

## Bringing the citizens in: civil society in globalizing cities of the South

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Simon Raiser, Krister Volkmann (eds.)

**Bringing the Citizens in:  
Civil Society in Globalizing  
Cities of the South**

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## **Introduction: Civil Society in Globalizing Cities of the South**

*By Simon Raiser and Krister Volkmann*

The 21<sup>st</sup> century often is presented as the „urban century“, during which the majority of the world’s population will be living in cities for the first time in history. While urbanization already reached very high levels in Europe and the Americas early after World War II, this process continues at tremendous speed in large parts of Asia and Africa. On average, the population of urban regions in the developing world is growing five times faster than the population of urban areas in the North. In 2030 an estimated 79% of the world’s urban population will live in the so-called developing countries.<sup>1</sup>

The enormous growth of urban areas has created many serious problems and poses great challenges for urban governance. The mega-cities and globalizing city regions in the South are faced with these challenges with growing intensity,<sup>2</sup> considering that the urbanization process was initiated only within the past few decades. In the countries of the North, the same process took about a century, creating great historical ruptures there as well. The growing urban population needs access to jobs and infrastructure (housing, water and sanitation, electricity, roads and public transportation, waste collection, educational and health services, cultural facilities). At the same time, the dense concentration of so many people puts the natural environment under extreme pressure. Within the given financial and institutional restrictions, these problems remain to a large part unresolved for at least a great part of the inhabitants in the big Southern cities.

Since national governments in the past have failed to ameliorate the situation, one answer has been to partly decentralize tasks. Local governments are seen to be closer to the problems and better prepared to provide necessary infrastructure and services.<sup>3</sup> Not always, however, have the local authorities been equipped with accompanying financial resources and/or competences. Under the neoliberal paradigm a further answer has been the deregulation and opening-up of national economies. This offers new opportunities to attract foreign capital and entrepreneurs, who create new jobs, but it also makes local actors more vulnerable to volatile international financial markets and profit-oriented multi-national corporations. Together, these trends have transformed the setting for city government. Different levels of government are involved, as well as an increasing number of non-state actors: private companies, non-governmental and community-based organizations (NGO/ CBO), religious congregations, and engaged citizens. Within political science, the term “urban governance” has been introduced<sup>4</sup> to describe this new mode of interdependent steering of the city polity. This series of working papers looks at a specific aspect of urban governance: the role of civil society in globalizing city regions in the developing world.

Civil society is not a clearly defined concept. Different notions exist about its essence,

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<sup>1</sup> McCarney/Stren 2003, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Gugler 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Whitfield 2001.

<sup>4</sup> McCarney, Halfani, and Rodríguez 1995. On “governance” in general, see: Rhodes 1996; Jessop 1998; Pierre/Peters 2000; Rosenau/Czempiel 2000.

boundaries, and functions. The observation and recognition of a civic sphere outside of state rule gradually emerged with the contract theories of the Enlightenment era, but the nature of this civic sphere was characterized very differently by philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. Alexis de Tocqueville impressively described the contribution of civic associations to American democracy in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Later in the century, Karl Marx analyzed civil society in the context of class struggle as part of bourgeois society. Today, theories on civil society remain a contested terrain. Different traditions are reflected and further developed in modern approaches represented by Edward Shils, Charles Taylor, Ralf Dahrendorf, Michael Walzer, Hannah Ahrendt, and others, while a radical notion of civil society continues in the Gramscian legacy to view it as an agent to build up counterhegemonic power. Accordingly, the approaches by the authors in this working paper differ in their assessment of the role of civil society for development. They all, however, add refreshing views and experiences to a hitherto rather euro-centric debate.

The contributions in this working paper present issue-related research findings of a comprehensive, interdisciplinary research project “Global city regions as changing sites of governance”<sup>5</sup> directed by professor Klaus Segbers, Free University Berlin. They are written by local experts in the four project city regions: Sudha Mohan (Mumbai/Bombay), Pedro Jacobi (São Paulo), Fan Lizhu (Shanghai) and Patrick Bond (Johannesburg).

## THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The UN-Habitat Global Report on Human Settlements 2001 describes an amazing phenomenon. In Mumbai, slum dwellers have started to count themselves. This means literally that they keep track how many people – and also who – live in the neighborhood. It is an impressive example of how the slum dwellers have organized themselves in order to keep population statistics of the informal settlement – a task that is originally one of the most genuine domains of the state (as indicated by the very word “stat(e)-istics”<sup>6</sup>). The people has taken over this state responsibility for very concrete reasons. Only when their own number is known, can they make themselves and their grievances and demands recognized. It is the sheer necessity of make themselves visible that has motivated them to conduct their own census.

This is probably an extreme example of how civil society shows tries to compensate for a lack of state action. In many cities in the developing world, however, a wide variety of non-governmental and/or community-based organizations step in where state activity is inadequate or even completely missing. Other organizations and social movements form networks to make demands to officials or resist government and/or business action deemed to threaten a community. In her contribution Sudha Mohan presents three types of strategies practiced by civil society organizations: 1) persuasive strategies, aiming to bring certain is-

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<sup>5</sup> For information on this research project, see <http://www.city-regions.de>. Part of the findings will be published with Ashgate Publications under the title “Public Problems – Private Solutions? New Trends from Globalizing Cities in the South”. A second book publication is currently under negotiation.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) 2001: pp. 171-175.



sues to the attention of the authorities; 2) collaborative strategies, including cooperation with authorities; and 3) confrontational strategies that organize protest action against the authorities. They all belong to the realm of civil society, as long as they are conducted without violence, though they may well include acts of old and new forms of civil disobedience<sup>7</sup>.

## EXPERIENCES FROM GLOBALIZING CITIES IN THE SOUTH

In her analysis of civil society in Mumbai/Bombay, Sudha Mohan identifies the decline of institutional politics, which in the past failed to respond to the needs of the poor majority, as a key factor explaining the rise of civil society organizations in the 1990s. The other major factor identified by her is the new stage of globalization, which is a dichotomous process. It causes new problems for society, but it also has enabled new alliances between local actors. An interdependent development of "glocalization" is the result. Consequently the range of civil society organizations has changed considerably in the last two decades. Older organizations based on philanthropic, charity, and social welfare ideals have been complemented or replaced by new social movements formed around issues such as ecology, human rights, women, and dalit (casteless people). The contribution of this sector towards poverty alleviation and development is increasingly being recognized in the recent official five-year plans (seventh and eighth, 1985-1990 and 1991-1996 respectively). Mohan briefly presents several cases of innovative civil society action, such as a business-sponsored educational initiative on the one end of the spectrum and a women's grassroots organization that assists micro-entrepreneurs on the other. Finally, she cautions that civil society action does not make government action obsolete and that there are also traps in over-reliance on NGOs. NGOs sometimes build up considerable bureaucracy and may in the worst case lose close contact to the people concerned.

A number of parallel trends can be found in Pedro Jacobi's analysis of civil society in São Paulo. Older movements that played an important role in opposing the military regime are partly losing momentum. New organizations have come into being, focusing on unemployment, violence, women's issues, and the inclusion of ethnic groups and minorities. Jacobi argues that this may be seen as a strengthening of democracy, where the activity of social movements is gradually cast into institutional forms of participation, such as the practice of Participatory Budgeting. Still, the movements vary greatly according to the degree of institutionalization, starting with the Worker's Party (PT), which formed the national and several regional governments, to grassroots communities of the Catholic church (Comunidades Eclesiais de Base), and the radical movement of landless workers (Movimento dos Sem Terra, MST). The strategies range from collaborative to confrontational.

Similar to Mumbai/Bombay, Jacobi observes an increase in cooperative action. Civil-society organizations are formed to step in when state policies fail to address burning issues, but this action takes place in cooperation with the authorities. The practice in many Brazilian cities of Participatory Budgeting (a process whereby ordinary citizens make decisions on

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<sup>7</sup> Kleger 1993.

local investment priorities) is highly innovative and probably the most prominent example of government recognition of civil society's contribution to urban development. The particular cases presented by Jacobi portray projects concerned with so-called "social entrepreneurship", cooperative breeders and micro-credit, which also aim to reduce violence in low-income neighborhoods. As such, they attempt to build a civil society without violence, or at least with a lesser degree thereof. The other category of initiatives focusses on "digital inclusion", which seeks to employ modern technology to open new opportunities for marginalized people. Like Mohan, Jacobi describes a dual process induced by globalization, producing great social asymmetries but also allowing for "important innovations to make democracy work".

The contribution on Shanghai by Fan Lizhu shows that civil society is an increasingly relevant topic in China, too. Official mottos such as "Small government, big society" underline this trend, as do concrete policies of "community construction". This is a planned attempt to create new structures in accordance with the market economy. It is intended to combine traditional Chinese forms of societal organization with Western models as far as they are considered beneficial under the present political system. The comparison with Mumbai and India, however, reveals the strong state domination of society still in place in China. According to Fan Lizhu, "the government is always in the core position in cooperative relationships and alliance relationships [...] Government did not become 'smaller and smaller', but stronger and stronger". The interesting case study of Meiyuan community bears evidence of how the contact with Western culture slowly is influencing traditional values and giving rise to hidden conflicts.

The fourth contribution, by Patrick Bond on Johannesburg, starts from a somewhat different position. Building on the Gramscian notion of civil society that composes a counter-hegemony, Bond focusses on urban social movements that are "protest-oriented and utopian", rather than on implementation-oriented NGOs or mutual aid groupings. With respect to the former, he points out that "Johannesburg is notable in many respects, not least because it has [...] spawned amongst the most vigorous urban social movements anywhere on earth". According to Bond, this is a specific manifestation of how the "urban" and the "global" come together in this South-African metropolis through civil society challenges to municipal, national, and even global-scale political processes. In his analysis he describes the rise, fall, and subsequent revival of Johannesburg's civic associations and popular movements in response to a policy shift by the ANC-led governments at the national and local levels. This return of civic protest is exemplified by the struggles for decommodifying water and electricity and civil society marches on Sandton (the site of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development).

Patrick Bond's contribution reminds us of the limitations of cooperative strategies and the ambiguities and difficult choices with which civil society has to deal. It is important to observe that although development can hardly succeed without civil society, civil society actors cannot solve problems alone either. As Sudha Mohan pointed out, "these organizations can never be a substitute for the state [...]". The state is still needed and can not be allowed to

escape its responsibilities. Civil society can complement state activity. On the other hand, civil society, as understood by Bond, helps to articulate political dissent and as such plays a crucial role in making state authorities more transparent and responsive to the citizens' needs and concepts.

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# 1. Political Transformation and Capacity Building: Role and Relevance of Civil Society in Mumbai

*By Sudha Mohan*

Civil society<sup>8</sup> gained public attention in the 1980s as an attempt to establish civility in society. It was seen as the opposite of despotism, a 'space' in which groups can exist to ensure better and more tolerable conditions of existence. However, civil society is complicated, in being both a 'social value and a set of social institutions'.<sup>9</sup> Civil society thus is used both as a normative concept and as an empirical description. As a normative concept, it prescribes the conditions for effective governance. As a descriptive concept, it identifies certain viable social activities, civic dispositions, and non-state institutions that are linked to development.

This paper critically appraises the role and relevance of civil society with reference to the current disaffection with the state and its institutions. It examines the emergence of a new form of 'state-society synergy' when horizontal civil society organizations (CSOs) interact with the conventional vertical structures of the political system. The paper also discusses the reallocation of roles and responsibilities between the state and civil society actors in the quest for the construction of a new urban development coalition in the era of liberalization and globalization. However, it wishes to neither celebrate urban development coalition revival nor skeptically undermine its function, but it purports objectively to perceive the salience of civil society organizations in Mumbai.

From Hobbes to Gramsci, there have been many variants on the notion of civil society. But the most important institutional component of civil society comprises voluntary groups of different hues and kinds, including community groups, co-operatives, unions, associations, self-help groups, foundations, social service agencies etc. There is no such thing as 'the' civil society. There are hence Hobbesian and Hegelian, Marxian and Gramscian conceptions of civil society. They share one thing in common - they all refer to the sphere of social life, which falls outside the state, though they do not see it as necessarily free from state interference. To put it simply, civil society here is seen as groups and individuals that are at the interface between the state and the rest of the social order.

## CHANGES AND CHALLENGES IN MUMBAI THE 'URBS PRIMA' OF INDIA

Mumbai is the capital of the state of Maharashtra and the financial and commercial capital of India. Most importantly, Mumbai connotes more than just the land area and the material wealth that it houses on it. Mumbai is a concept, an idea, a dream cherished by millions who look up to it for being liberated from their poverty and inhuman social conditions. Cities have become 'sites' for several contestations, and Mumbai is no exception. However, cities have their contradictory sides. Mumbai too is a city of contrasts. This city, which has global preten-

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<sup>8</sup> Unstructured interviews were carried out with bureaucrats, political leaders, NGO activists and members of community for the purpose of this study.

<sup>9</sup> Hall 1995.

sions, houses more than half of its people in slums. Though it is poised on the path of globalization, it is faced with the growing problem of urban degeneration.

This metropolitan city therefore, encompasses several facets of life. It is, on the one hand, an epitome of modernity and culture itself. It symbolizes the best that human spirit and enterprise has wrought. On the other hand, it also represents the sordid side of human life - the dehumanizing and debilitating aspects that thwart human spirit. This dualism has several causes. A number of factors such as poverty, lack of employment in the villages, industrial and technological advancements that sometimes render human labor superfluous, and other socio-cultural factors have contributed to urban blight. However, it is also important to point out that this city's pulsating spirit and its never-say-die attitude have led to many dynamic changes over the last several decades. The current process is one of change, churning, and transformation taking place in a mega-city that epitomizes the worst and the best of human existence.

The twin process of de-industrialization and informalization preceded the liberalization initiated in the 1990s. They were set into motion in the late 1970s. Further policies only accentuated the problem, with liberalization leading to the state's withdrawal from social-sector funding and pressure put on communities to raise and manage resources themselves. Reduction in state control did not bring about market economy, as the markets became subservient to global markets under globalization. Thus, coupled with a general disenchantment with political institutions, large sections of the urban poor were marginalized in the new dispensation. This was mainly because the formal institutional structures were losing credibility. Political parties increasingly became electoral machines, communalizing politics for electoral gains. Trade unions did not effectively incorporate the informal sectors of the economy. The decline of institutional politics combined with the exclusion of people at best or manipulation at worst, pushed these sections further away from mainstream politics, resulting in the growth of movements, organizations, and associations that sought to address issues independently.

Globalization - the other widespread process to have had a tremendous impact in almost all countries - was beginning to be felt in India, and more specifically in the mega-city of Mumbai. The macro-effect of this phenomenon was felt and subsequently examined and interpreted. Debates equated globalization with the general, the necessary, and the abstract. However, insufficient attention has been paid to what it does at the specific, concrete 'city' level. Many scholars subscribe to the view that there is a dichotomy developing whereby globalization and localization occur simultaneously. This trend is expressed in terms of fine polarized oppositions, emphasizing the uneven and dialectical nature of the process. Localities or City Regions have become an important focus for social, political, and cultural mobilization against perceived and present global threats. There is need to therefore articulate both the local and the global as two interdependent elements in a universal process. Terms like "glocalization" are increasingly used to illustrate the dialectical interrelation.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See e.g. Mittleman 1997; Robertson 1992, and Teune 1995.

Thus, when globalization is modified by its contact with the local, what actually seems to emerge is not what is usually believed to occur, homogenization, but an interesting fusion. It is evident from this fusion that organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, shape the city environment, transforming political and social life. Cities thus are not helpless pawns of international capital, but have the capability to mediate and direct their own destiny by exploiting their comparative advantages. They have the capacity to 'mould' as well as 'mirror' global processes, if their energies and strengths can be put to positive use and advantage. The mega-city of Mumbai has been trying to do precisely this!

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND URBAN GOVERNANCE

Yet another important challenge came about with the emergence of new social movements - ecology, human rights, women's rights, and dalit<sup>11</sup> -, which began addressing collective concerns in new ways. A wide variety of social movements, raising issues relating to citizenship, legitimacy of state institutions, ability of the state to implement policies, participation of the common people in state institutions, animated the civil society sphere in a very significant manner in Mumbai.

It is important to emphasize that the civil society organizations (henceforth: CSOs) that emerged in Mumbai did not represent a close-knit community but comprised a broad spectrum of diverse groups with varied activities. Some CSOs have been taking up the cause of the vulnerable sections in urban areas, sometimes independently, by providing alternatives to the formal development model. However, their role assumes importance when combined with the efforts of state actors. They often collaborate with the formal governmental structures, making the delivery system more workable and viable. Their modus operandi involves three strategies:

- Persuasive strategies - bringing issues to the attention of authorities through surveys, the collection and presentation of evidence, and petitions.
- Collaborative strategies - open interaction with authorities through lobbying of local governmental offices and other decision-making bodies; and
- Confrontational strategies - encounters with the government through rallies and marches.<sup>12</sup>

Together, these strategies constitute a repertoire of action. The kind of action that a group undertakes may vary over time. A group may move from persuasive to confrontational, if the government does not respond to its demands. But it could also graduate to co-operative and collaborative strategies if it perceives that the state apparatus provides a congenial atmosphere for such collaborative endeavors.

