can contribute immensely 'behind the scenes' when they work together with local NGOs to write project proposals and apply for funding and help local NGOs with their knowledge of training, advocacy and lobbying methods to improve on the quality of the programs. Moreover, the networks of INGOs are well established, contrary to (beginning) local NGOs, and a mutual cooperation allows the latter to expand its own network quickly and efficiently, thereby aiding the local NGOs to mature more swiftly.^{xxviii}

Furthermore, a constructive relationship between international and local NGOs stimulates the growth of a professional indigenous NGO sector. Ultimately, INGOs will not permanently establish themselves in Kosovo and when they leave they take a large amount of technical expertise and connections to international institutions and donors with them. However when INGOs and local NGOs cooperate on projects, the local organizations learn from and adopt those characteristics of their international partners that they can use to their advantage. For instance the main case study NGO Fractal has been cooperating with IKV Pax Christi from the Netherlands for a number of years now. Their cooperation has also extended beyond just the program Enclavia and includes other projects, both in the past and present ones. Undoubtedly this cooperation has played an important role in the professionalization of NGO Fractal, making it one of the most efficient and active Serb NGOs in Kosovo to date.

However, certain constraints also arise from the relationship between international and local NGOs. More often than not INGOs and local NGOs compete in the same space and for the same resources, and cooperation is not always based on an equal footing. The largest constraint is the competition over funding. Western countries' budgets for NGO development projects in Kosovo are in majority only made available to local NGOs when they execute programs in partnerships with INGOs from those countries.^{xxix} This makes local NGOs dependent on INGOs to access development budgets of these governments and enables INGOs to define their relationship with local NGOs on their terms, making the relationship asymmetrical by definition. A local NGO employee complained of reaching a 'ceiling' at a certain point in the relationship with an INGO. NGOs in general can be inclined to claim successes in cooperative projects for their own. This is because successes provide a good name with donors, and subsequently increases the chances for future projects to be funded too. Thus, the competition over funding between local and international NGOs can incentivize both to claim success, but the latter often has shorter communication lines to donors and a better command of English and thus sometimes uses its position to bypass or marginalize the efforts of a local NGO.^{xxx}

This is what the informant meant with the word 'ceiling.' They can feel as if INGO employees restrict them from growing further or evolving into better standing with donors. Although such events were reported during interviews, the fieldwork did not give off the impression that such incidents occurred structurally. It would however be an interesting focal point for further research.

Also, the precious international resources, although of substantial size, are still a relatively scarce good which incentivizes efficient spending. INGOs are thus inclined to press for ever increasing efficiency with their local partners, while local NGOs are dependent on their relationship with INGOs for project funding. This further highlights the asymmetrical relationship, and produces tension. For example, a Serb NGO noted how one of their international partner NGOs demanded full financial transparency of the entire organization, including all base costs and salaries of all employees including those working on unrelated projects, as a requisite for their continuing partnership. However, unlike INGOs, local Serb NGOs do not enjoy core funding from donations or government assistance, instead having to rely on project-based funding to cover the costs of the entire organization, including overhead costs. This already puts great strain on the financial sustainability of local NGOs, and attempts at increasing efficiency erodes local organizations' basic means of operating. Although the INGO's request in question was most likely a well intended effort to help optimize spending on the project, it did not realize that it itself has no need to reciprocate the provision of such financial transparency to its local partners. Thus, the local NGO in question, already struggling to maintain its operability, was greatly frustrated by the INGOs request, stating that "we will provide transparency once you [INGO] provide us with the same financial information from your organization." Fortunately, this reaction made the INGO aware of the imbalance and so mitigated the arisen tension.^{xxxix}

Donors

An excessive amount of resources has been devoted to NGO development activity in Kosovo in roughly the past ten years since the conflict. There is, regrettably, no official account of this, nor is there a central institution keeping track of the flows of funds. NGO development and its funding is one of the least visible, formally organized forms of post-conflict development. This by itself warrants further investigation. Despite the devoted resources to Kosovo, the development of a sustainable Serbian civil society in Kosovo still trails behind. The topic of the impact of donors on the development of civil society in Kosovo was frequently brought up in the interviews with NGO workers, indicating the influence donors have on NGO activity. This is natural. Donors are the base facilitators of all nongovernmental development activity in Kosovo, because in the rule NGO movement does not generate a profit to sustain itself.¹⁷ However, 'those that pay decide.' Thus donors influence the development environment profoundly. Decisions by donors are based on often extensive experience with a variety of different countries, making them excellent centers of generalized knowledge on (post-conflict) development. Unfortunately, the generalized knowledge and institutional practice of donors can be at severe odds with the necessity motivated earlier to base sustainable post-conflict development on a local contextual framework. Donors are in a tough position to reconcile their practice with local peculiarities. The following provides but two examples and effects hereof in Kosovo.

¹⁷ Though private philanthropy in developed countries can partly fund INGOs allowing them some independence, local Serb NGOs do not have that luxury.