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<sup>11</sup> The term "Dalit" (meaning depressed classes) was apparently used in 1930 as the Devanagiri translation of 'depressed classes', a term used by the British. Currently it has a broad definition, encompassing all those subaltern communities that have been discriminated for centuries.

<sup>12</sup> For Strategies adopted by the Action Group see Short 1996, p.270.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND POLITICAL RESTRUCTURING

The 1980s saw civil society organizations, most notably non-governmental organizations (henceforth NGOs), gaining ground. They achieved acceptance and credibility among both their constituencies as well as the government. These groups gained formal recognition in the Seventh Five-year Plan from 1985-90. Interestingly there was also a shift in thinking and in the action programs of many funding agencies. This led to an increase in the number of NGOs and funding organizations.

It could be inferred from the processes at work then and from developments thereafter that civil society movements sought, first and foremost, non-state solutions to political questions, in other words, workable solutions at the local level. Second, the negative repercussions of centralization consistently led to the decay of other institutions. This over-centralization over the past three decades led to relative isolation of the political order from the social structures, what is usually referred to as the 'crisis of political institutions in India'.<sup>13</sup>

Institutional decline thus was coupled with an unwillingness to decentralize political and administrative powers until almost the 1990s. Only in 1992 did the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment make local governments effective units of administration, at least formally/constitutionally. Unwillingness on the part of the government of India at one level and state governments at another made decentralization merely a laudable goal. This led to the rise of alliances of various kinds forged between different sectors and actors to counter the problems confronting society and polity.

The government later emphasized the need to formally incorporate civil society in policy implementation. This emphasis came in Five-Year plans (e.g. 1991-96) and could be seen as government's response to the criticism that while it does not err in policy-making, it fails in implementation. Such official and institutional recognition given to the voluntary sector has been responsible for the further growth of this sector.

## RISE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

### *From Philanthropy to Development*

The most prevalent ideas in the past in both India and Mumbai were philanthropy, charity, and social welfare. This became less relevant in the post-colonial period. The resultant political scenario, dominated by the welfare state, did not provide welfare benefits to a large number of people. It marginalized large numbers of people. This inspired the creation of several non-profit, non-governmental or non-party organizations, which specifically catered to problems relating to, e.g., housing, health care, and slum-rehabilitation. However, most of these groups were basically 'protesting' against the injustices in social life. Due to the lack of sus-

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<sup>13</sup> Sudipto 1984.

tainability, collective mobilization, and an emphasis on ideology, these groups are best described as 'protest groups.'<sup>14</sup>

### *Decline of Institutional Politics*

Civil society gained prominence as a result of the decline of institutional politics. Processes of institutional exclusion and manipulation resulted in the alienation of civil society from mainstream politics.

### *Failure of Plans*

The state allocated ever less to urban development. Many existing and laudable plans for state-sponsored urban development, intended to benefit the poor and disadvantaged, were not successful. This led to the realization that 'government failure is a much more important problem than market failure'.<sup>15</sup>

### *Reduction in Government Spending on Urban Development*

The reduction in the government budgets and ensuing reduction in government expenditures arose both from macro-economic problems and the failure of existing policies to cope with the needs of cities and their residents. Voluntary organizations stepped in to try to formulate and implement government policy. It became clear that the government was unable to tackle development on its own. Even the First Five-Year Plan document carried a brief plea for voluntary organizations to become part of the implementation mechanism. Yet only in the Seventh (1985-90) and Eighth Plans (1991-96) was there a clear and substantial allocation of Rs. 200 and 750 crore<sup>16</sup> to such groups. This was a steep increase from a meager 4 crore in the First Plan.<sup>17</sup>

## FORGING NEW ALLIANCES

New alliances therefore came to be forged between the state and civil society. The state and civil society came together on certain issues (e.g., to protect the consumers). Civil society saw itself sometimes being caught between the state on the one hand and the 'market' on the other, fighting both simultaneously. Market and civil society started confronting the state when the state failed on the human rights front, and the state and the market came together to 'punish' some sections of civil society when it tended to become fundamentalist. The view that civil society is necessarily and always anti-state is, therefore, at variance with facts, as would be pointed out in this study. Civil society could be anti-state, pro-state, or neutral to the state. Thus, channels of political openness and popular influence were seen to be growing with the entrance of a large number of interests, opinions and groups in the city of Mumbai.

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<sup>14</sup> Rao 1978.

<sup>15</sup> Virmani 2002.

<sup>16</sup> Editors' remark: The word "crore" is commonly used in India to denote the number of 10 million.

<sup>17</sup> Dinesh 1985, p.259.



Civil Society began to 'fill' in for government where political controversy, rooted in demographic diversity, made it difficult for government to respond to collective needs.

It soon became apparent that in real situations the state did not occupy a moral high ground nor that the state-civil society relationship was necessarily a contentious one. This preoccupation with the state had, for a very long period, "abstracted the state from its zone of engagement, i.e., civil society".<sup>18</sup>

Thus, three important developments contribute to a pragmatic interface between the state and civil society interface in Mumbai: 1) reworking within the state, 2) redefining the role of the state, and 3) moving from duality to commonality between the state and civil society. Though civil society organizations can never be a substitute for the state, they can pressure the state to live up to their demands.

### EXISTING FORMS OF SELF-ORGANIZATIONS IN MUMBAI: ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

The NGO sector is diverse and heterogeneous in the state of Maharashtra. The state registered about 427,164 organizations, including 181,181 charitable societies and 245,983 public trusts. In Mumbai alone there are 66,318 registered societies and 43,926 public charitable trusts. Maharashtra registers about 2,422 new charitable organizations per month, while the greater Mumbai region alone registers 216 charitable societies per month.<sup>19</sup> It is important to note here that the NGOs do not represent a well-knit community, but comprise a broad spectrum of diverse groups with varied activities and ideologies.

Given the ethos of Mumbai, there are always new kinds of on-going activism in the city. A very important form of collective action, which had begun in the urban centers, is the 'voluntary protest or civic action group'. Initially these groups functioned only as pressure groups, drawing attention to the deteriorating quality of urban life. They would appeal to the public and government. In the early years most groups preferred constitutional and peaceful modes of protest.

Presently Mumbai has an impressive array of civil society organizations. They work in the areas of housing, health care, self-employment for women and gender justice, primary education, communal harmony and so on. Some have also been active in advocacy. A number of the NGOs have now a diversified role whereby they work towards varied issues relating to urban poverty. Many NGOs are based and have origins in the community. Some have been major actors in the policy agenda of governments, while a few others have been recipients of foreign funding. However, the increasingly important role played by NGOs in the development arena is also related to the declining legitimacy of the state especially in the era of neo-liberalism, where it is not only the funding agencies but the state itself that accepts the presence of NGOs in the participatory role. It is now recognized that development requires not only the 'hardware' of investment in physical infrastructure, but also the 'software' of de-

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<sup>18</sup> Chandhoke 1985.

<sup>19</sup> Oldenburg 1993, p.142.

veloping human capabilities. Without capacity-building for managing institutions, legal-rational procedures for decision-making and accounting, development will not be socially sustainable. Civil society organizations seem to be entrusted with the task of developing this 'software' now.<sup>20</sup>

A brief examination some of civil society organizations in Mumbai is made here. These organizations have been engaging in direct service provision and supporting local organizations in service delivery. State and local governments also have initiated such participatory effort in an attempt to strengthen their own service implementing mechanisms, reach out effectively to recipients, and involve the public. Most of the NGOs in Mumbai are now focused on direct interaction with their constituencies, for example in providing services in the area of housing, education, and health care. There are others who support capacity-building enabling communities to organize or procure such services for themselves and to access entitlements, like ration cards. Such urban engagement involves interacting with institutions of the state. It also involves advocacy, i.e., working to secure access to entitlements for marginalized sections of the city and effective implementation of existing policies and procedure.

The following organizations have interacted with the local authorities on a continual basis. They have been acting as intermediaries between beneficiaries, community-based organizations, and government bodies. These NGOs have successfully maintained a relationship with the government because they seem genuinely committed to tackling the issues and believe in engaging the government constructively in the urban development agenda.

Women's self-organized savings and credit associations, such as Annapurna, or squatter communities, like the Railway Slum Dwellers Federation (RSDF), are examples of community-based, capacity-building organizations that have contributed in releasing latent social capital. In every department of the local government the presence of NGOs is visible. Their contribution is acknowledged by the authorities as well. This researcher was informed by several authorities that the collaboration of NGOs is generally sought in all areas except in the ones that requires 'technical' or highly-specialized inputs. The areas in which there is collaboration include health care, women's empowerment, sanitation, and education, or, in other words, 'social' infrastructure. In matters relating to 'physical' infrastructure, the role of NGOs is limited.

#### *Ration Kruti Samiti: Partnership for Influencing the Public Distribution System (PDS)*

This organization works to procure stocks of food, it issues food cards to citizens, and has created a network of fair price shops for card holders. The objectives of the PDS are twofold – to provide basic food supplies at a subsidized rate and control market prices. Though the PDS is a lifeline for the poor in Mumbai, the system is fraught with malaise. Since the mid 1990s PDS has collaborated with a NGO called the Ration Kruti Samiti (RKS). RKS is a collective of around forty NGOs-CBOs, rationing system consumers, employees from the De-

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<sup>20</sup> Baviskar 2001.

partment of Rationing, and shopkeepers.

Through collaboration PDS and RKS aim to help people gain better access to regular and good quality grains, facilitate a process of dialogue between the government machinery, consumer groups, and shopkeepers, and, to minimize corruption in the system. It also strives to make the PDS more accountable and responsive.<sup>21</sup>

### *Pratham: A Three-way Collaboration in Education*

Pratham has reached most of the municipal schools in Mumbai, and is working very closely with the school administration and education department of local and state government. It has been successful in mobilizing financial resources from the corporate sector, by co-opting representatives of donor agencies as permanent invitees in the mission.

Pratham's Mumbai Education Initiative is a model for three-fold collaboration involving the voluntary sector, corporate sector, and the Municipal Corporation. Corporate sector contribution made it possible for Pratham to widen its coverage in the city. In the financial year 1997-98, Pratham was able to mobilize Rs. one crore from the corporations such as ICICI, Tata Sons Limited, Mahindra, and Mahindra Limited.<sup>22</sup> The local government was a willing partner the effort supported the government policy of ensuring free primary education for all children in Mumbai, especially from the lower strata.

### *Annapurna: Partnership in Women's Empowerment*

This working-class women's grass-roots organization was formed in 1975 in the aftermath of the 1974 Mumbai textile strike. The women displayed tremendous will to tackle both their economic conditions and the harsh treatment by textile mill owners. This process enabled women to become micro-entrepreneurs and self-employed workers. It has helped them to discover their innate strength and work collectively to address common problems.

Two of the schemes started by the government, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK - providing an alternate source of credit for poor women) and Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY - offering financial schemes to women) were inspired by NGOs like Annapurna Mahila Mandal (AMM). The story of AMM is one of constructive engagement in the mainstream of planned development process. It works to facilitate access rights of poor women. It is one of the few NGOs in Mumbai or even India that opted to work as an intermediary between the formal banking system and women micro-entrepreneurs in the informal banking sector. The organization has worked to enable and sensitize, bringing the women and the formal structures to co-operate closely.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Joshi, Leena: Consumer Protection: Ration Kruti Samiti, (available at: <http://www.mumbai/RKS>, accessed on March 11, 2004).

<sup>22</sup> Chavan 2000.

<sup>23</sup> Personal interviews with Prema Purao, founding member of the organization on December 26 and 28, 2002.

*Praja: Citizens Charter and Capacity Building Program*

Efficient city administration is a function of several inter-linked factors, one of the most important being the quality of intelligent citizenship. Good local self-government cannot function merely with a highly motivated bureaucracy and elected representatives. The other side of the coin is the concern, awareness, and interest manifested by the city's inhabitants. An enlightened and well-informed citizen body can pressure local governing into action and compel it to respond to the needs of the people.

To access information on basic civic amenities is another important right. However a lack of awareness about the structure and functioning of the municipality (that provides these amenities) coupled with an apathetic attitude of service providers towards poor communities hinders the poor from acquiring basic services. Besides, there are a number of procedural and administrative details which individual citizens are unaware of. With this as background, PRAJA came up with a capacity-building program for the Citizens' Charter in Mumbai. PRAJA has been working with the Brihan Mumbai Corporation (BMC, i.e. city administration) to publish, disseminate, and implement this Charter for the city. The Charter is conceived as an instrument to bring about transparency and accountability in the administration of essential services.<sup>24</sup>

**STATE-CIVIL SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP: CRITICAL APPRAISAL**

A wide variety of groups (apart from the four mentioned here) contribute to various aspects and issues in civil society in Mumbai. However, controversy about their 'political' role has emerged in recent years. Notwithstanding the neo-liberal notion that believes in completely de-politicizing this realm, there is still considerable faith in the contrary. In Mumbai most civil society groups are linked to the state. This is mainly because in any form or feature of development, organizations must enter into a dialogue with the state if effective change is to take place. Even without actually capturing political power, many groups, through their sheer determination and commitment, can and do influence political authorities with such interaction. (e.g., Pratham or Annapurna). Over time the distinction between state 'versus' civil society has come to be slowly replaced by state 'with' civil society.

However, it would be naive to assume that this process is peaceful or free of conflict. Several important political questions arise. The first concerns the pluralization of the state in this power-sharing arrangement between government and NGOs. The second addresses the problem of democratic citizenship with citizens becoming passive consumers of an agenda constructed in their name. The third inquires into the role of NGOs functioning as intermediaries, developing an agenda that can appropriate people's participation. The fourth asks about how NGOs have incorporated all those aspects of the government that they have resented viz. amassing scarce resources meant for communities or in building up significant bureaucracy along with all the support-staff. The fifth looks into the problem of NGOs mort-

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<sup>24</sup> Capacity Building on the Citizens' Charter of Mumbai, Mumbai, August 2001.

gaging/subordinating their own development agenda to suit donor-requirements.<sup>25</sup> This tendency is particularly dangerous, as in the era of globalization, it is unwise to uncritically accept rules of engagement set forth by the prevailing global power structure.

Inter-organizational conflicts have arisen as well. This occurs when there is no coordination, mutual understanding, or willingness to work together. A senior bureaucrat, who did not wish to be quoted, claims that some organizations have been ruthless in their pursuit of project-grabbing. Egoists who claim to speak 'on behalf' of the beneficiaries usually head such organizations, though they have no sense of responsibility or accountability whatsoever. Activists from several organizations interviewed by this author blamed the 'bureaucratic' mentality of officers who are normally unwilling to partner, least it affect their own exclusivity. Politicians, on the other hand, purportedly are more often than not jealous of their success and popularity among the community they serve. Politicians who spoke to this researcher stated, diplomatically, that they welcome cooperation with NGOs provided the organizations are sincere and committed to their cause. Finally, the community and beneficiaries of government/NGO activity complain that promises and policies have been made for too long. Community members say they would certainly co-operate (as they have in the slum rehabilitation or micro finance, among others) if the collaborators were clearly committed to fulfill their basic responsibilities towards them. They certainly seem to be in no mood to be either taken for granted or fall prey to tall promises.

It could be interpreted that all those involved (government, organizations, and the community at large) have a stake in getting things done. Organizations that believe in sustainable urban development (at least the more committed ones) wish to retain their autonomy and yet are willing to partner to bring about necessary change. The politicians are too happy to get work done as it enhances their credibility and their constituency wishes things got done! If they perceive change or even potential changes they seem more than willing to form their own community organizations to provide appropriate inputs to the NGOs to act as the intermediary between them and the government. Many community-based organizations like the railway slum dwellers federation, tenants associations, anganwadis/ballads (child-care groups), mahila mandals (women's groups), credit associations, mohalla committees (neighborhood protection-security groups), etc. have been formed in Mumbai to cater to the needs of the respective communities. This has undoubtedly increased participation besides enhancing collective bargaining capacity vis-à-vis both the NGOs and the Government.

Thus, the relationship between some CSOs and the state in Mumbai has taken the form of a 'client-patron' relationship which is both 'confrontational' and 'cordial'. However, the specifics of the relationship depend largely upon (a) understanding between the partners, (b) renegotiable relationship between them, and (c) recognition of this necessity by local com-

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<sup>25</sup> For instance, the 1980s and 1990s witnessed an extraordinary proliferation of foreign-funded NGOs in India. According to the Home Ministry, by the year 2000 nearly 20,000 organizations were registered under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, though only 13,800 of them submitted their accounts to the government as required. Total foreign funds received by these organizations rose from Rs 3,925 crore in 1999-2000 to Rs 4,535 crore (about \$993 million) in 2000/2001. (Economic Times, 4 September 2003).

munities or stake-holders. It can be argued that with this kind of interaction 'state-society synergy' emerges, where active government and mobilized communities can enhance each other's developmental effort. It has also been argued forcefully in this connection, that "...creative action by government organizations can foster social capital. Linking mobilized citizens to public agencies can enhance the efficacy of government. The combination of strong public institutions and organized communities is a powerful tool for development."<sup>26</sup>

This alliance of social (horizontal) and institutional forces (vertical) shows the interdependence and interaction between the state and civil society sectors. It indicates how civil society organizations seize initiatives, which put pressure for action by the government bodies, which in turn seeks collaboration. It can thus be stated that civil society organizations and their developmental responsibility can be seen as part of a wider process that includes governments fulfilling their development responsibilities. "The state should play a positive role in the promotion of civil society, by providing institutional frameworks within which civil society can prosper and flourish."<sup>27</sup>

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

Horizontal linkages and interactions in Mumbai have thus been challenging. They have also changed conventional development paradigms that had traditionally relied only upon the organizational and governmental framework for any kind of action. These new developments have significantly altered existing roles and relationships between development actors. Partnerships and alliances have been established, nurtured, and expanded. Such urban voices, needs, concerns and aspirations of micro grassroots communities, are being heard and heeded to and are becoming a part of the choices that are made by the government.

A broader understanding of social capital accounts for both positive and negative aspects by including vertical as well as horizontal associations between people and including behavior patterns within and among organizations. Horizontal ties are needed to give communities a sense of identity and common purpose. But these go with "bridging" ties that transcend various social divides. Otherwise horizontal ties can become a basis for the pursuit of narrow interests.

In the long run such efforts build up human capital that is so vital for any democratic polity. The broadest and most encompassing views of social capital include the social and political environment that shapes social structure and enable norms to develop. The importance of forging ties within and across communities, recognizes that the capacity of various social groups to act in their interest depends crucially on the support (or lack thereof) that they receive from the state as well as the NGO sector. Similarly, the state depends on social stability and widespread popular support. In short, economic and social development thrives when representatives of the state and civil society create fora in and through which they can identify and pursue common goals. This outlines a model of an "associational democracy"

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<sup>26</sup> Evans 1996, p.1119.

<sup>27</sup> Gopal 2001, p.43.

model that could be discerned from such interface, in which state and civil society organizations are both part of a single, new regulatory framework that transforms both.<sup>28</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It seems quite clear from this study of Mumbai that most of the NGOs have no intention or even desire to supplant or compete with the state in their development efforts. Several of them continue to interact frequently with the government. This kind of interaction has led to the emergence of what is called 'state-society synergy,' where active government and mobilized communities can enhance each other's developmental effort. It has been argued that "synergy usually combines complementarity with embeddedness and is most easily fostered ... even in the more adverse circumstances typical of Third World countries."<sup>29</sup>

In the city of Mumbai, there recently have been endeavors to open up political spaces by increasing the diversity of horizontal organizations. When these horizontal civil society organizations interact with the conventional vertical structures of the system, what can and does emerge is a synergy of action, an alliance, and a partnership that perhaps is of utmost importance in the present period of transition. No one or single organization is either capable or willing to take up the burden of development. This is more evident in the urban centers, which have a range of problems, the amelioration of which can be brought about only by an alliance of forces. In a mega-city like Mumbai, with mega-problems of varied kind, even the biggest of NGO with its local success and expertise cannot, however, be a replacement for the government or policy institutions. Thus a number of citizens' organizations have emerged over the last decade in response to the failure of our dominant institutions. These are not traditional charities and community development organizations, but a new breed of citizen organizations coping with change through citizen action. They are forging a new vision of the human future. Governments have also started paying more attention to them and acknowledging their contribution. More importantly, government has recognized the necessity and significance of partnership politics in urban initiatives.

Sustainable urban development can be fostered only if and when all social, political, and institutional actors combine in a collaborate effort in bringing about the necessary changes that would benefit the people. Both the state and civil society move in to fulfill certain responsibilities that neither can individually accomplish. This has enabled a new kind of interaction that has led to the renegotiation of a set of rules between the two. These take the form of government institutions and non-government organizations collaborating in designing and providing for services, by mobilizing funds from among recipient groups and other sources and by monitoring delivery. In some cases this can create the basis for synergy, in which state institutions acquire greater legitimacy and improve their performance by developing responsive working relationships with civil society that draw on reservoirs of social capital built up in local communities.

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<sup>28</sup> Hirst 1994.

<sup>29</sup> Evans, op. cit., p.1119.

NGOs' participation was thought to be particularly crucial as an intermediary between the poor communities and various other stakeholders especially in the area of slum rehabilitation, primary education, and also in the public distribution system. It was assumed that the NGO and CBOs they were supported by could be effective intermediaries because they were neither like government, which was interested in social control, nor like market agents, interested in profits. NGOs were to articulate to the government the needs and preferences of the poor communities in a professional way, and convey rules and regulations in simple language and non-intimidating ways to the communities. Similarly, in dealing with market actors, NGOs were to assist the communities in mobilizing community resources to complement investment by private firms.

The institutions of civil society are going to play an increasingly important role in the coming years. These changes that have been taking place in Mumbai, from the 1980s, have altered the meaning, definition, and role of development itself. There is a move, especially through such participatory endeavor, to make deliberative democracy a reality in a substantial manner. Thus, the involvement of new kinds of alliances between formally and informally constituted citizens' groups, NGOs, CBOs, and state institutions can perhaps be construed as an interesting development in that direction. Urban development in Mumbai therefore is not only about ways of delivering services efficiently and effectively, from top-down politico-bureaucratic powers. It is instead about how people (especially the marginalized sections of the urban realm) with shared interests in relational webs, can come together to identify common concerns, develop strategic ideas, and generate the momentum to bring forward links and constructing discourses. As Manuel Castells, effectively argues "only by analyzing the relationship between people and urbanization will we be able to understand cities and citizens at the same time. Such a relationship is more evident when people mobilize to change the city in order to change society."<sup>30</sup>

It is important to treat civil society not as a fixed entity incapable of revitalizing and regenerating itself. Rather, it is a constantly changing social interaction with ever new possibilities. Although one might be cautious about the discourse of civil society as it encompasses elements that are uncivil and as it encompasses a contradictory theme of the "repressive, reactionary and profane",<sup>21</sup> Mumbai is at the crossroads of change. In this changing scenario, several transformations are underway which may slowly but surely impact the interaction between the different sections of the state and civil society.

We live in a complex world where, amidst confusing proposals for all sorts of struggles, there are also creative alternatives. During this period of uncertainties, but certainly not without hope, we do have certain mechanisms that would subject the markets, the state, the uncivil elements of civil society, and the negative fallout of globalization to the demands and aspirations of the people.

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<sup>30</sup> Castells 1977, p.xvii.



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## 2. Civil Society and Capacity Building in São Paulo

*By Pedro Roberto Jacobi*

### INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, and especially São Paulo, assessing the recent increase in social participation has been one of the greatest challenges in the analysis of the reach of democracy in local government-citizen relations. Although the visibility of social movements has declined since the 1970s and 80s, in the 1990s popular participation was guaranteed and institutionalized in the context of representative democracy, so that public policy today actively takes into account such participation. This paper addresses the accumulated experience of São Paulo. This experience centers on different forms of self organization, community-based capacity building, and the acquisition of social capital. Civic engagement by different social sectors aiming to reduce social disparities and improve access to citizenship rights increases the prospects for social inclusion through different types of initiatives. Such programs center on: 1) equal opportunity and access to new technologies through community-oriented public spaces, such as telecentros, and 2) the development of citizenship, social entrepreneurship, and income generation.

### CIVIL SOCIETY- TRANSFORMATIONS AND TRENDS

The transformation of the Brazilian public sphere is contemporary with the democratization that took place in many parts of the world, especially Latin America, from the 1980s onwards. The public arena in Brazil today must accommodate conflict, but it recognizes the negotiated order of modern democracy.<sup>31</sup> Thematic social movements and non-governmental organizations are working towards the autonomous organization of society and a public sphere independent of the State. This dynamic is engendered through self-constitution and self-mobilization and has been institutionalized through laws as well as collective rights and customs. The mobilization of social actors has diversified the public sphere. The public sphere today is a place where identities are formed, solidarity established, and a network of associations institutionalizing problem-solving discourses arises.

In Brazil the transition from military rule to democracy (beginning in the 1970s and ending with the adoption of the 1988 Constitution) saw the emergence of a variety of social organizations, the transformation of professional bodies and trade unions, the rise of new political parties (the most visible example being the workers' party, PT, which gained its first local mandate in Diadema, São Paulo, at the beginning of the 1980s), the creation of non-governmental organizations originally opposing military rule, the re-emergence of a vigorous catholic church with its Comunidades Eclesiais de Base, and, at a later date, the birth of strong and fiercely independent movements such as the Movimento dos Sem Terra

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<sup>31</sup> On civil society see e.g. Cohen /Arato 1992; Keane 1998; Hall 1995.

(movement of agricultural workers without land (MST))<sup>32</sup>.

Avritzer<sup>33</sup> has argued that the post-authoritarian, civil-society period in Brazil is associated with three factors: modern and democratic social actors, the rise of the idea of free association in state-society relations, and the formation of new legal, political, and public structures capable of institutionalizing the socio-cultural concerns of civil society.

In the context of this paper, civil society refers to a network of autonomous associations independent from the state and characterized more by solidarity and cooperation than by competition. The actors of civil society interact through networks and organize around common interests that may affect politics.<sup>34</sup>

These actors have created new forms of interactions (i.e. the health, housing, and water and sanitation movements) and redefined their relationship to the government. The knowledge and political culture that they have introduced help foster direct democracy in popular councils and other participatory initiatives. The emergence of a diversity of movements, focusing on the concerns of women and ethnic and other minorities, has become a point of reference for multicultural demands within a universe of social exclusion. Different types of articulators - the progressive church, young professionals in the field of public health, medicine, social work, education and architecture serve as important advisers and provide a link between the institutionalized agendas of society and civil society groups.<sup>35</sup>

Administrations with participatory experience tend to publicize their decision-making practices and encourage the democratic development of public spaces by overcoming information asymmetries and affirming a new culture of rights.<sup>36</sup> These innovative experiences<sup>37</sup> strengthen the capacity of low-income sectors to intervene in decision-making processes. Participatory budgeting has been a particularly successful experience and has reduced territorial corporatism and stimulated a universal approach to urban affairs. More than 150 cities in Brazil used participatory budgeting in 2003. Porto Alegre has been using this device since 1989. The Municipality of São Paulo experimented with participatory budgeting under the first PT administration (1989-1992), but subsequent municipal administrations did not continue this practice. In the interim, the successful experience of Porto Alegre<sup>38</sup>, now into its fourth consecutive administration, reinforced the legitimacy of the approach. The municipalities in the Metropolitan Region that adopted participatory budgeting as a mode of government have created a very stimulating experience to democratize public management at the local level.

## STRUCTURE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE CITY OF SÃO PAULO

In Brazil data on civil society associations is very hard to come by. A few surveys provide

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<sup>32</sup> Scherer/Krischke 1987; Sader 1988; Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar 1998; Jacobi 1992.

<sup>33</sup> Avritzer 1994.

<sup>34</sup> Avritzer 2002; Costa 2002; Jacobi 2000; Dagnino 2002.

<sup>35</sup> Jacobi 1992.

<sup>36</sup> Jacobi 2000; Dagnino 2002; Avritzer 2002.

<sup>37</sup> Jacobi 2003.

<sup>38</sup> Avritzer 2001; Avritzer 2003.

local head counts. Another source of information is data derived from the various census activities carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). In recent years voluntary activity has grown and is an important component of civil society. Available numbers derive from intelligent estimates, not precise census data. One estimate states that there are some 220,000 non-profits in Brazil, of which many are dedicated to philanthropic activity. Around 20 million Brazilians are involved in some kind of voluntary activity. This represents one fifth of the population between 15 and 60 years of age.<sup>39</sup> Of the total of non-profit organizations, a very small number, around 300, could be classified as social movements that have been extremely active in popular education, supporting urban and rural movements, and creating independent forums for the discussion of major policy questions. The Brazilian Association of NGOs was created in 1991 and currently has 250 member organizations, all of which are registered as non-profits. They are committed to democracy and development and have at least two years of effective operation.

In São Paulo the most common forms of interaction are community organizations, and some of them adhere to the traditional organizational logic of São Paulo social associations, known as *Sociedades Amigos de Bairro* (Associations of Friends of Neighborhoods, hereinafter: SABs). SABs emerged when São Paulo became home to a large contingent of migrants attracted by the industrialization and development boom of the 1950s. SABs were an important intermediary in migrant relations with authorities.<sup>40</sup> They usually represent a constituency from a specific geographic area and are regarded by the authorities, the press, and even society in general as legitimate representatives.

The SABs' activism profile is extensive. They number around 550 in the city of São Paulo and about 1000 in the other 38 municipalities.<sup>41</sup> Most SABs are located in low-income neighborhoods, and are euphemistically referred to as "Jardim" (garden). Today these SABs are hardly mobilized, despite their active past of the 70s and 80s. Today's most active SABs are located in middle-class neighborhoods and work to defend these neighborhoods from the pressure by the real estate industry, changes in zoning, and violence. To overcome the isolation of individual SABs, the middle class SABs created a forum called *Defenda São Paulo* in recent years. The *Defenda* holds meetings and discussions to map common problems and find solutions in an inter-district, co-operative practice. Unfortunately, however, most SABs in the city of São Paulo are located in low-income neighborhoods, and their role has significantly diminished over the years, reduced to local demands and representation in Participatory Budgeting.

The fact that SABs have joined forces in larger organizations suggests that decentralized management of the city and participation of civil society as a partner of the authorities has become an efficient way to pressure authorities and react against urban projects that prove disruptive in some neighborhoods.

There are also a significant number of primarily cultural and philanthropic associa-

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<sup>39</sup> According to *Revista Veja* – December 2001.

<sup>40</sup> Jacobi 1992.

<sup>41</sup> EMPLASA 2003.

tions. Official data published by EEMPLASA indicates that around 120 organizations exist in the city of São Paulo and around 600 in the metropolitan region. This data comprehends a heterogeneous group of associations, including NGOs, unions, philanthropic forums, and community clubs.

Another type of social organization is the Center for the Defense of Human Rights, working to protect human rights and fight violence, racial and minority discrimination, and other oppression. There are about 60 of these associations in the City of São Paulo and another 160 in the Metropolitan Region. Most of these associations are a key resource for the poorest neighborhoods.

The other organizations active in São Paulo belong to the Third Sector. They are mainly foundations linked to private and public corporations. They often form partnerships with other public organizations to influence public policy. Third Sector organizations are linked mainly to education, health, environment, and income generation.

The number of partnerships between NGOs and private entrepreneurial foundations and enterprises is increasing. They strive to improve the quality of life, and several initiatives are associated with increases in access to complementary cultural activities in peripheral neighborhoods, basic information on human rights and citizenship, the creation of cooperatives to foster economic development, continuing education, and environmental education.

Various self-organization groups have been included within the local politics, and this has reduced their political clout. Among the self organization groups, cooperatives have had more adherence. Examples are cooperatives centered on needlewoman supported by foundations providing basic equipment such as sewing machines, cooperatives producing products with recycled paper, and others that gather unemployed workers doing all types of household services. These cooperatives have had vital support from an increasing number of "breeders of cooperatives" located in universities as the University of São Paulo, Catholic University, unions, and even private universities.

The consequences of the different forms of civic engagement for urban governance are, on the one hand, pressure on local governments to include issues in their agenda and/or to refrain from polemical proposals. Recurring issues are urbanization and urban services, health care centers, day care centers, schools, cultural spaces, telecentros (digital inclusion), and initiatives to reduce levels of violence. The groups strive to reduce irregular business in residential areas, advocate against traffic corridors, and defend quality of life in residential areas.

The principal outcome of the inclusion of new actors in the formulation and implementation of public policies is that public policies have ceased to be paternalistic. This has stimulated the development of a sense of joint responsibility. São Paulo has implemented policies of social inclusion, where citizens are stimulated to participate actively in the development of policies. Some municipalities of the metropolitan region have succeeded in the development of programs to increase income generation, stimulate the creation of cooperatives and other

forms of economic initiatives, re-qualify workers expelled from the labor market, confront the issue of urban violence, and act in the prevention of drug use.