First, donors seem to be motivated to be as unbiased and fair towards all parties as possible. This in turn has led to a system of highly advanced operationalization of fund attribution. Donor policy makers set development priorities roughly every six months and open up their tenders correspondingly. The implications are that NGOs can apply for funds on the basis of the tenders' set priorities. Such priorities are described by NGO actors as either "sexy words," for example 'gender equality,' 'inter-ethnic communication,' or 'minority return,'^{xxxii} or made analogous to "fashion cycles such as spring-summer, fall-winter seasons. For six months you have anti-corruption, then decentralization. [But] then you have no in-depth process."^{xxxiii} Although this levels the opportunities for all NGO actors to win a tender and gain funding, it strains the development of projects into long term processes as such projects have to reapply for funds each year. Meanwhile, after six months another set of development priorities characterizes the donors' tender requisites. Accordingly, the continuation of projects on a recurring basis is uncertain. However, the provided examples and analysis of the approaches to developing social capital – which in turn is required for sustainable facilitation of an intrinsically motivated participation in Kosovo processes and civil society – evidenced that such attempts can only generate the desired effects if these projects are run on a recurring basis, allowing them to evolve into a development process. As such, the operationalized methods of donors, although designed to facilitate equal opportunity, seem to be counter-productive in achieving sustainability.

Furthermore, donors orientate themselves globally and as such have limited resources on the global playing field: they cannot devote their resources infinitely to Kosovo as there are multiple crisis regions they wish to address. This effect is directly felt by NGOs: "In the last one and a half years, the main donators, they finish their mission. They count Kosovo as stable area. And it is much more difficult than five years ago to find funds."^{xxxiv} Due to their relative time constraints and limited resources, donors are inclined to pursue swift, concrete results. NGO actors complain how this affects the design of their programs:

"We are building up really grass roots movements that should become political parties within four years. That could bring result in four years time. We discussed it with the donor, but they said: 'four years is too long'. If only we could have started four years ago and build something with credibility at the grass root level. But they [the donor] say that with a four year project they don't know the outcome. But now, with present practice, you have a great outcome! Ten years of current donor practice and it is a wonderful outcome. We don't have four years, but [here in Kosovo] we have forty, four hundred years! We need to have time. The entire policy [of donors] is 'now or never'."^{xxxv}

Long term processes that focus on a cognitive transformation within the population – such as the example above in particular and civil society as a process in general – are difficult to report on concretely, let alone operationalize in practice. And because donors are also held accountable for how they spend their funds, they are concerned with producing results. Subsequently shorter term projects with easily reportable results are prioritized at the cost of long term processes in Kosovo.

Overall, there is still huge ground to be gained in overcoming the structural difficulties between donors and NGO approaches to civil society development that were presented here. The above were but two features of the difficult position donors operating in Kosovo experience while there are likely to be many more. Further practical research seems warranted. Meanwhile, funding for the

development of a sustainable Serbian civil society seems to enjoy less attention at the cost of more practical issues. Kosovo is underdeveloped in many ways, including practical facilities. Thus donor attention in these areas is vastly important. However, civil society must address the underlying problems between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo in the future for peace-building to be sustainable. If civil society is unable to do so because it has been insufficiently developed, and donors' attention wanes further, the concrete results that were achieved in practical areas run the risk of suffering severe setbacks if underlying tensions mass into renewed conflict. Apart for an utter waste of resources, this could be devastating to Kosovo as a whole.

State Actors

States and the International Civilian Office (ICO) have a substantial role to play in facilitating the development of a Serbian civil society in Kosovo – they have been grouped under the heading 'state actors.' This is a relatively new take on the environment in which civil society development takes place and has to date received sporadic attention in the literature. Nonetheless, since civil society at the conceptual level is principally a process for reconciling the societal order in relation to the state, combined with the fact that Kosovo is a newly created state with a population having incongruent views on its legitimacy, it cannot be stated that its (upcoming) civil society is separate from politics. Indeed, the two are profoundly connected, as I also advanced in the conclusion of Chapter 4. Currently, there are a number of state actors that are deeply involved on a political level on the ground in Kosovo. Thus, their presence is also considered to complete the overview of the environment in which civil society development in Kosovo takes place.

The International Steering Group (ISG) in Kosovo is considered a state actor. It is a body of states that appoints the International Civilian Representative (ICR), Mr. Pieter Feith, who is charged with supervising the implementation of the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement (Ahtisaari Plan). Upon the declaration of independence of Kosovo on 17 February 2008, its government requested a civil presence to supervise the implementation of the Ahtisaari Plan that was used as a guideline for the adopted constitution. The ICR is supported by the International Civilian Office (ICO) in his mandate, thus being the active organization on the ground supervising the implementation of the Ahtisaari Plan.^{xxxvi}

On a conceptual level civil society embodies a process whose merits can facilitate a redefining of the social contract in Kosovo between Albanians, Serbs and other minorities. If the development of a civil society in the Serbian communities in Kosovo is embraced as a means to mitigate the discord between Serbs and Albanians on Kosovo's status, it is by definition politically charged. In Chapter 4 I advanced that Serbs are locked out of the political processes in Kosovo. One of the reasons was that their status as political subjects is denied *prima facie* because their opinion on Kosovo's status was bypassed with the unilateral declaration of independence. State actors that support Kosovo independence advocate that Kosovo-Serbs have to acquiesce to this new reality, stating that Serb rule of Kosovo is over.^{xxxvii}