As to social mobilization, there has been a significant decrease. The most active social mobilizers are “tenants’ associations” that invade empty buildings in the downtown area. Other social movements have had little visibility, though most have participated in important ways in different councils and participatory instruments, as part of the increasing involvement as “participatory publics”.<sup>42</sup>

## SOCIAL CAPITAL, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND ROADS TO SOCIAL INCLUSION IN SÃO PAULO

### *Socio-Territorial Exclusion and Increase of Social Capital in the Communities*

The most recent data on squatters in São Paulo City suggests that there were more than one million squatters in the city in 2000, more than 8% of the population. In some districts, mainly the most peripheral, the percentage of squatters may reach between 15% and 20%. The neighborhoods with the largest percentage of squatters also have high crime rates, mostly involving the population between 15 and 24 years of age.

While there were 1554 squatter settlements in 1991, by 2002 that number had grown to 2018. Thus, in one decade, 464 new settlements arose in the city, covering 2% of the city’s territory. The number of squatters households increased from 196.000 in 1991 to 287.000 in 2000. This data is disturbing. If 900.000 persons lived in squatter settlements (favelas) in 1990, this group grew by 30%, while the city grew only by 8%. Favelas have become the face of poverty.

Violence has increased dramatically in the socially most precarious areas of the city. The expansion of poverty and violence has its origins and reproduction in a superposition of lacks, thus adding for the augmentation of social vulnerability. Poverty and violence converge in the 96 districts of the city (Mapa da Exclusão Social; Indicadores de Vulnerabilidade Juvenil-Fundação SEADE). The higher the annual growth of poor headhouseholds of a district, the greater the chance of the region to live with an increase of violent deaths. Presently, one out of every five households lives below poverty line, and in those districts with the highest annual average growth of poor headhouseholds, there has been an increase in homicides, mostly related to drugs.<sup>43</sup> In only four years - between 1996 and 2000 - the homicide rate grew by 15,3%. Homicide affects male juveniles most. Commentators speak of a “new pattern of juvenile mortality”.<sup>44</sup>

In Brazil the total number of homicides grew by 50% in the 1990s, which is much faster than the overall population growth. The number of juvenile victims increased by 77%. The national juvenile victimization rate increased in two decades from 30 (1980) to 52,1

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<sup>42</sup> Avritzer 2002.

<sup>43</sup> Cardia 2002.

<sup>44</sup> Cardia et al. 2003.

(2000) per 100.000<sup>45</sup>, in Brazilian cities, 43% of juvenile deaths were due to homicide, while the national average was a mere 4,7%. In São Paulo, the mortality rate of that age group was 138,8. This is more than double the country's average.

One third of youngsters live in high crime areas. More than 400 thousand adolescents between the ages of 15 to 19 are exposed to violence on a daily basis.<sup>46</sup> Juvenile vulnerability data shows that one third of the youth in the city lives in regions with high risk of contagion by urban violence.

Indicators on illiteracy show that less than 4,9% of the city population over 15 years of age is illiterate.<sup>47</sup> Notwithstanding these positive indicators, children's literacy in the impoverished peripheral regions is low. An equally serious problem is the rate of school evasion/repetition and highly divergent student ages at each grade level. This situation has mobilized various actors in the search of ways to confront the problem of social exclusion. This is especially true in neighborhoods also plagued by high crime rates.<sup>48</sup>

The city of São Paulo has focused its economic programs on encouraging popular entrepreneurship, micro credit, manpower development and minimum income programs.<sup>49</sup> In urban planning the city is addressing the urbanization of favelas and the quality of life in all neighborhoods. Social policy encompasses literacy programs, family health programs, and programs for street children with cultural and leisure components. The experiences in São Paulo and other municipalities in the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo indicate the large range of possibilities for social inclusion through different strategies.

One of the most challenging issues is to reduce and constrain the dissemination of violence that is destroying the bridges of social conviviality. The premise of these initiatives is to strengthen social links and the understanding of the importance of citizenship. Initiatives in low-income areas aim to include young people and train them to develop "social entrepreneurship".<sup>50</sup> The programs aim to create a local identity, social co-responsibility, and mobilize towards the solution of community problems. Also, they aim to engage an ever-growing segment of the community, reduce violence, and improve the quality of life.

An interesting experience is the "community police", implemented by the Military Police (institution administered by State of São Paulo) in the most affected neighborhoods and regions of the metropolis. Its focus is to improve relations between the police and community. According to official police data, this initiative has diminished crime rates, even in the worst of neighborhoods in the southern part of the city of São Paulo. The success is associated to a growth of trust and the creation of different forms of mobilization in forums against violence. These forums bring together different actors - churches, human rights organizations, community organizations, and the police - to discuss the best strategies to combat violence in

<sup>45</sup> According to the report "Map of Violence 3", produced by UNESCO in 2002.

<sup>46</sup> Fundação SEADE, Índice de Vulnerabilidade Juvenil, 2002.

<sup>47</sup> Fundação SEADE 2000.

<sup>48</sup> This is the case of Jardim Ângela and Capão Redondo in the extreme south of the city. Data from Mapa da Vulnerabilidade Juvenil no Município de São Paulo, SEADE, 2002.

<sup>49</sup> Jacobi 2002.

districts with the highest rates of violence (Capão Redondo, Jardim Ângela in the southern part, Vila Brasilândia in the northern part, Cidade Tiradentes in the east). These experiences strengthen social capital and cohesion. In the metropolitan region, 31 municipalities already have this type of program, and the outcomes are positive.

## OPEN DOORS THROUGH DIGITAL INCLUSION

Another important initiative is the increase of digital inclusion programs to equalize opportunities to access new technologies. Several municipalities have entered partnerships with the Third Sector to integrate the digitally excluded.<sup>51</sup> Several districts with high crime rates were chosen by the Third Sector specifically to establish such programs. The main challenge is to promote information technology as a means to social development, making it accessible to sectors of society with few opportunities of acquiring it otherwise. NGOs consider technological inclusion part of a process to strengthen notions of citizenship and human rights and promote social empowerment. These experiences<sup>52</sup> indicate the possibilities that are being opened, as a bridge of social and physical frontiers through digital contact, to confront technological segregation, emphasizing the multiplication of solidarities, alliances, and the gradual formation of a digital community between the excluded and the different processes of re-socialization and enlargement of citizenship.<sup>53</sup>

In this context, the opening of 'telecenters' (telecentros) has generated a significant mobilization of human and material resources. In São Paulo, the municipal administration has already installed almost 60 telecentros and it hopes to have opened 107 by the end of 2003. They are located in the poorest neighborhoods and are managed by the community, offering the population free access to internet and other online services.

### *Access to Forms of Community-Based Capacity Building, Social Entrepreneurship and Income Generation in the Periphery*

Notwithstanding the dramatic social situation, there has been an important growth of organized groups, households associations, church groups, and social movements in the different peripheries of the region. Some of these organizations are cultural movements linked to hip-hop, graffiti, and rap, and thereby attract youngsters frustrated by the harsh realities of life - unemployment, financial problems, domestic violence, drug trafficking and abuse, and alcoholism. Many community organizations look for financial support to Third Sector and outside institutions.

Community initiatives have created centers for the defense of human rights, partner-

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<sup>50</sup> Jacobi 2002.

<sup>51</sup> Jacobi 2001, 2002.

<sup>52</sup> Jacobi 2002.

<sup>53</sup> The numbers are impressive and reflect the reach of CDI in its short existence. There are actually 33 regional CDIs, 285 EICs in 33 Brazilian cities and 17 Brazilian states, and since its inception 86.500 children and young people have been trained in basic computer literacy. There are also CDIs in six countries and 24 EICs abroad.



ships with schools in activities of environmental education (recycling, and cleaning of stream-lets), community libraries, cultural fairs, and other activities that intend to change the conditions of these excluded neighborhoods, training and qualifying potential social entrepreneurs.

Several initiatives have become catalyzers and multipliers for proactive actors. The main task is to inspire young people to participate in problem solving in the peripheral regions and motivate them to take charge of their own lives and their communities.

The majority of programs aim to increase social inclusion. Some focus on the link between schooling and income, under the theory that longer schooling contributes to higher income. The challenge is to break the circle of poverty, the inability to earn a stable income, and homelessness. Some municipalities are very successful in coordinating governmental programs that address education, health, nutrition, and the fight against child labor.

The lack in investments in the peripheries, in particular in libraries, playgrounds, recreational spaces, and professional opportunities for young people undoubtedly has been one of the most serious problems municipal administrations face. They are trying to alleviate the problem through Unified Educational Centers (CEUs) in the peripheries, i.e. centers that offer educational and cultural community. In some situations, communities partner with social organizations and thereby gain access to cultural infrastructure, but this has been small and on a local scale. When this happens, the difference is felt.

The municipality of São Paulo is seeking to consolidate a new generation of social and work-oriented policies.<sup>54</sup> Its planning is based on three types of programs: a) redistributive programs, centered on three different groups – the unemployed between 16 and 20, 21 and 39 and 40 and over; b) emancipatory programs – based on supporting different types of solidarity initiatives - micro credit, and occupational qualification in collective initiatives; and c) programs to back local development.

Implementing programs consistently and systematically through technical and financial support to projects developed by locals is seen as an effective method to end the cycle of criminality and enhance social cohesion. The challenge is to strengthen a fragile social tissue. Recent published data indicates a reduction in the number of homicides and the rate school evasion in the most violent districts of the city, which one can interpret as a success of the programs.<sup>55</sup>

## CONCLUSION

São Paulo is modernizing rapidly and adapting to economic changes and redefinitions. This modernization comes with a visible, and perverse, cost: increased unemployment, social exclusion, and urban violence. São Paulo increasingly is a dual metropolis, with an increasing gap between the areas of so-called “global activity” and the periphery. Though marked by social inequality, São Paulo also is a region that has developed important innovations to

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<sup>54</sup> Pochman 2002.

make democracy work. Nonetheless, the peripheral ring is growing in demographic terms. The growth of squatter settlements has modified the urban landscape. The periphery is the locus of poverty, social exclusion, segregation, and disarray.

Civil society initiatives reflect the determination of citizens scattered throughout the region to fight for citizens' rights and participatory democracy. The rupture with clientelistic and centralizing policies that dominated the Municipality of São Paulo from 1992-2000 gives increasing legitimacy to more administrative practices in public management. The inclusion of new actors through participatory budgeting and other initiatives involving civil society actors in the formation, implementation, and control of social policies has opened the way to exciting possibilities of change. There are clear indications the definition of the public sphere is slowly but steadily changing. Here new policies can be articulated. Institutional networks are bringing together diverse actors and leading to the development of agreements over new strategies linking a variety of interests and resources. Such experiences offer alternative perspectives on state and society that seek to guarantee the sustainability of public policies and the effective engagement of civil society in the definition of priorities and monitoring of activities.

The number of people engaged in volunteer actions is much higher than many previously imagined. Municipal and civil society organizations have been linked in new ways, especially in those municipalities that consciously stimulate partnerships between the private sector, local government, and the community.

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SEADE, Fundação Sistema Estadual de Análise de Dados [www.seade.gov.br](http://www.seade.gov.br)

## OVERVIEW ON NGOS AND THIRD SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS IN SÃO PAULO:

Ashoka empreendedores sociais, [www.ashoka.org.br](http://www.ashoka.org.br)

Instituto Ethos de Responsabilidade Social, [www.ethos.org.br](http://www.ethos.org.br)

Câmara Americana de Comércio, [www.amcham.com.br](http://www.amcham.com.br)

Comitê para a Democratização da Informática, [www.cdi.org.br](http://www.cdi.org.br)

Fórum Nacional Lixo e Cidadania, [www.unicef.org/brasil/lixoecidadania](http://www.unicef.org/brasil/lixoecidadania)

Fórum Metropolitano de Segurança Pública, [www.forumsp.org.br](http://www.forumsp.org.br)

Instituto Sou da Paz, [www.soudapaz.org](http://www.soudapaz.org)

Projeto Aprendiz, [www.aprendiz.org.br](http://www.aprendiz.org.br)

Action-Aid, [www.actionaid.org.br](http://www.actionaid.org.br)

CENPEC, [www.cenpec.org.br](http://www.cenpec.org.br)

Instituto Ayrton Senna, [www.senna.globo.com/institutoayrtonsenna](http://www.senna.globo.com/institutoayrtonsenna) ,

Sampa Org., [www.sampa.org.br](http://www.sampa.org.br)

ILANUD, [www.sites.uol.com.br/ilanud.org](http://www.sites.uol.com.br/ilanud.org)

NEV, [www.nev.prp.usp.br](http://www.nev.prp.usp.br)

Instituto Fernand Braudel, [www.braudel.org.br](http://www.braudel.org.br)

Instituto Polis, [www.polis.org.br](http://www.polis.org.br)

FGV-Gestão Pública e Cidadania, [www.gv.br/ford](http://www.gv.br/ford)

Fundação ABRINQ, [www.abrinq.org.br](http://www.abrinq.org.br)

Associação Comunitária Monte Azul, [www.monteazul.org.br](http://www.monteazul.org.br)

Casa do Zezinho, [www.casadozezinho.org.br](http://www.casadozezinho.org.br)

### 3. Shanghai: Civil Society as Community Basis

#### Some basic information on community development in Shanghai

*By Fan Lizhu*

#### INTRODUCTION

Economic liberalization is accompanied by changes in the behavior of people in both their public and daily life. In China market competition is replacing the collective economy gradually. During this phase of development Western and Chinese traditional culture are becoming intertwined as urbanites seek to establish their own, new way of life in modern society. A relatively independent civil society has grown in China and increasingly is exerting influence on Chinese politics, economy, and culture. Objectively, this phenomenon requires Chinese leaders to face reality, i.e. to change their negative attitude toward civil society: its legitimacy and growing role in social, political, and economic activities. Indeed, Chinese leadership should take measures to encourage the sound development of civil society.

Before economic reform and the opening up of society, a highly unified political system integrated organization and leadership, state and society, and public and private interests in an almost single whole. There was no possibility to talk about civil society issues. After economic reform, people have gradually abandoned traditional concepts of political ideology and values. They have replaced them with new political ideology. In this small article, we are going to provide some basic information about Chinese community structure in urban areas with some examples from Shanghai.

#### THE BASIC IDEAS OF COMMUNITY CONSTRUCTION

Since the mid-1980s community construction in China started with community services, and gradually expanded to community culture, community health care, community environment protection, and community security. The model of community construction bases of citizen involvement under government guidance. Through reform, China gave up its large centralized system for a new structure. The goal of community construction is to build up that structure: "small government, big society".

Since 1996 there has been an extraordinary upsurge in community development in large Chinese cities. Shanghai Municipal Government unveiled its reform plan "two levels of government and three levels of management" at the Working Conference on the City Proper of Shanghai in March 1996. In 1998, the community construction plan was extended to cover "two levels of government, three levels of management, and four levels of network," serving as a prelude to reform in urban management.

The two levels of government refer to the governments of the municipal and district levels with independent financial and law-enforcement powers. The three levels of management are designed to increase the financial and personnel powers of sub-district offices. They will strengthen their ability to carry out comprehensive law enforcement and urban

management, bringing departments such as police substations, sub-administrations for industry and commerce, and taxation offices under their management. The goal of this arrangement is to enhance sub-district offices of the government body closest to citizens and endow them with financial resources and power. The four levels of network emphasize the significance of local communities with one or more residents' committees and ensure that significance by way of "the four levels of network".

Community development in Shanghai is providing some positive examples for other cities in China. Sub-district offices and residents' committees have been de-linked from economic organizations. The city's community-service network has been specializing, industrializing, and socializing through the introduction of technologies such as touch screens and communications hot lines. Community management is also becoming more open, democratic, and self-governing and is being incorporated in the process of reshaping communities.

In the 1990s, Shanghai created the project "Community Culture Development". In urban development, residents' committees actively organized residents and addressed problems that the government could not solve. Combed with community education and community culture, the project contributes to the "Spiritual Civilization Construction with Chinese Characteristics" in the community. The Socialist modernization is an undertaking featuring mutual aid and harmonious development of material and spiritual civilization.

## STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY

With the delegation of the social functions of working units (*danwei*) to sub-district offices, the sub-district offices are placing increasing hope on residents' committees. In order to adapt to the change of their own functions and overcome deficiencies in the vertical contact of the original organizational system, sub-district offices have tried to establish a network of special committees and special service companies under these committees.

Sub-district offices formerly were structured into functional sections and departments. In order to adapt to present needs and put an end to the separation between regions and departments, sub-district offices gradually established four special committees through a process of trial and error. These committees are: the Civil Management Committee, the Social Development Committee, the Committee for Improving All Facets of Public Security, and the Finance and Economic Committee. The organizational composition and responsibilities of these committees are as follows.

The Civil Administration and Public Health Sections under the sub-district office are in charge of the day-to-day work of the committees. The main responsibility of the committees is to manage, organize, coordinate, and supervise, to the extent that they are empowered to do so by higher authorities. A committee provides direct leadership over legal-service offices and takes the initiative to cultivate relations with the public security squadron of the district sub-bureau of public security and the district office for improving all facets of public security. The main responsibility of a committee is to execute services in the areas under the jurisdic-

tion of the sub-district office, such as social security, social welfare, community service, community culture, community education, employment, family planning, and grain-ration management.

The Finance and Economic Committee is an administrative management organ under the direct leadership of the sub-district office. Its main responsibility is to manage institutions and self-employed industrialists and businessmen under the jurisdiction of the sub-district office according to law the enterprises and ensure orderly economic development in the region.

Many sub-district offices in Shanghai have carried out institutional reforms separating administration from service provision. The Employment Service Center is in charge of unemployment registration, job-searching assistance, employee guidance, the issuing of unemployment certificates, administrative management of temporary workers, transfer of workers, and unemployment insurance. The Market Management Service Center is in charge of the application, transformation, and rebuilding of markets as well as the multi-dimensional management of markets. The Sanitation Service Center takes charge of the environmental sanitation in the community and consists of a sanitation on-duty team, team for eliminating pests, team for dredging pipes, and sanitation cleaning team. The Community Service Center mainly provides guidance for service activities in communities, helps set up bicycle sheds, milk retail stations, informational hot lines, homes for the elderly, care centers for the disabled, gymnasiums, matrimonial agencies, and labor service management for these services. The Cultural Service Center is responsible for managing billiard rooms, ballrooms, gymnasiums, and libraries. The Migrant Population Center takes care of registration certificates, and helps coordinates the migrant population. The Legal Service Center provides services in criminal and civil cases, helps people prepare complaints, provides legal consulting, propagates the law, and assists in the mediation of civil disputes.

In addition to the above-mentioned changes, the Shanghai Municipal Government, in order to increase the management ability of sub-district offices (the third level of government), put under the management of sub-district office the original district environmental sanitation centers and housing management centers.

## CIVIL ORGANIZATIONS IN COMMUNITY

Newly-established cultural mass organizations have encouraged some citizens to become involved at the community level. Examples are volunteers associations, house-owners associations, citizen mutual-help organizations, and cultural groups such as stamp-collector groups, photographic associations, singing groups, and the sunset-fashion team. Through self-management and self-improvement, these non-governmental organizations have become a major force in community cultural activities.

The rise of these new organizations suggests that civil society is emerging in China. How such organizations will be incorporated in governance strategies has been a critical

issue since the 1990s. Clearly, the leaders of sub-district offices need to adopt new management strategies in light of the increase of citizen organizations. Some grassroots organizations have also sprung up at community level, yet these still lack the legitimacy as well as the financial resources to develop further. Community organizations supported by the government fare much better.

## CONCLUSION

*Are the changes at community-level in China evidences of the development of civil society in China?*

During the process of readjustment, the government is always in a key position to determine cooperative and alliance relationships and to perform the functions of guidance, coordination, organization, and service. In China the Communist Party represents the development trends of China's advanced social productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people.

Most civil organizations are overly-dependent on the Party and government organs of political power. They have an official nature. The government has not become "smaller and smaller", but stronger and stronger. The development of the current civil organizations in China is rather uneven. There are great differences in social, political, and economic influence and status among the various civil organizations.

Chinese government is trying to promote a civil society with Chinese characteristics. As the economic and political environment has undergone changes, a relatively independent civil society has grown in China and today exerts an increasingly important influence on Chinese politics, economy, and culture.

## **Case Study: Meiyuan Community – A Chinese Community Between Traditional Chinese and Western Values<sup>56</sup>**

Economic liberalization is accompanied by changes in the behavior of people in both their public and daily life. In China market competition is replacing the collective economy gradually. During this phase of development Western and Chinese traditional culture are becoming intertwined as urbanites seek to establish their own, new way of life in modern society.

Ever since China began to pursue modernization, Western influences on society have grown tremendously. Chinese officials are keen to follow Western modernization patterns. Chinese traditional culture, however, makes people firmly conform to public values. So is there any conflict between Chinese and Western culture? Yes, of course. Community leadership is trying to develop new forms of community organization to take into account new values. Official community leadership addresses community culture through its administrative

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<sup>56</sup> The case study was prepared in collaboration with Zhang Huanhua from Shanghai University.



organization. It thus is able to engage deeply in people's daily life, in spheres such as family, education, medical care, and spiritual development. From our very primary observation of communities in Shanghai, it is very clear to see that community leadership is working actively to establish an applied ethics based on Chinese traditional norms and Western thoughts.

In the following, we will focus on these areas: (1) community leadership, (2) community health, education, and arts/music, and (3) the culture of families and communities.

Aside from official leadership, we will look into unofficial community leadership as well. For instance, some entertainment groups have organized voluntarily, such as the Qi gong, or dancing groups. These groups have nothing to do with official organizations, but are very popular among ordinary residents. Civil society develops from the community base. So it is very significant to draw the picture of community culture in Shanghai, the most international city in China.

This study was carried out in Meiyuan community. Meiyuan community is located in the new Pudong area, by the Huangpu River at the Lujiazui Finance and Trade Zone. It is highly developed and has a population of 150,000 (40,000 households) in an area encompassing 5.5 square kilometers. Among its residents, about 14.5% are retired, 66.3% hold full-time jobs, and 19.2% are students. 42% of households are nuclear families, 23% live with three generations, 4.9% are single parent families, and 5.4% are disadvantaged families.

The leadership of Meiyuan Subdistrict has the same characteristic of Shanghai's government. However, the leaders of Meiyuan are trying to break away from the old system and the big burden of taking care of everything in the community. Now, "small government, big society" is a reform goal. It requires more active and efficient involvement of residents in the cultural construction. Our research will address how to develop neighborhood associations at community level and how government leaders will define the functional role of neighborhood associations in community. Yet what is community culture? This is a significant question for our study, especially because the concept of community in Shanghai differs from the idea of community in the West. Community in Shanghai is not defined by ethnic or other cultural elements, but is determined by administrative decision. This survey aims to present some basic aspects of community life, attitudes, and values in Meiyuan.

## METHODOLOGY

In July, 2002, the community of Meiyuan had a population of 150,000, divided into 28 residential areas. This survey covered all 28 areas. We obtained the samples by systematic random sampling. We deleted all those who are below age 16 from the name lists. So our sampling frame is made up of all the residents aged 16 or above in the community of Meiyuan. We distributed 1000 questionnaires. 973 returned, 884 of which were valid after verification.

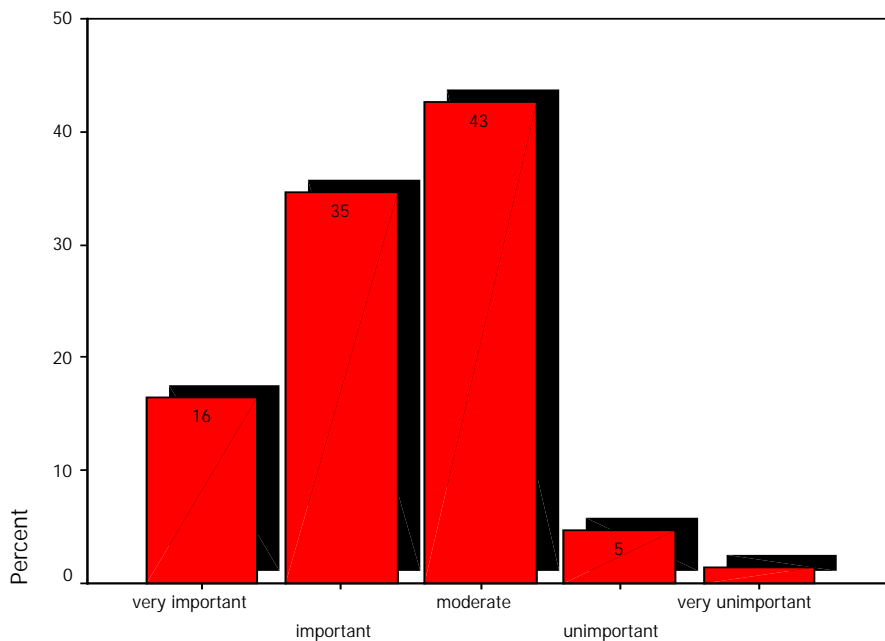
## THE FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

### Part A: Residents' Appraisal of their Life.

#### 1. The degree of satisfaction with community life is moderate.

In this part, our first question is that how important the residents think the community is. Chart 1 shows us that the group who thinks the community is neither important nor unimportant to them is the largest group of respondents. Generally speaking, very few respondents tend to regard the community as unimportant or very unimportant.

**Chart 1: How important is community life to you?**

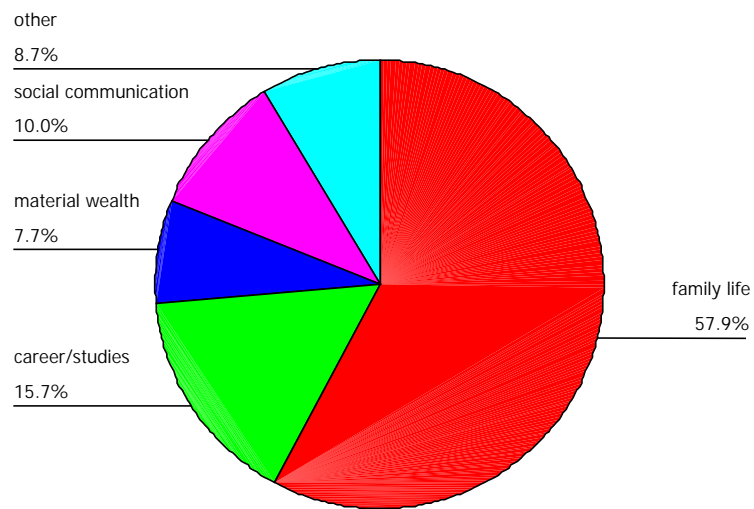


We then asked nine specific questions on development opportunities, the cultural environment, public security, public health, employment consultation, assistance offered to seniors and the disabled, assistance offered to the poor and underprivileged, the distribution of hospitals and clinics, and medical fees. In brief, the frequency of “moderate” is also the highest for most of the nine questions.

#### 2. Family life satisfies residents most and material life dissatisfies them most.

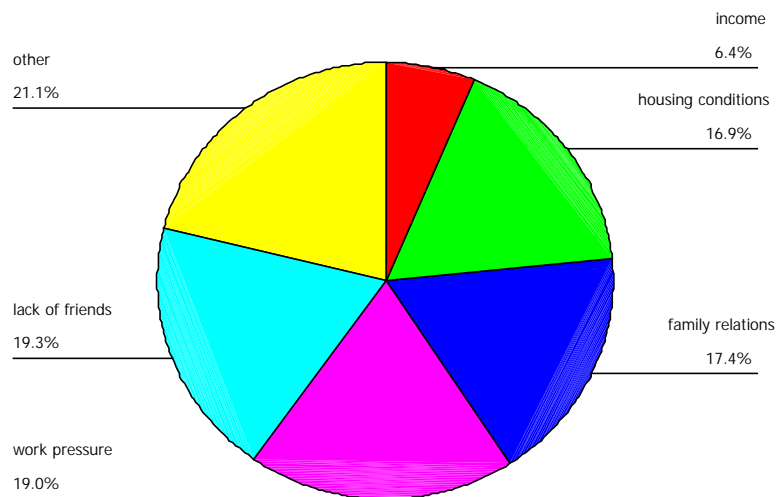
We asked two questions here. First: What satisfies you most in your private life? Almost 58% of respondents cited family life. The fewest respondents thought their material wealth was satisfactory.

**Chart 2: In your private life, what satisfies you most?**



Second: What dissatisfies you most? Chart 3 shows us that housing conditions ranked first, and income second. This result supports the previous finding.

**Chart 3: In your private life, what dissatisfies you most?**



## Part B: Attitudes and Viewpoints

1. *Parents' two biggest expectations of their children are "full education" and "moral maturity". The golden rule is to teach a child is "self-disciplined as an example".*

Table 1 shows that parents expect their children to obtain full education, moral maturity, and gain a specialized skill. According to this result, we may say that today's parents in China are still very traditional in their expectations of children. Chinese parents have almost the same expectations of their children today as they had hundreds of years ago.

**Table 1: Parents' expectations of their children**

	fully educated	wealthy	powerful	morally matured	have a specialized skill	contributing to the society	sociable	other
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1	69.8	4.2	3.5	19.5	10.8	4.8	7.1	3.5
2	14.3	14.4	5.2	32.1	26.0	6.2	11.2	1.1
3	8.4	11.6	7.8	15.7	31.7	14.3	20.0	.5
4	4.7	11.6	7.3	12.0	15.6	19.3	20.9	1.1
5	1.6	15.0	9.7	10.2	9.8	20.8	20.6	.8
6	.9	29.4	17.1	6.2	4.3	15.9	9.9	4.8
7	.2	10.4	33.7	3.6	1.4	16.9	8.6	11.0
8	.0	3.4	15.9	.7	.3	1.8	1.5	77.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0 <sup>a</sup>	100.0	100.0	100.0

a. The numbers in the left column represent the level of importance, ranging from 1 = "important" to 8 = "unimportant".

On the other hand, only few respondents expected their children to be powerful or wealthy. I personally think this is a strange, maybe even doubtful, phenomenon in a society which values power and money so much. In addition, more than half of the respondents don't tend to expect their children to contribute to the society. This is opposed to the ideology of collectivism that the Party imposes. I think it is a strange but, anyway, understandable, phenomenon.

About the means that parents use to cultivate their children, the most important is "self-disciplined as an example", and the second-most important is "traditional ethics". These two methods have long prevailed in China's history. In this respect today's Chinese people are still very traditional.

**Table 2: How should children be raised by parents?**

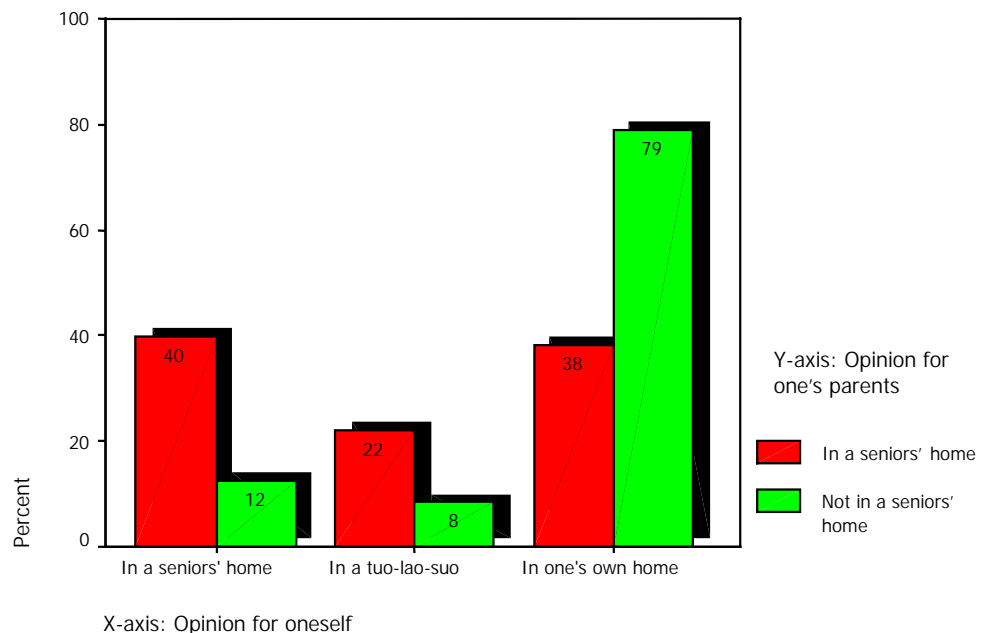
	heroes and celebrities	traditional ethics	self-disciplined as an example	aesthetic nurture	physical punishment	other
	%	%	%	%	%	%
1	20.2	26.7	56.7	14.0	2.5	4.0
2	17.5	37.0	23.0	17.8	4.9	2.0
3	31.4	15.7	12.1	30.3	6.2	2.0
4	24.7	16.2	5.0	30.3	7.1	2.5
5	5.5	2.8	2.9	6.9	54.8	13.6
6	.6	1.6	.4	.7	24.5 <sup>a</sup>	75.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

a. The numbers in the left column represent the level of importance, ranging from 1 = "most important" to 6 = "most unimportant".

*2. To age at home and in the family is acceptable.*

As for the question "where do you want to spend the end of your life?", both children and parents indicated that the home and family was the most acceptable place to spend the end of one's life.