Without arguing either for or against this position, the sustainable development of a Serbian civil society in Kosovo starts with opening the opportunity for Kosovo-Serbs to disagree with the new reality of independence within the context of a Kosovo-wide discussion or process. Presently, the status of Kosovo essentially defines the lives of Kosovo-Serbs, and they need to be engaged on it through civil society. And state actors in Kosovo have a crucial role to play in drawing them into this

discussion because through their proposition to Kosovo's independence they are themselves party to this discussion. This latter argument was also touched upon in the conclusion of Chapter 4. There I developed that the two prevalent realities, both the Kosovo-Serb position and that of pro-independence, must equally be recognized. Only when this premise is fulfilled can civil society facilitate the social process of realigning the societal order in relation to the state in Kosovo. Thus, rather than presenting rigid realities that lock each other out categorically, mutual recognition enables a meaningful discussion. And in effect, once the discussion takes place on a Kosovo-wide scale, a rudimentary but conceptually sound form of civil society *within* Kosovo will already materialize. Conversely, it is possible to develop a Kosovo-Serbian civil society outside of this conceptual discussion, but then their civil society is also conceptually detached from Kosovo processes rather than a part of it and will be unable to tackle the underlying problems between Albanians and Serbs, leaving it to fester and continually fuel tensions.

Furthermore, state actors in Kosovo do not seem aware that they play an active role in developing a Serbian civil society. This seems to be spurred by the rigid separation state actors make between civil society and the state. As a high level diplomat of one country that supports Kosovo independence explained, involvement in civil society is shunned as it is seen to violate the international principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Kosovo.^{xxxviii} This is a crucial though difficult point. It seems irreconcilable with the necessity advanced earlier to be a part of the discussion in civil society. However, this problem can be mitigated by actively stimulating the ICO, of which this state supporting Kosovo independence is a member, to take up this role on their behalf.

Equally, though on the other side of the spectrum, Serbia undeniably has an important role to play in facilitating Serbian civil society development. As Chapter 4 motivated, Serbia remains an important source of identification for Kosovo-Serbs. This cannot be denied nor will it go away if ignored. Unfortunately both the ICO and state supporters of Kosovo's independence seem to want to ignore engaging more intensively with Serbia.^{xxxix} For example, a high level diplomat of a member state to the ISG¹⁸ explained that their strategy was to wait until Serbia did not have enough money to finance Kosovo-Serb facilities anymore. After that, they expected that Kosovo-Serbs would have no choice but to participate more in Kosovo processes.^{xl} Hopefully, this thesis provides ready ammunition to rethink such strategies. Moreover, there are a number of highly relevant technical institutional issues on for example the matters of transportation and property rights that have to be resolved if the capacity of Kosovo-Serbs to participate in civil society are to be stimulated. Similar to the necessity of recognizing a dual reality on Kosovo, the involvement of Serbia in developing the situation of Kosovo-Serbs does not entail that either side has to cede to the other on the status issue.

¹⁸ For obvious reasons both the diplomat and the state have to remain anonymous.

Endnotes – Literature Chapter 5

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- ⁱ Personal notes; formal minutes of the Enclavia alumni group meeting, Gračanica, dated 21 april 2009.
- ⁱⁱ Observation notes; email correspondence with one of the organizers.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Interviews.
- ^{iv} Howell & Pearce (2001), pp. 17-31.
- ^v Interview 2, 26 March 2009; Interview 9, 27 March 2009.
- ^{vi} Kosovar Institute for Policy Recommendation and Development (2005), pp. 6-7.
- ^{vii} UNMIK document (2004), Kosovo Standards Implementation Plan, pp. 5, 7.
- ^{viii} Interview 17, 13 May 2009.
- ^{ix} Kosovar Institute for Policy Recommendation and Development (2005), pp. 1-5, 7.
- ^x World Vision Kosovo (2009); Kosovar Institute for Policy Recommendation and Development (2005).
- ^{xi} Interview 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8; observation notes; *Politika* newspaper, 29 May 2009, p. 10; *Press* newspaper, 29 May 2009, p. 13; *Vecernje novosti* newspaper, 29 May 2009, p. 13.
- ^{xii} Interview 22, 22 April 2009.
- ^{xiii} Interview 15, 26 March 2009; Interview 19, 16 June 2009.
- ^{xiv} Interview 1, 12 May 2009.
- ^{xv} Interview 22, 22 April 2009.
- ^{xvi} Interview 1, 12 May 2009.
- ^{xvii} NGO Fractal website: www.ngofractal.org
- ^{xviii} Radio interview of Filip Pavlovic, director of NGO Fractal, for KLOKOT Radio in Parteš, dated 4 June 2009.
- ^{xix} Interview 20, 10 March 2009.
- ^{xx} Ibid.
- ^{xxi} Putnam in: Hooghe & Stolle (2003), pp. 3-4.
- ^{xxii} Interview 7, 13 March 2009.
- ^{xxiii} Interview 15, 26 March 2009.
- ^{xxiv} Observation notes: informal conversations with various NGO workers.
- ^{xxv} Interview 3, 26 March 2009.
- ^{xxvi} Interview 7, 13 March 2009.
- ^{xxvii} Ibid.
- ^{xxviii} Fieldwork observations; notes.
- ^{xxix} Interview 6, 18 March 2009.
- ^{xxx} Ibid.
- ^{xxxi} Interview 6, 18 March 2009.
- ^{xxxii} Interview 11, 8 May 2009.
- ^{xxxiii} Interview 6, 18 March 2009.
- ^{xxxiv} Interview 2, 26 & 27 March 2009.
- ^{xxxv} Interview 11, 8 May 2009.
- ^{xxxvi} For detailed information on the structure of ISG, ICR and ICO, as well as member states to the ISG, please see <http://www.ico-kos.org>.
- ^{xxxvii} Interview 9, 27 March 2009; Interview 10, 9 June 2009.
- ^{xxxviii} Interview 10, 9 June 2009.
- ^{xxxix} Interview 9, 27 March 2009.
- ^{xl} Interview 10, 9 June 2009.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