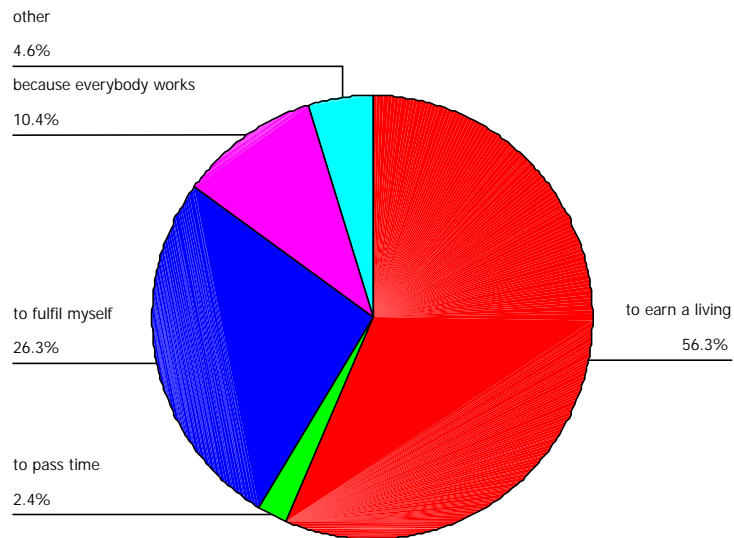
**Chart 4: Where do you want to spend the end of your life?**



*3. Most people work to earn a living. Education is vital to success.*

Chart 5 tells us that more than 55% of respondents work to earn a living, and more than one fourth of respondents work for self-fulfillment.

**Chart 5: Why do you work?**



When we introduced another variable, education, we saw that for those who have a high-school or college education, self-fulfillment and earning a livelihood were equally important. For those who have a university education, the latter obviously outweighed the former. And for those who had only a middle-school education, they worked because everybody works or only to earn a living. So we could conclude that the higher the degree of education one receives, the more rational (either purpose-rational or value-rational) people’s understanding of their work, and the more they can afford to make self-fulfillment a priority.

As for success, most respondents thought that enough education, a stable society, and hard work were the three most important factors. Family background was seen as least important. This is quite a modern attitude.

**Table 3: Most important factors for success**

	First important factor		Second important factor		Third important factor	
	Answers	%	Answers	%	Answers	%
1	221	25.6%	142	18.0%	111	14.6%
2	100	11.6%	155	19.7%	152	19.9%
3	243	28.2%	125	15.9%	116	15.2%
4	53	6.1%	59	7.5%	83	10.9%
5	208	24.1%	223	28.3%	169	22.2%
6	33	3.8%	80	10.2% <sup>a</sup>	126	16.5%
7	5	.6%	3	.4%	5	.7%

Possible answers:

- 1 = "enough education"
- 2 = "fair play"
- 3 = "a stable society"
- 4 = "a wealthy, influential or prestigious family"
- 5 = "hard work"
- 6 = "a wide social network"
- 7 = "other"

#### 4. Most people believe in honesty and credibility.

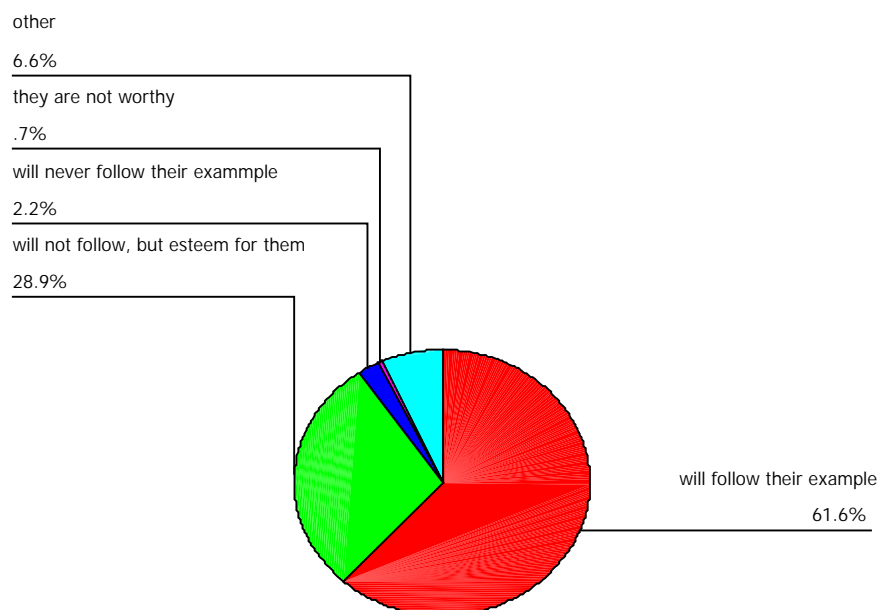
It is often held that only the elderly believe honesty and credibility is important. Our findings suggest that this is wrong, since people at almost every age level value this principle. Education does exert some influence, but not excessively. Respondents with a college education or above definitely thought that this principle was “very important”, and those who only have elementary education or below thought it was “important”. However, those with a middle-school or high-school education had an ambivalent attitude. But until now we cannot tell why. This point requires further study.

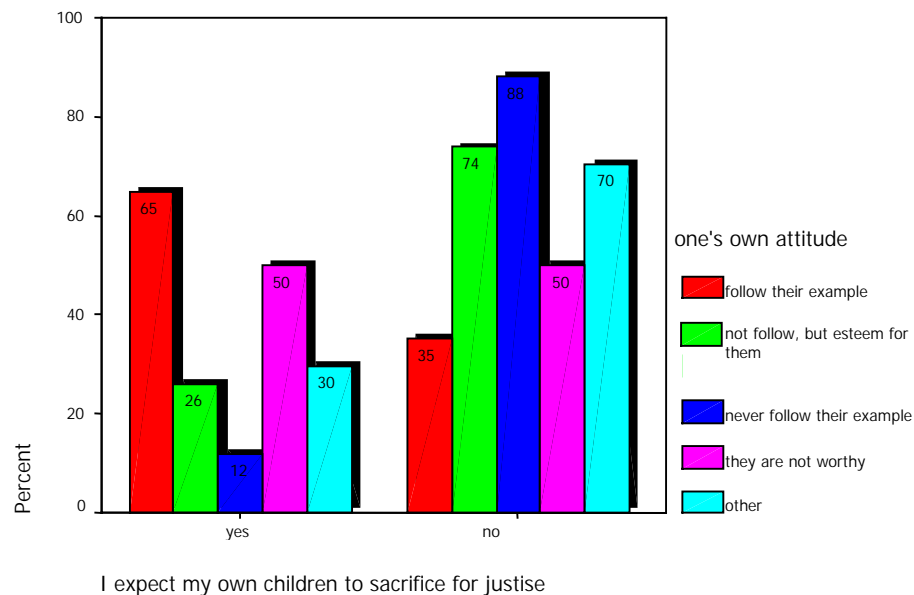
#### 5. Most people have the sense of justice, but it is not strong enough to compete with affection for their own children.

Chart 6 shows that the value of justice ranks high in today’s China. I personally doubt that. Are there really so many people who will sacrifice for justice? The finding does not correspond to most news and stories we usually hear.

As for the question of whether people expect their own children to sacrifice for justice, most of the answers vary proportionately to the answers to the previous question, but not entirely. Only in those who have the strongest sense of justice, the value of justice outweighs parents’ love for children.

**Chart 6:What do you think of those who sacrifice for justice?**



**Chart 7: Do you expect the same attitude from your children?**

**6. Ancestor worship still counts in some way, but it is not an important matter to integrate the whole family.**

When we asked “Is it important to offer sacrifices to ancestors on Qingming festival?”, almost three quarters of respondents affirmed. This may suggest that the idea of ancestor worship is still valued by most Chinese people. From this we can infer that the value of filial piety still counts in some way.

Most respondents will spend some holidays with their family, few will never do so. This indicates that the family still has some influence on today’s Chinese people. But those who are between 20 and 50 tend to have a more dependent choice than those below 20 or beyond 50. I guess it is because the former are more engaged in social activities than the latter. And this may suggest that family concerns are no longer as predominant as they once were.

The further analysis shows that people who have a middle-level education (including middle-school, high-school and college education) tend to spend more holidays with their family than do others. We cannot tell why until now. This point again requires further study.

**7. The Party (CPC)’s propaganda is thought to be the biggest influence on public morals.**

What influences public morals? According to Table 4, the Party’s propaganda is the most important factor, and Confucian ethics comes in second. Interestingly, they represent the so-called “new tradition” and the “old tradition” respectively.



**Table 4: What influences public morals?**

	the Party's propaganda		Confucian ethics		folk beliefs		Buddhist thoughts		Christian thoughts	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	638	81.0	129	21.3	24	4.4	49	9.0	21	4.1
2	67	8.5	295	48.7	143	26.1	86	15.8	16	3.1
3	33	4.2	98	16.2	200	36.5	173	31.7	35	6.8
4	23	2.9	54	8.9	115	21.0	201	36.9 <sup>a</sup>	77	14.9
5	27	3.4	30	5.0	66	12.0	36	6.6	368	71.2
	788	100.0	606	100	548	100	545	100	517	100

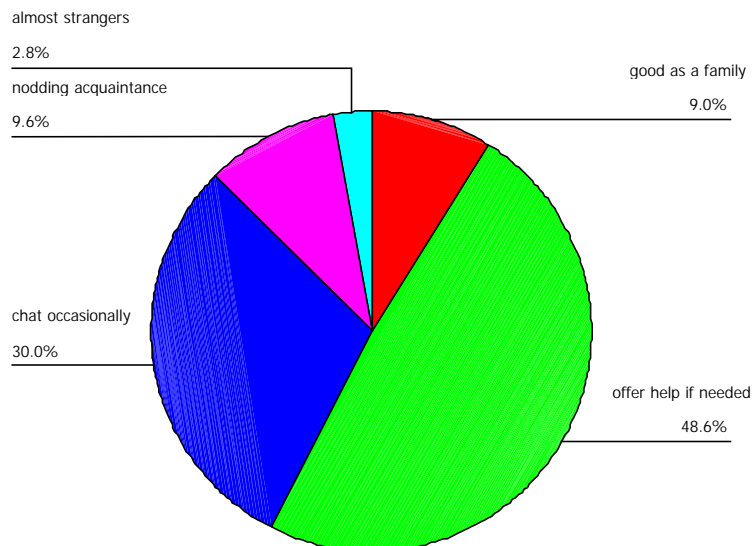
The numbers in the left column represent the level of importance Ranging from 1 = "most important" to 5 = "most unimportant".

**Part C: Interpersonal Relations**

*1. Interpersonal relationships in neighborhoods are weakening.*

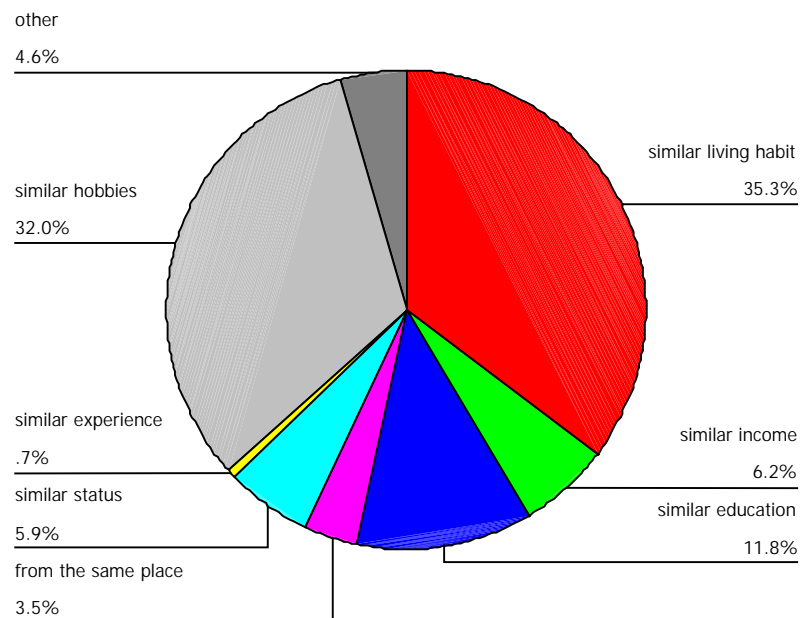
Chart 8 tells us that the relationship between neighbors can seldom be as good as a family, nor as bad as that between strangers. Yet nearly half of our respondents said that they will offer help if needed. Another third said that they chat with neighbors only occasionally. This result may suggest that the interpersonal relations in neighborhood are weakening.

**Chart 8: How are you getting along with your neighbors?**



Then we asked: What kind of neighbors do you find are easy to live with? In general, the data shows that neighbors with a similar life style or similar hobbies are easiest to live with.

**Chart 9: What kind of neighbors do you find are easy to live with?**



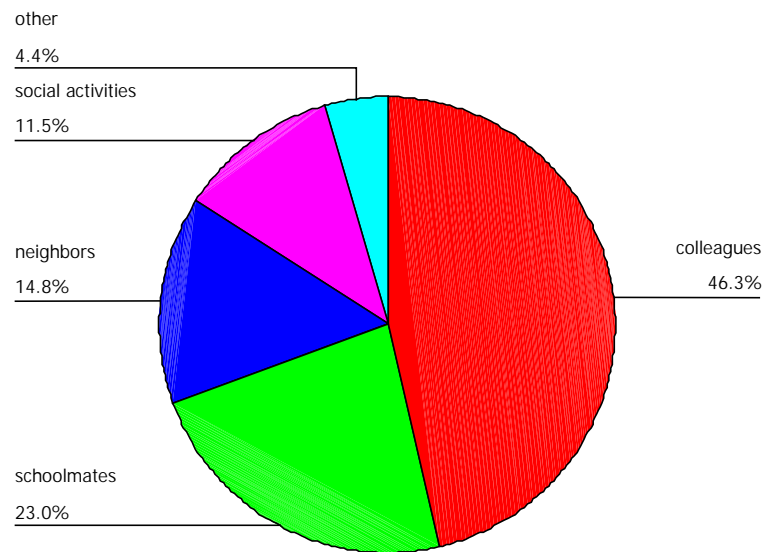
Further analysis tell us that people who have a college education or above like to live with neighbors with a similar education level. People who have a high-school education like to live with neighbors with similar hobbies. People who have a middle-school education like to live with neighbors who have similar living habits.

## *2. Colleagues and schoolmates are major sources of friends.*

Where do people make friends? Chart 10 shows that the main source of friends is colleagues, and the second source is schoolmates. Together they make up nearly 70%.

When we introduced the variable of age, it became clearly that most friends of those below 20 are from school, for those between 20 and 35 from social activities, and for those between 36 and 65 from among colleagues.

When we introduced another variable, education, we saw that friends of those with a university education mainly come from social activities and among schoolmates. For those with a college education friends are recruited from among schoolmates. For those who have a high school education friends are found among colleagues.

**Chart 10: Where do you make friends?**

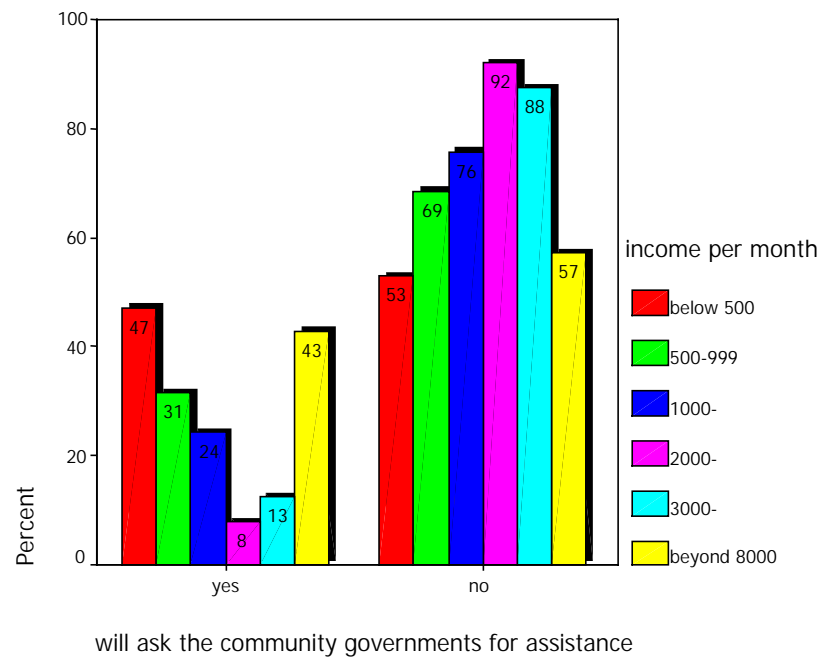
### *3. Residents interact well with the sub-district government, but rarely ask for help.*

Generally speaking, residents and sub-district governments have positive interactions. 69% of respondents were “concerned with public affairs”. 90% were willing to “substantially assist in the affairs of the community”. 75% were willing to “put forward their suggestions to the community”. 84% thought that the sub-district government tends to accept their suggestions.

However, only one third of respondents would “ask the government for help” when confronted with difficulty. We don’t know whether this is because the number of residents who don’t need help is small, or because most residents are not willing to ask governments for help.