When the discourse on civil society throughout history is reviewed, we see that the concept was attributed with different meanings in different periods, reflecting the fashion and the context of its time. It is therefore puzzling to see that there is presently a rather static conceptualization of civil society. Contemporary mainstream thinking on civil society still reasons from the modern emergence of the concept in North-Western Europe and sees it primarily in such terms as formal association, democratization and separate of the state and/or the economy. Although such definitions undoubtedly fit well-established democratic states, civil society is actually more than a description of a sphere or place in society. When framed in that manner, we self-impose severe limitations on what we understand by civil society. Because when we look more critically at its history, and take note of authors that offer alternative views, then we are able to conclude that civil society is not descriptive but straightforward, not passive but active, it is not a place but a process in society. The physical components are less relevant than the process and thus an analytical normative trap of sorts. Only when we distinguish between civil society as a normative concept and an empirical reality are we equipped to apply its development in non-Western contexts that lack the historical conditions of the concept's original emergence. Thus, I plea to define civil society as:

a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority.

Unfortunately civil society remains to suffer from conceptual and strategic confusion in the international intervention discourse. In a review of international interventions since the 1990s, we see that in the beginning democratization was pursued as a strategy and civil society development was designed to produce the necessary *democratic culture*. However, the problem herewith is that, although democratization needs civil society to function well, civil society does not necessarily produce democratization. Since then authors have distinguished between three schools of intervention practice that in various ways try to make use of civil society. But these approaches continue to insufficiently substantiate the role of civil society in the peace-building process, resulting in a poor strategy for its development. The necessity remains to develop a clear strategy for civil society development in post-conflict peace-building.

I have argued that civil society development should not be limited to a facilitating role in democratization. Instead, in post-conflict situations it has the unique ability to address the societal reconfigurations that underlie the conflict, even if these were unintentionally frozen by an intervention. As such, it can reconcile communities and contribute to building a durable peace. And through its merits civil society can address and channel other problems between (former) rival communities and within communities as well, whether practical, political or otherwise. In order to realize this potential, we have to reconsider how we think about war and peace, and deny war its special status. War is a social project among competing social projects. Such social projects also take place in peaceful and stable societies. Stable societies are not static but dynamic, continuously reconfiguring the societal order in relation to the state, and do so peacefully because civil society is the process that channels it. Likewise in post-conflict societies, civil society can be utilized for the same purpose. Especially in conflicts that result in the contestation by particular groups of the

state's legitimacy, civil society seems to provide the prime opportunity to crystallize differing group opinions in relation to the state. This is a very long term process requiring specific attention to the conceptual roots of local political and social life. In other words, civil society must be allowed to operate within a locally-owned, normative framework. Support for civil society development in post-conflict situations must thus take account of local knowledge, information and resources, it must be scheduled in a way that prioritizes and emboldens local processes, and outsiders must realize and accept that their involvement will create asymmetric relations with local forms of organization. Acting on these points will create the opportunity for development practitioners to make their efforts truly sustainable. As such academics, development actors and policy makers should embrace a scientific sociological and anthropological method in order to begin understanding the local communities that are targeted for development. These insights can subsequently inform the design of development projects so that they can be integrated in local contextualities, instead of operating on technical institutional operationalizations that are characteristic of the peace-building industry.

Now that the conceptual and strategic level focus of civil society in post-conflict peace-building are established, a scrutiny of the tactical level implementation – or the practice of civil society development itself – is in order. In the review of theory and studies on development practice, I have focused specifically on how unofficial third party intervention actors, or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), can facilitate civil society development. Apart from capacity building, stimulating advocacy and creating ownership, the generation of social capital was given due attention because of its importance in micro and macro level (civil society) processes. Theory postulates that bridging social capital is created between communities and is assumed to create linkages between former rivals, thus enabling a mitigation of possible tensions. Hence the popularity of inter-ethnic projects in peace-building processes. However, a detailed study of development practice in Kosovo revealed that attempts at developing this type of capital had failed to produce profound results. Not only did they discover that where projects focused on creating bridging social capital the impact remained largely superficial, but it was also unable to prevent inter-ethnic violence during the March 2004 riots. Interestingly, theory motivated that bonding social capital could enable a community to escalate the intensity of their grievances and subsequently promote inter-ethnic tensions. However, the study revealed that where bonding social capital –the ties between individuals of the same community – was created, it was far more effective at reducing inter-ethnic violence in the March 2004 riots. These findings were however inconclusive as to what type of social capital is more advantageous in sustainable civil society development. Therefore it is taken as the primary focus in analyzing the effectiveness of approaches to civil society development by NGOs in Kosovo.

Furthermore I established that the successful implementation of civil society development in post-conflict societies depends on a concerted effort of all third party intervention actors, whether local or international. Not only nongovernmental organizations that perform projects and programs in society, but also donors and state actors must realize that they all have vastly important roles to play in the development environment. The relations between these actors create structural incentives and limitations that are challenging to overcome and must remain to be actively taken into account in peace-building processes.

The insights that were advanced above answer the sub-question '*What is civil society?*' and entail an expansion thereupon to formulate the implications that the conceptualization of civil society have

for its subsequent implementation in post-conflict situations. These findings have been applied to study the sustainability of the development of a Serbian civil society in Kosovo. The results are both informative and provocative to current development approaches in Kosovo. They will be presented according to the sub-questions of the project.

What are the conceptual roots of political and social life of Kosovo-Serbs?

Chapter 4 presented a detailed analysis of Kosovo-Serbian life that can explain to the reader a little bit about how these people think, what their concerns are and what their situation is like. The information aims to provide the necessary insights to outsiders aspiring to increase the effectiveness of their development efforts with the Serbian communities in Kosovo. Paraphrasing Béatrice Pouligny, we need to be sensitive to the fundamental concerns of Kosovo-Serbs and enable ourselves to understand them if the peace-building is to be truly meaningful.

In the national narrative of Serbia, Kosovo-Serbs live in a holy place. Kosovo is, due to how Serbian history is explained, profoundly connected to the national identity because its keeper, the Serbian Orthodox Church, originates from there. Though the practical value of Kosovo to Serbs might be marginal, its symbolic significance within the national narrative should never be marginalized.

Kosovo-Serbs have been enduring a decade long transition of their political system, and a culture of political apathy is prevalent in society. The long duration of the transitional phase has arguably had a more severe effect on Serbs from Kosovo than from Serbia proper. In any case, the transition maintains a level of uncertainty in society. Furthermore it restrains Kosovo-Serbs from building up experience with self-advocacy and accountability that are characteristic of the new democratic systems that both Kosovo and Serbia are transitioning into. Thus, the expectations on Kosovo-Serbs should be tempered. The culture of apathy is mainly the result of the widespread sensation that, with all of the changes taking place around them and the influence of Serb, Albanian and international principals, they cannot possibly exercise control over their own situation – so why should they bother? This is quite frankly one of the most disturbing findings concerning the life of Kosovo-Serbs. An apathetic populace is in diametric opposition to their participation in civil society as that depends entirely on their engagement. Furthermore a thorough reconsideration of the denial by pro-independence stakeholders of Kosovo-Serbs' status as political subjects *prima facie* is necessary. Only then can civil society function on a conceptual level and enable a societal reconfiguration in relation to the new state that inarguably was forced upon the Kosovo-Serbs.

Kosovo-Serbian social relations are structured according to patriarchy, hierarchy and seniority, and patronage and nepotism. I have argued the importance for outsiders to take these cultural and societal rules into consideration when dealing with people, as it can help to explain their behavior and increase an understanding. Furthermore we see that there are two main difficulties characterizing the social life of Kosovo-Serbs, being the absence of a comprehensive community and the debilitating social effects of the phenomenon I coined 'social lockdown.' These factors severely strain the potential of Kosovo-Serbs to start participating in civil society as a process. When these problems are left unaddressed, development programs strictly aiming to stimulate the growth of civil society will have severe difficulty materializing as the quality of underlying conditions for Serbs to participate remain poor.

What is the perception that various actors on the ground in Kosovo have of civil society and how does this relate to its development?

In answering this question I considered both the perceptions of development actors and Kosovo-Serbs. Generally, development practitioners seem to inform their perception of civil society according to the mainstream reading of the concept. However, much confusion was identified and the emerging picture suggests that, in Kosovo, the different stakeholders do not have a shared understanding of civil society. This does not contribute to an effective concerted effort of development practitioners in Kosovo, and mitigating this challenge is of the utmost importance.