From the below chart, we see that there are two different trends. Those whose monthly income is below 8000 are more likely to ask for government assistance the lower their income. But for those whose monthly income is beyond 8000, this tendency reverses. I guess the first tendency can be explained by economic incapability. As for the reverse tendency, it may be explained by their lack of time to do house work. Of course, these two hypotheses need to be tested by further research.

**Chart 11: How does economical status influence whether people ask community government for assistance?**



## CONCLUSION

In general, life in Meiyuan community is geared to residents' different needs. Based on plaza culture, community culture, terrain culture, and special culture, Meiyuan community carries out many cultural activities, such as literary performance, Summer evening parties, knowledge contests, citizen moral education, etc. to satisfy the needs of resident of different backgrounds and life situations. At the same time, cultural activities emphasize the size and public participation, and try to achieve community activity everywhere and everyday. Residents feel that community activity plays a very important role in improving the quality of life and creating good community atmosphere. Cultural activities are mostly managed by government. The people involved are mostly very active residents. Powerful leaders work efficiently with the support of strong economic and administrative power. Do they still need unofficial community leaders to cooperate and provide services which cannot be provided by government? How should one utilize the cultural resources in a community such as swimming pools, sport grounds, computer labs, etc? We posed this question to difference interviewees, community leaders, school principals, and residents and got different answers. Among those answers, however, we found a unifying desire to create community identity. The main problem is who will be the organizer and integrate a diverse population.

A powerful sense of mission arises from a community vision emanating from the community itself. Such vision is not mandated or controlled by any outside party. Rather, it comes out of the collective, deeply-imbedded experiences and wisdom of community members and draws on both the traditional and current assets of the society and community.

It seems that there is a deadlock in dealing with the relationship between official and unofficial leadership.

## 4. Johannesburg's Resurgent Civil Society: For--or Against--Globalization and World-City Status?

By Patrick Bond<sup>57</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

As a site to consider 'civil society's' recent development, Johannesburg is notable in many respects, not least because it has, since the mid-1980s, spawned amongst the most vigorous urban social movements anywhere in the world. This paper discusses the way that the specifically 'urban' and 'global' come together through Johannesburg-based civil society challenges to municipal, national and even global-scale political processes. The central hypothesis is that globalization has intensified strife between a newly-elected democratic government and organizations representing the urban poor and workers. It may well be that such strife would have emerged in a post-liberation period in which international economic relations were not so predominant, but nevertheless conflicts became intense in recent years between the objectives of obeying global trade, investment and financial impulses on the one hand, and serving people's needs on the other.

South African civil society has long been deemed a highly contested terrain, not amenable to the traditional liberal definitions, such as: 'the non-market sphere of organizational life lying between the family and state.' From the early 1990s, attempts to add traditional radical analysis to the liberal ideal via a reading of Gramsci led to the idea, expressed by Alexandra township leader Mzwanele Mayekiso, of 'working-class civil society.'<sup>58</sup> There have been many more attempts to understand South African civil society through existing literatures of social movements, civil society and the 'third sector,' as noted below. Invariably, politics and ideology overwhelm typical institutional and functional considerations. I take it as axiomatic in a highly-politicized society such as South Africa that 'civil society' will inevitably be a terrain of struggle, and that extreme class differentiation (along with residual racial imbalances and gender discrimination) has resulted in a more militant mood amongst the majority of citizens. Such a mood is less easily channeled through the sorts of 'community-based organizations' (mainly aiming at self-help strategies) or Non-Governmental Organizations providing welfaristic services, that are more common in less politicized settings.

One reason for South Africa's exceptionalism in this regard, is that since even before coming to power in 1994, the country's ruling party--the African National Congress (ANC)--has been accused of using civil society for its own ends, and of either demobilizing grassroots organizations or demonizing them as 'ultra leftists' or 'popcorn civics' (that pop up suddenly and immediately fall back).<sup>59</sup> However, the most crucial basis for the politicization of civil society in Johannesburg was the late 1990s decision by city managers to welcome corporate globalization and all that it entails, after several difficult years in which central government in Pretoria had subjected the economy to trade and financial liberalization. Civil society critics allege that because more privileges were given to investors and wealthy residents as a function of the

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<sup>57</sup> Research assistance by Thulani Guliwe is gratefully acknowledged.

<sup>58</sup> Gramsci 1971; Mayekiso 1996.

<sup>59</sup> Heller 2003.

desire to be a world-class city, the material grievances of low-income people were not only mainly ignored, but their organizations were actively demobilized and then repressed.

After an international and local literature review (Section 2), the story must be told dating from the upsurge of urban social movement mobilization in the mid-1980s. The crucial political-ideological condition was the rebirth of anti-apartheid campaigning sparked by trade union mobilization in early 1970s Durban, and by the famous 1976 Soweto student uprising. This background explains why, after late 1980s state repression, the early 1990s 'civic associations' played such a fundamental role in the way Johannesburg emerged as a democratic city (Section 3).

Notwithstanding a period of mid-1990s decay of civic movement strength, the resurgence of Johannesburg residents' organizations in the late 1990s is correlated to the way globalization impinged upon city finances and policies, especially in relation to the distribution and regulation of housing, water and electricity. The city's 'Igoli 2002' strategy caused massive conflict with trade unions and a new generation of community groups that came to be federated in the Anti-Privatization Forum. The single most spectacular event that reflected the contemporary tensions between Johannesburg's world-city aspirations and local civil society activists was the August 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. Because of split loyalties between important civil society groups, including nationally-headquartered trade unions and Non Governmental Organizations in Johannesburg, the story is complex, but nevertheless crucial to evaluating how Johannesburg might fare when seeking not only future events of such global stature, but also the status of world city (Section 4). So too is the ruling party's increasing concern that its civil society critics are a) excessively internationalized and b) unfairly hostile to South Africa's stance on globalization, to the point of representing an ultra left' politics (Section 5).

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND URBAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

### *The (Global) Rise of Urban Protest*

This paper builds upon major studies of civil society conducted over the past decade or so, beginning during the early period of democratic transition when the lessons of East Bloc 'socialist' repression of civil society were most important for South Africa's own social change trajectory.<sup>60</sup> The last quarter-century's democratization wave, from Southern Europe to the Cone of Latin America to East Asia to Africa to Eastern Europe, witnessed an international revival of concern for civil society's prospects, particularly in cities where both human rights advocacy and social activism were integral to broader political and economic liberalization.

The key objects of this analysis, urban social movements, are, as Schuurman puts it, 'social organizations with a territorially-based identity, striving for emancipation via collective action.'<sup>61</sup> But it is important to distinguish immediately between urban 'organizations'--

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<sup>60</sup> Some of these are reviewed in more detail in Bond/Mayekiso 1996.

<sup>61</sup> Schuurman 1989, p.9.

particularly those that emerge in the implementation of formal social policies (such as welfare agencies or implementation-oriented NGOs) or in the reproduction of daily life (mutual aid groupings)--and movements, which are both protest-oriented and utopian, in the sense of attempting to construct the community of a future society in the decay of the old.<sup>62</sup>

As globalization amplified local uneven development during this period, rising inter-urban competition between many of the world's mega-cities reduced municipal management to the enhancement of competitive advantage, via the heightened efficiency of the city as an export platform. The bottom line was the productivity of urban capital, as it flowed through urban land markets (now enhanced by titles and registration), housing finance systems (featuring mainly private sector delivery and a dramatic reduction in state subsidies), the much-celebrated (but often extremely exploitative) informal economy, and (often newly-privatized) urban services such as transport, sewage, water, electricity and even primary health care services (via intensified cost-recovery). Such processes were vigorously contested by popular movements, agitating both around conjunctural social policy decisions associated with structural adjustment, especially cutbacks in subsidies for food, transport or other services. As a result of looking to more structural determinants of the problems instead of just short-term causes of crisis, the movements began to transcend the traditional dichotomy of urban organizations: between an inward-looking territorial identity, and the rhetoric of a broader emancipation.<sup>63</sup>

The leading scholars of the Third World's periodic 'IMF Riots', Walton and Seddon, have contemplated the transition from the chaos intrinsic in most urban uprisings to the more durable mobilizations required for movement-scale democratic transformation. Given that the most decisive factor in the reproduction of everyday life in many Third World urban settings is the shrinkage of the state under conditions of structural adjustment, 'the broader trend is toward the decline of clientism and, conversely, the growing autonomy of urban low-income groups.'<sup>64</sup> As states lost their patronage capacity to channel social surpluses to supporters thanks to structural adjustment, social movements began to cast off the worst influences of corporatism and corruption associated with urban civil society under populist regimes. Similar structural factors are prevalent in South Africa.<sup>65</sup>

### *South African Civics, Then and Now*

There are numerous reviews of Johannesburg civic resistance during apartheid's dying days of the early 1990s.<sup>66</sup> Many subsequent publications on Johannesburg civil society dealt explicitly with the mid-1990s governance debates.<sup>67</sup> However, the more detailed studies reflected upon the systemic demobilization of<sup>68</sup>--and in one case, the desire to demobilize<sup>69</sup>--the community

<sup>62</sup> Castells 1983; Frank/Fuentes 1990.

<sup>63</sup> Petras/Morley 1990.

<sup>64</sup> Walton/Seddon 1995, p.336.

<sup>65</sup> I provide evidence for this assertion in Bond 2000a, 2000b, 2002, and 2003.

<sup>66</sup> The local participant-based writings from the early 1990s are most interesting, and many are reviewed in detail in Mayekiso 1996, *Township Politics*, Chapters 5 and 12, as well as Murray 1995; Verso/Marais 2000.

<sup>67</sup> Everatt, Rapholo, Marais and Davies 1997.

<sup>68</sup> Meer 1999; Pieterse 1997; Seekings 1996; White 1995; Lanegran 1996; Zuern 2000.

<sup>69</sup> Makura 1999.

groups that had played such an important early 1990s role. As a relatively less politicized environment prevailed after apartheid was defeated, one quantitative survey specified civil society with such a large lens as to lose the distinction between status quo and social-change organizations.<sup>70</sup> While other reviews of civil society's influence after apartheid ended were more respectful, they retained enormous skepticism that the intense counterhegemonic role played earlier in the decade could (or indeed even should) be restored under conditions of state legitimacy and democracy.<sup>71</sup>

However, by the late 1990s, the state's increasingly neoliberal policies had severely deleterious effects on urban South Africa, and resistance was not long in materializing (as documented below). Researchers identified an upturn--if not a full-fledged revival--of some Johannesburg-area SA National Civic Organization branches, for example.<sup>72</sup> However, because of a simultaneous political break from the ANC, the most substantial community groups that formed the Anti-Privatization Forum mainly rejected the organizational forms of the prior decade, even if their leaders had gone through the earlier round of urban struggles.

The composition of Johannesburg's working class was, likewise, changing. As new social subjectivities emerged, they merited study in and of themselves, often as sites of 'autonomist' politics.<sup>73</sup> According to a proponent of this analysis, the new movements are based on 'community self-management, construction of grassroots discourse, direct action in ways that are so rich, plural and diversified to be totally at odds with the hierarchical organizational practices of the traditional Left.'<sup>74</sup> Such an alleged rupture with left traditions, however, is hotly contested, with local leaders insisting that the Johannesburg left has simply reconstituted itself via community activism, while the traditional goals of socialism via state power remain intact.<sup>75</sup>

Finally, in terms of thinking globally and acting globally, more recent studies describe the resurgence of Johannesburg-based civil society's global vision, in part through the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in September 2002,<sup>76</sup> and in the construction of the African Social Forum and World Social Forum.<sup>77</sup> By the early 2000s, indeed, the key characteristic of Johannesburg's most active civil society movements was profound skepticism about both the world-class city agenda adopted by the municipality and the national government's neoliberal response to economic globalization.

## CIVIL SOCIETY STRUGGLES FOR A NON-RACIAL CITY, EARLY 1990S

To give these studies historical context, and to establish the need for a tighter relationship between contemporary urban movements and Johannesburg's drive to become a world city,

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<sup>70</sup> University of the Witwatersrand Graduate School of Public and Development Management 2002.

<sup>71</sup> Friedman 2002; Greenstein 2003 (online available at: <http://www.nu.ac.za/ccs>) ; and Greenstein, Heinrich and Naidoo 1998.

<sup>72</sup> Heller/Ntlokonkulu 2001.

<sup>73</sup> Desai 2002.

<sup>74</sup> Barchiesi 2002.

<sup>75</sup> Ngwane 2003.

<sup>76</sup> Munnik/Wilson 2003; Ngwane 2003.

<sup>77</sup> Cock 2002, Cock 2003.



requires further review of civil and political society dating at least to the high points of activism in the mid-1980s and early 1990s.

### *Background to the Civic Resurgence*

Civil society organizing in South African cities has a long tradition, but the historical memory of activists to the intense apartheid urban repression during the 1960s-70s might be the most important precursor of contemporary civil society. An essential element of political ideology across South Africa, but particularly in Johannesburg's vast proletarian townships, was the ANC call for 'ungovernability,' made from exile in early 1985. There quickly emerged a vision of building 'organs of people's power' in the townships.<sup>78</sup>

The stage of ungovernability was a new political epoch. 'Make South Africa Ungovernable!' was a popular slogan, accurately reflecting the mood and the activities already underway in the townships. The ANC's surrogate was the United Democratic Front (UDF), a broad multi-class, non-racial coalition that coordinated the national protest campaigns against apartheid. The mid-1980s revolts against urban apartheid were repressed by repeated States of Emergency. But financial sanctions and other economic constraints forced white business to negotiate with the ANC in exile, and in turn brought Pretoria to its senses. On 2 February 1990, the apartheid government began its political liberalization, culminating in the transfer of power to a democratic government in May 1994 following the first one-person, one-vote election in South African history. But of greatest importance for understanding Johannesburg civil society during the 1990s through the present, is the rise and fall and then subsequent rise of township 'civic associations'—or simply 'civics'—and popular movements.

The civics' choices of strategies and tactics rested upon several crucial universal norms, values and practices: non-racialism, mass participatory democracy, a commitment to fight apartheid (including its fake reforms) until one-person one-vote in a unitary state was obtained, and the translation of struggles over material grievances into a broader program of socio-economic justice. There were at least three immediate hurdles to clear beginning in the early 1990s: the threat—in many cases, reality—of barbaric state-terrorist activities, especially associated with the Zulu migrant workers' organization Inkatha; the increasing misery created by intransigent local white councils and other official bodies; and uncertain relations with the recently unbanned ANC. We can consider each in turn.

By 1990, approximately eighty civics were active in the region stretching from the coal mines of the Vaal Triangle, to Johannesburg and the Rand, up to Pretoria. While political liberalization in 1990 allowed the civics to operate above ground again, it was a more classically repressive process—a semi-fascistic paramilitary attack on civics—that brought the groups into alignment in the struggle for democracy. For example, horrific hostel-based attacks occurred against township residents in mid-1990 in which a thousand people were killed. Fed by police and an alleged 'Third Force,' the unprecedented aggression of Inkatha migrant workers forced street mobilization on a scale not seen since the 1985-87 States of Emergency. Inkatha's well-

documented massacres, initiated in Seboking in late July 1990, pushed communities to reevaluate what kind of local civil society they were defending.

In more than a few cases, the traditional community fabric, characterized by organized, highly politicized response, tore badly. Facing desperate conditions, ANC-aligned township youth resorted to in-kind violence, sometimes with tribal overtones. The material conditions behind the violence--particularly the inhumane housing of migrant laborers--were to some degree addressed by the more visionary civics, such as in Alexandra. Civics made migrant hostel conversions (into family units) a top priority, and the National Union of Metalworkers and National Union of Mineworkers unions established longer-term proposals to provide migrants with access to family housing or at least to better living conditions.

The community fabric came under even more stress when negotiations with local white town councils began in late 1990. More than 150 such negotiations were attempted across the country at that point, but they produced very uneven results which mitigated against short-term conflict resolution. Johannesburg's 'Metro Chamber' was an exception, but not without internal contradictions associated with ANC control that led to its premature mid-1990s demise. White officials wanted the civics to call off widespread rent boycotts, which in Soweto were joined by 80% of formal rent-paying households for four years.<sup>78</sup> Civics wanted a range of immediate and medium-range concessions, ranging from highly-subsidized services, to a single metropolitan tax base, to the development of formulas for democratic local government, to transfer of rented houses from the state to the people. All these objectives were achieved for South Africa's largest township, Soweto, in theory, in September 1990. The signing of the Greater Soweto Accord between the Soweto People's Delegation, the Transvaal Provincial Administration and three black councils could have been the model for civic victories elsewhere in Johannesburg and across South Africa, but two problems emerged.

One was the desire of many civics to use negotiations as a final tool for discrediting the black councils (which were viewed, quite appropriately, as local agents for apartheid), and so the inclusion of the three Soweto mayors raised activist hackles. Although civics were rarely formally implicated in dozens of fatal attacks against black councilors since the mid-1980s, their message to the councils was always simple: 'resign.' It was evident to the civics that only with the removal of the racially-demarcated, financially-unviable system of local government, to be replaced by 'one-city, one-municipality' governance, would this form of violence cease.