Kosovo-Serbs' perception is dictated by their experiences, which have essentially been negative. The principal factor herein is that people equate NGOs and civil society, which has produced two problems. On the one hand, NGOs are associated with an unbalanced pursuit for criminal justice. On the other, the wild growth of NGOs in the aftermath of the conflict in 1999 and the poor results they produced have made Kosovo-Serbs cautious of their intentions, suspecting that NGOs are mainly in it for the money. These experiences with NGOs have given civil society a bad connotation among Kosovo-Serbs. Thus, NGOs working on civil society development must uphold respectable reputations and produce concrete results to gain the trust of and access to the Serbian communities.

What types of approaches to civil society development are most effective in Kosovo?

The importance of social capital was scrutinized and developed in the theoretical framework. There, theory and practice seemed at odds with each other. While theory assumed that bridging social capital is most advantageous in overcoming rifts between communities, studies of practice revealed that development efforts produced superficial results. Conversely theory warns that bonding social capital might actually kindle inter-ethnic tensions. However, where development practice had focused on creating bonding social capital, communities seemed to be able to mitigate inter-ethnic violence ensuing from the March 2004 riots in Kosovo. These findings produced important questions that were further elaborated on in the analysis of development practice in Kosovo. Hence, two types of NGO approaches to civil society development were analyzed in Chapter 5: bonding and bridging social capital. The results challenge the traditional notions of the uses of social capital in civil society development.

The Enclavia program is designed to create bonding social capital within the Serbian communities in Kosovo. In analyzing the program and its effects, we see that this type of approach directly addresses some of the core problems that were identified in the conceptual roots of Kosovo-Serbian life. Thus, it is essentially embedded within their own local normative framework: the substance of the program takes shape on their terms, and participants truly attain ownership in both the outcome of the debates and the subsequent lobby group activities. After all, the program is designed to be dependent on the efforts of the participants themselves. Discussions are, through the help of NGO moderators, framed in such a way that they actively think of their situation within the context of Kosovo, and are stimulated to formulate plans and solutions. This creates room for Kosovo-Serbs to emancipate the passive role they had assumed because of the apathetic tendency in society. Moreover, the program produces valuable spin offs. Some participants become motivated to organize themselves in informal alumni meetings, or erect their own NGOs, in order to continue tackling issues on a Kosovo level. Moreover, the lobby group combines Serbs from different areas in Kosovo, enlarging the network among them. Furthermore the NGO provides the lobby group with trainings that increase their capacity to engage with relevant actors that can help improve their

situation in Kosovo. In turn, the lobby visits are increasing the contact between Kosovo-Serbs and the Serbian and Kosovo governments, the international organizations in Kosovo and in Brussels and The Hague. Interestingly, the reservations in theory towards the negative effects of bonding social capital appear to be unfounded in this case.

Conversely, the review of approaches to bridging social capital development reveals that the produced results remain largely superficial. Projects with an inter-ethnic focus appear able to achieve results among the participants in terms of an inter-ethnic understanding or inter-ethnic ties and friendships when these occur outside of their own community discourse. However, upon reentry into their own communities, the results seem to be crowded out by the weight of community pressure, nullifying the effects. The findings of both the CDA-CLP study and my own fieldwork lead me to conclude that development efforts focused on creating solely bridging social capital are ineffective. I have argued that the trailing ineffectiveness stems from the lack of base conditions that are required to enable participation in a civil society process. Bridging social capital projects fail to address the problems identified in the conceptual roots of Kosovo-Serbian life. The Serbs do not yet form a wholesome community in Kosovo, and the localities face many problems. It seems that such problems must first be mended before bridging social capital can take hold and play a positive role in civil society. However, the results were inconclusive as to what the impact of bridging social capital could be on civil society development itself.

What is the environment in which civil society development takes place in Kosovo?

Though the scope of this project did not allow me to expand on the development environment comprehensively, I have identified the main actors and motivated the role they have to play in facilitating civil society development. Firstly, careful attention on the relationship between international and local NGOs in Kosovo is necessary. In order to attain the goal of sustainable development, INGOs and local NGOs need to cooperate on an equal footing by making use of their comparative advantages. Local NGOs have a better ready knowledge of local contexts and are most suited to identify the main challenges of communities and which require attention. They are also excellent partners in identifying the local stakeholders and in building up relationships between communities and international development actors. INGOs can aid local NGOs to professionalize their organization and work methods so that they can operate maturely and independently of INGOs once the latter have to focus their attention elsewhere.

Donors have to be mindful that their institutional operationalizations concerning fund attribution to NGO projects do not interfere with the necessity to develop long term processes. The current practice reveals that donors often issue tenders on the basis of a specific topic for a six month duration, after which a new topic is prioritized. This severely impedes the development of short term NGO projects into long term programs and is thus counter-productive in attaining sustainability. Although I wish to refrain from policy formulation, exploring the opportunities to cooperate with (local) NGOs in setting donor priorities and to increase the funding for programs over a longer period of time instead of a case by case basis seem logical.

Finally, I addressed the role of state actors. If civil society is to address the incongruity between Albanians and Serbs on Kosovo's status in the future, state actors should become involved in the discussion. That means that they are in fact a part of civil society as a process already. Equally, Serbia remains an important source of identification for Kosovo-Serbs. It is not likely that this identification

will subside soon. Therefore, the involvement of Serbia can help to develop a Kosovo-Serbian civil society. It has an important function in easing the technical institutional difficulties between Serbia and Kosovo on material matters such as transportation, taxes, property rights and so on. When such problems are mitigated, the potential of Kosovo-Serbs to participate in Kosovo-wide processes rises. However, I do not deny that such cooperation with Serbia is already being sought and that it continues to be a challenging matter.

Answering the Research Question

What is the sustainability of the development of a Serbian civil society in post-conflict Kosovo, and how can it be improved?

Civil society is a process through which individuals move in spheres of social interaction in order to negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with centers of authority. Since civil society is a process, the most salient concern for development actors is to increase local participation herein. In order to increase the participation of different communities in the process that is civil society and accordingly give it a chance at influencing the peace process, the development of conditions and facilities that enable their participation must be prioritized. Such conditions and facilities are embodied by capacity, social capital, experience and local ownership. This in opposition to how civil society development in post-conflict situations appears to take place traditionally, for often NGOs operate as service delivery vessels that fail to develop capacity within the communities themselves. For example, an NGO might organize inter-ethnic meetings where views and/or stories are shared, organize inter-ethnic economic activity or establish an inter-ethnic school, with the aim to increase inter-ethnic cooperation – or, create *bridging social capital*. However, studies reveal that, in Kosovo, those programs' effects are superficial and fail to create real bridging social capital. Another problem with these approaches is that NGOs continue to monopolize the facilities and capacity needed to sustain these projects. Thus, if these NGOs run out of funds, decide to close office or for another reason have to discontinue their practices, the local communities will have difficulty continuing their inter-ethnic activities: there is no mediator and it is unlikely that former belligerents will seek each other out to prolong previous NGO activities. This risk severely strains the sustainability of civil society development as the dependency of local communities on NGOs remains.

Instead, when capacity is created *within* communities and experience with engaging in the civil society process is built up, these benefits are inalienable: they are internalized and cannot vaporize when outsiders disengage. The development becomes intrinsic to the individual if, of course, the individual has the will to commit him or herself to it. If civil society is to be a successful force in post-conflict societies, different communities have to communicate. However, successful communication depends on the capacity of each group to formulate its problems and solutions within the context of a space of multiple communities. Thus, in a situation where a community lacks the capacity to interact, the prioritization of inter-ethnic cooperation is inefficient in making a civil society process effective and sustainable. Instead, stimulating the growth of *bonding social capital* creates the means for communities to start build bridges themselves instead of having to rely on non-permanent outsiders. When a community develops capacity and has been able to address some of the structural problems it faces, then there is more certainty: firmer base conditions have materialized. Perhaps bridging social capital development has a better chance of taking root then.

The negative effects for peace-building that theory attributes to bonding social capital are not displayed in the empiricism of Kosovo.

Civil society has many merits. Its principle merit is that it can facilitate a mitigation of tensions and problems in society between individuals and centers of authority. These problems can be practical, political, and even a disagreement on the legitimacy of a state itself can be addressed. In order to realize this potential, civil society must be developed within a locally-owned normative framework. Local communities' concerns must be taken seriously and the development of their capacity to think about, engage with, and formulate solutions to local problems must be prioritized. This will improve the base conditions that can enable the participation of individuals from these communities in civil society. The present reality of an independent Kosovo is imposed on a substantial part of the inhabitants in Kosovo. This thesis has motivated that civil society can represent the means to redefine the social contract in Kosovo between Albanians, Serbs and other minorities, and begin to turn this imposition into a shared, inclusionary process that can start to shape a viable, stable future for Kosovo in the heart of South-Eastern Europe.

When a conflict generates diverging interests between peoples, we must create room for genuine disagreement within civil society. The process must be allowed to be substantive so that it is able to address the most salient issues. Thus, the civil society process must also be inclusive of all elements in society. Conceptually civil society is the process that can solve societal tensions and problems non-violently, regardless of context. The development and final shape of civil society, however, has to reflect the local context entirely. We need to rethink our strategies and look critically at the effects of our policies. In this exercise we can ask ourselves whether the goal of interethnic reconciliation is reached by prioritizing interethnic development, and if such approaches have lasting effects. The two aren't necessarily alike. Have such policies really been that effective?