The other barrier to applying the Soweto Accord elsewhere was the surprising intransigence of most white local councils, including Johannesburg. Many white authorities were stung by then-president FW De Klerk's efforts to open municipal amenities such as libraries and swimming pools to all races, and they were also cognizant of the deteriorating position of the ANC in national negotiations, until the April 1993 breakthrough that followed the assassination of popular leader Chris Hani. In combination, such factors signaled to white councils that they had the capacity to resist democratization. Add to this the confusing strategies of provincial and

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<sup>78</sup> For critiques of this strategic turn, see Morris/Padayachee 1988; Carter 1991a; Carter 1991b; Kane-Berman 1993. For a rebuttal, see Mayekiso 1993.

<sup>79</sup> Swilling/Boya 1997, p.187.

parastatal authorities--which sent contradictory signals to negotiators--and it quickly became apparent to leading civics like the Alexandra Civic Organization and Johannesburg's Actstop that joint regional actions would have to replace case-by-case negotiating. Hence was born the Civic Associations of the Southern Transvaal (CAST), a group determined to unite a variety of urban organizations and to approach the authorities with a standard set of demands. Nevertheless, the impunity with which police and Inkatha carried out their oppression suggested a concurrence at the highest levels of the state. This realization, in turn, led many civic activists to question their own relations with the ANC, which was regularly accused of laying down its arms and making excessive concessions in negotiations.

### *Civics and the ANC*

In Johannesburg and elsewhere, the ANC appeared to be sidelined during most, if not all, of the local negotiations, aside from local government coordinator Thozamile Botha's efforts to maintain consistency with the ANC's national constitutional goals. Local ANC branches were still relatively weak, and the organization's membership was less than 200,000 in 1990. The prospect of a standard African nationalist power transfer made the willingness of key township activists to remain in autonomous civics (instead of converting them to ANC chapters) all the more remarkable. From 1990, even though they were allied in spirit and history to the ANC, civic leaders began a delinking process from formal political parties, and permitted (even encouraged) membership from sympathizers of other parties, such as the PanAfricanist Congress and Azanian People's Organization. In 1992, the key activists in each region founded the SA National Civic Organization (SANCO) as their umbrella body.

The political maturity in civil society required to transcend internecine party politics came in large part from the material basis of the movement, especially the bottling up of the black intelligentsia in townships. These 'organic intellectuals' might, under a different system, have moved into the high-paying white collar jobs in finance, administration and services that began proliferating in the 1970s and 1980s. Instead, they were forced by apartheid to live and organize in townships, and this accounted in part for the enormous moral strength of urban resistance and the clearly-stated (and fought for) ideologies. Those ideologies--whether based upon the ANC's 1955 Freedom Charter or the mid-1970s traditions of 'black consciousness' and socialism--by-and-large remained 'anti-capitalist,' in spite of the generosity the ANC bestowed on big business as a potential anti-apartheid ally from early in 1990.

In the urban sphere, business began to earn the status as an ally of deracialization. The most important voice of business was the Johannesburg-based Urban Foundation, which from 1991 attempted to win civics to their position. As its leading strategist, Jeff McCarthy, argued, winning civics over to a 'market-oriented' urban policy would 'hasten the prospect of alliances on broader political questions of "vision".'<sup>80</sup> The option of joining this political-economic project was perhaps the most important choice that civics faced in the short- and medium-term. Until 1994, the civics were resolutely anti-capitalist, but after demobilization began in earnest in the wake of

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<sup>80</sup> Swilling 1990. See the discussion in Bond 2000, Chapter 10.

the country's May 1994 liberation, SANCO turned to a corporatist relationship with the ruling party.

No matter the strength and creativity of the civic movement at its peak, a period of demobilization resulted from the ascendance of the ANC to state power in 1994. Civil society was meant to be nurtured, according to official documents such as the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme: 'Social Movements and Community-Based Organizations are a major asset in the effort to democratise and develop our society. Attention must be given to enhancing the capacity of such formations to adapt to partially changed roles. Attention must also be given to extending social-movement and CBO structures into areas and sectors where they are weak or non-existent.'<sup>81</sup> This did not happen, as an enormous funding boost meant for civics and other CBOs was diverted into advertising the state's new 'Operation Masakhane' (pay your bills) campaign.<sup>82</sup> Perhaps the most charitable interpretation of the relationship desired by the ANC can be found from an important discussion paper circulated widely within the party. Author Joel Netshitenzhe insisted that, due to 'counter-action by those opposed to change,' civil society should serve the ruling party's agenda: 'Mass involvement is therefore both a spear of rapid advance and a shield against resistance. Such involvement should be planned to serve the strategic purpose, proceeding from the premise that revolutionaries deployed in various areas of activity at least try to pull in the same direction. When "pressure from below" is exerted, it should aim at complementing the work of those who are exerting "pressure" against the old order "from above."<sup>83</sup> In reality, as we will see, most of the pressure from below in South Africa's largest city soon came to be directed explicitly against the ruling party.

## CIVIL SOCIETY STRUGGLES FOR A 'DECOMMODIFIED' CITY, EARLY 2000S

### *The Return of Protest*

By the late 1990s, Johannesburg was witnessing regular community rejections of obedience and discipline. South Africa's own version of the IMF Riot began breaking out in townships such as Soweto, Tembisa, Eldorado Park and KwaThema.<sup>84</sup> In July-September 1997, as the SA government insisted on using harsh tactics to enforce a cost-recovery approach to infrastructure and services, township protests intensified. Grassroots demands included lower service charges, an end to pre-paid (and more expensive) electricity meters, and cut-offs of basic services. The protests turned violent in some areas, and included clashes with the police and municipal councilors.

By mid-1998, the conflicts had reached even deeper into East Rand townships and smaller rural towns. In the townships of Witbank and Tsakane, east of Johannesburg, municipal offices and a post office were burned after evictions and summonses stripped residents of their

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<sup>81</sup> African National Congress 1994, chapter 5. For more on how this would ideally have been implemented, see South African National Civic Organization 1994.

<sup>82</sup> The story is told in Bond, *Elite Transition*, Chapter Three.

<sup>83</sup> African National Congress 1998, p.12.

<sup>84</sup> Barchiesi 1998; Phadu 1998.

personal property. In Amersfoort, community residents kidnapped a leading councilor in anger over mass cut-offs of water which led directly to the death of an infant. Tembisa saw more strife over evictions from houses where commercial banks declared foreclosure. On the East Rand, ANC councilors' houses were even burned down in rage, and in one tragic incident, a mayor was killed allegedly for disconnecting residents' services. An unsuccessful 1998 protest by Soweto and Alexandra residents against the Lesotho Highlands Water Project included an attack on its designer, the World Bank. In 1999, as Johannesburg's Igoli 2002 commercialization strategy was adopted, the SA Municipal Workers Union was engaged in sustained public confrontations (including a protest by 20,000 workers). In 2000, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee was formed to reconnect electricity to those disconnected, and the Anti-Privatization Forum gathered urban residents and students opposed to the University of Witwatersrand's outsourcing.<sup>85</sup> When Alexandra township experienced forced removals in February 2001 once the national cholera epidemic spread there, the country's leading elite (and generally pro-government) paper, the *Sunday Independent*--protested 'bureaucratic know-it-allism and disregard for individuals and indeed communities. Sadly the events in Alex have all the elements of the worst of apartheid-style thinking and action.'<sup>86</sup>

### *Johannesburg's Electricity and Water Wars*

From 2001, the electricity sector was the subject of particularly intense civil society contestation once Eskom began disconnecting the supplies of 20,000 Sowetans each month. In November, the front page of the *Washington Post* carried a lengthy analysis that portrayed activists reconnecting electricity as 'Robin Hood' figures who fought 'all of this globalization garbage our new black government has forced upon us,' as one Soweto grandmother put it.<sup>87</sup> A month later, minister of public enterprises Jeff Radebe criticized the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC) for the 'Operation Khanyisa!--Reconnect the Power!--campaign.'<sup>88</sup> Radebe, SANCO, the Human Rights Commission, Eskom, the Johannesburg Metro and Johannesburg's corporatised City Power agency launched 'Operation Lungise'--Light Up--to persuade Sowetans that, as full-page advertisements put it, 'All you need to do is pay your current account. Every month. On time. And with those payments, we're able to keep improving service delivery'. Although quite a few Sowetans signed up for Radebe's deal, within a few months payments levels were back to pre-deal levels.<sup>89</sup> Finally in early 2003, Radebe announced that R1.4 billion worth of Sowetans' electricity arrears would be canceled, yet still the payment rates remained low.

Much the same story occurred in subsequent months in the field of water, as the *New York Times* reported on its front page in May 2003, based on a site visit to a civic group headed by Bricks Mokolo in Orange Farm township (even further southwest than Soweto): 'Officials at Johannesburg Water acknowledged that in communities like these, billing people for water has

<sup>85</sup> Details are provided in Bond, *Unsustainable South Africa*, Chapters 3-6 and Bond, *Cities of Gold, Townships of Coal*, Chapter 14.

<sup>86</sup> *Sunday Independent*, 18 February 2001.

<sup>87</sup> Jeter, J. (2001), 'For South Africa's Poor, a New Power Struggle', *Washington Post*, 6 November.

<sup>88</sup> Department of Public Enterprises (2001), 'Speech by Minister Radebe at Workshop on the Service Delivery Framework', Megawatt Park Conference Room, 30 November 2001.

been like squeezing water from a stone... Mr. Mokolo, a veteran of the anti-apartheid movement, urges people not to pay. His motto, he said, is “destroy the meters and enjoy the water.”<sup>90</sup> In part because the activists chose national and even international targets (e.g., the World Bank and Paris-based Suez, Johannesburg’s water supplier), these sorts of social struggles occasionally linked global, national and local movements, as well as Johannesburg to rural areas.

For example, the SA Municipal Workers Union, Rural Development Services Network, Johannesburg Anti-Privatization Forum and Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee simultaneously demanded a specific minimal daily amount of water (50 liters) to be supplied to each person free. According to activists, the free services should be financed not only by subsidies from central government, but also by a ‘rising block tariff’ in which the water and electricity bills for high-volume consumers and corporations rise at a more rapid rate when their usage soars to hedonistic levels (a position opposed by the World Bank, which viewed such cross-subsidies as inefficient).

Similar strategies for decommodification<sup>91</sup> were emerging from Johannesburg-based NGOs, unions, churches and social movements in other sectors. The need for free access to antiretroviral medicines, for five million HIV+ South Africans, was increasingly acute. A campaign for a Basic Income Grant was taken up by churches and trade unions. The Landless People’s Movement objected to the failure of a commodified land reform policy designed by the World Bank, and insisted upon access to land as a human right. These campaigns were mainly directed from Johannesburg. The ANC government’s argument against such expansive national and municipal policies, however, was that international competitiveness and job creation relied upon South Africa’s and Johannesburg’s successful integration into the world economy. If ‘globalization made me do it!’ was the favored justification for neoliberal policies, then civil society would have to use Johannesburg as a base for contesting corporate-dominated globalization. An unprecedented chance to do so emerged in August 2002, when Johannesburg hosted the United Nations-sponsored WSSD.

### *Civil Society Marches on Sandton*

On 31 August 2002, at least 20,000 supporters of the ‘Social Movements Indaba’ and the landless (as estimated by BBC’s correspondent) marched along a 12 km route to the site of the WSSD. The route took the demonstrators to the country’s richest suburb, Sandton, from one of the poorest, Alexandra Township. In contrast, what was termed ‘the Global Civil Society Forum’--supported by the Congress of SA Trade Unions, the SA Communist Party, the South African Council of Churches and the ANC itself--attracted only roughly 5,000 to the Alexandra soccer stadium at the same time to hear president Thabo Mbeki, in spite of the fact that the ANC advertised the possible participation of Fidel Castro and Yasser Arafat (neither of whom arrived at the WSSD). At stake in this contest were both prestige in South African politics and the ability of government officials to disguise deep dissent from world leaders. The SA NGO Coalition had

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<sup>89</sup> *Business Day*, 12 April 2002.

<sup>90</sup> Thomson, G. (2003), ‘Water Tap Often Shut to South Africa Poor,’ *New York Times*, 29 May.

pulled out of the Forum march the day before, claiming the ANC was manipulating the gathering.

The Social Movements Indaba core group had claimed the week before, 'We will take Sandton!'--but the prior question was, who would win the hearts and minds of Alexandra? This question was striking on the eve of the big march, when Mbeki's weekly column in the e-zine ANC Today included the following analysis: 'So great is the divide that even as many are battling in the WSSD negotiations for a meaningful outcome that will benefit the billions of poor people in our country, Africa and the rest of the world, there are others, who claim to represent the same masses, who say they have taken it upon themselves to act in a manner that will ensure the collapse of the Summit. These do not want any discussion and negotiations. For this reason, they have decided to oppose and defeat the UN, all the governments of the world, the inter-governmental organizations, the major organizations of civil society participating in the Summit and the world of business...'<sup>92</sup>

Hundreds of activists had been jailed in Johannesburg for non-violent protest in preceding weeks: the Anti-Privatization Forum's 'Kensington 87' shot at and arrested outside the mayor's house; 100 from a landless group in the Mpumalanga town of Ermelo; 77 from the Landless People's Movement demonstrating outside the Gauteng premier's office; and nearly 100 from the Soldiers' Forum (an Anti-Privatization Forum affiliate of ex-ANC armed forces treated badly in the post-apartheid army). Tellingly, all were later released without being convicted of any crime. On August 24, an academic conference at Wits University suffered a police stun grenade attack when 800 candle-bearing marchers began to move off the university grounds to the local jail. And on August 31, after the last-minute unbanning of the anti-WSSD march, police and army overkill was still evident. 'One would have thought that South Africa had gone to war during the Summit,' commented Human Rights Foundation director Yasmin Sooka. 'Many senior police officers from the apartheid force were recalled and put in charge of security operations... It was almost unbelievable to watch the heavily armed police and soldiers lining every inch of the route with guns pointed at the marchers.'<sup>93</sup> Would this incident set the tone for future relations between state and civil society in South Africa's highly-politicized aspirant world city?

## CONCLUSION: POLITICAL VERSUS CIVIL SOCIETY

The struggle for Johannesburg's future is revealing for local, national, continental and even global politics.<sup>94</sup> The dominant 'political society' has viewed Johannesburg's urban movements as a profound threat, not only during early 1990s apartheid but also early 2000s neoliberalism. Illustrating the contemporary importance attributed to its critics by the ANC, civil society--especially based in Johannesburg townships and radical NGOs--is alleged to be a) 'ultra-left' and b) excessively globalized.

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<sup>91</sup> The phrase comes from Esping-Andersen 1990.

<sup>92</sup> <http://www.anc.org.za>, 30 August 2002.

<sup>93</sup> Sooka 2003, p.58.

<sup>94</sup> Kingsnorth 2003 and Klein 2002.

Mbeki's statement to an ANC policy conference showed how deeply he was shaken by the militancy of protests against his government and the WSSD a month earlier: 'Our movement and its policies are also under sustained attack from domestic and foreign left sectarian factions that claim to be the best representatives of the workers and the poor of our country. They accuse our movement of having abandoned the working people, saying that we have adopted and are implementing neoliberal policies... They assert that, on the contrary, we are acting as agents of the domestic and international capitalist class and such multilateral organizations as the World Bank and the IMF, against the interests of the working people.'<sup>95</sup> On that point, John Appolis, a leading Gauteng trade unionist, associated with the Anti-Privatization Forum, observed, 'By consistently highlighting the central role of the ANC government in driving the neoliberal agenda many international movements were won over to the side of the social Movements Indaba.'<sup>96</sup>

In sum, it is apparent that the past few years have brought together at least four factors that will continue to affect local state-civil society relations: Johannesburg's increasingly unsatisfactory municipal services for poor people (due in part to globalization pressures); the failure of neoliberal macroeconomic policies to deliver jobs and rising incomes; national and municipal political dynamics that fail to incorporate—and instead exclude—the urban masses; and an internationalist ideology on the part of the new protest movements. Will these conditions lead to the kinds of dramatic breakthroughs that were last witnessed a decade earlier, when urban social movements were instrumental in dislodging municipal-scale and indeed national-scale apartheid? Today, in both resistance and the potentially liberatory demands for decommodification and 'deglobalization,' Johannesburg's new social movements hope to dislodge their national and local government's commitment to neoliberalism and increasingly repressive governance, which they view as 'class apartheid,' or in other words, continuity from 1990 to the present, as well as change.

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<sup>95</sup> Mbeki, T. (2002), 'Statement of the President of the African National Congress, Thabo Mbeki, at the ANC Policy Conference,' Kempton Park, 27 September.

<sup>96</sup> Appolis 2002.



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