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Appendix A - Interview Guide

<p>Introduction of self (I, masters, country) Explain Research: Explorative research on civil society building by local & international actors and the sustainability of such processes. Information will only be used for this research. (Do you want to remain anonymous?) Speak freely.</p>	<p>Respondent details.</p> <p>Age Sex Works where?</p>
<p>Topic <u>Conceptual Roots</u></p>	<p>Example Questions</p>
<p><i>Items</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - perception of situation on the ground; - political playing field; - social playing field; - status of Kosovo. 	<p>Can you first tell me something about yourself? What is your personal connection with the field of work? What is your view of life in K-Serb society? What do you understand to be a civil society? Can you explain how you see Kosovo-S. civil society? In how far do you think are the Serbian IDPs a part of that society? How?</p> <p>What is the Serbian relation to governance here like exactly? How does Serbian interaction with governance or lack thereof influence the peace process? <i>[What is the difference between ethnically homogenous and heterogeneous municipalities in this regard?]</i> <i>[What effects does this have on S civil society?]</i></p> <p><u>Perception of situation:</u> community life, who are important? Cooperative vs non-cooperative people Jobs / economy, education, culture, entertainment, activities, media, communication friends and family in other enclaves, transport, trust/fear of Albanians, communication. Double pressure – ‘others’ and within own community Portraying of victimization by both communities</p> <p>What do you understand to be the status of Kosovo? What role does the status issue of Kosovo play in your work in civil society?</p>
<p>Topic <u>Key factors</u></p>	<p>Example Questions</p>
<p><i>Items</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jobs / economy, - security / KPS, - transport, - education, 	<p>Is there a perceived politicization? Real politicization?</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - property rights, - media, - youth and culture, - invisible cooperation with Kosovo governance, - radical forces at work, - Belgrade; - UNMIK; - Kosovo government; - Serb rights; - knowledge of locals; - local needs; - local practice. 	<p>returnees and local capital? Does the community help facilitate this process?</p> <p>What is the role of semantics vs pragmatism here?</p> <p>In what way is Belgrade helping Serbs in Kosovo concretely? In what way are they not?</p> <p>In what way is the international UNMIK umbrella supporting civil society building efforts? In what way do they directly work with localities?</p> <p>Are the Kosovo administrative institutions interacting with the Serbian communities, and if so, how?</p> <p>Serbian rights</p> <p>What do Serbs know of their situation and their rights? How are they informed?</p> <p>Jobs / economy, transport, education, initiative, representation, municipal organization</p> <p>local initiatives, snowballing?</p>
Topic	NGO / Organization
Items	Example Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - programs; - origin; - vision; - mission; - ties to communities; 	<p>Identify in brief the civil society programs. How was the organization created? From where did it originate?</p> <p>What is the vision underlying your work? What vision does your organization have?</p> <p>What is the mission?</p> <p>How does the organization connect to communities? Do you work with S community? (are they employed with the org, is there mutual cooperation and shared responsibility?) How did it come about? Are there local initiatives? What are they/why not?</p>

- what;	How long as the project been running? Can you tell me what it is doing specifically to develop Serbian society?
- why;	Why this?
- how;	What do the programs entail? How does this work?
- results;	What results have been booked? How is this measured? How would you say this was possible? Why have certain things been difficult? What are the directives of your programs? What results do you need to achieve (tangible, measureable)? Are there quotas?
- change/evolution;	Has the approach changed/evolved? Did you anticipate this? Why did it change?
- Cooperation with others	Who are perceived as serious civil society actors and organizations?? Few projects, or years of existence/sustainability?
- local human capital.	What impression do you get of locals' knowledge on community needs? Is the local knowledge increasing (capacity)? Do participants and beneficiaries of the programs stay involved in community work (experience)? How is this organized? Can Serbs independently advocate for themselves? Do they? Why?

Appendix B - Place names municipalities Kosovo

Albanian	Serbian	English
Deçan	Dečane	Decan
Prizren	Prizren	Prizren
Gjakovë	Djakovica	Gjakova
Skënderaj	Srbica	Skenderaj
Glogoc	Glogovac	Glogovac
Shtime	Štimlje	Stimlje
Gjilan	Gnjilane	Gjilan
Shtërpçë	Štrpce	Shtpce
Dragash	Dragaš	Dragash
Suharekë	Suva Reka	Suva Reka
Istog	Istok	Istog
Ferizaj	Uroševac	Ferizaj
Kaçanik	Kačanik	Kacanik
Viti	Vitina	Viti
Klinë	Klina	Klina
Vushtrri	Vučitrn	Vushtrri
Fushë Kosovë	Kosovo Polje	Fushe Kosove
Zubin Potok	Zubin Potok	Zubin Potok
Kamenicë	Kamenica	Kamenica
Zveçan	Zvečan	Zvecan
Mitrovicë	Kosovska Mitrovica	Mitrovica
Malishevë	Mališevo	Malisheve
Leposaviq	Leposavič	Leposaviq
Hani i Elezit	General Janković	Hani i Elezit
Lipjan	Lipjan	Lipjan
Mamush	Mamuša	Mamush

Novobërdë	Novo Brdo	Novo Brdo
Junik	Junik	Junik
Obilic	Obilič	Obilic
Klllokoti	Klokot	Klokot
Rahovec	Orahovac	Rahovec
Gračanicë	Gračanica	Gracanice
Pejë	Peč	Peja
Ranillug	Ranilug	Ranilug
Podujevë	Podujevo	Podujevo
Partesh	Parteš	Partesh

Source: <http://kk.rks-gov.net/>

Appendix C - Maps



Ethnic composition of Kosovo (2005)



Former Yugoslavia



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