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Democracy in Albania: Shortcomings of Civil Society in Democratization due to the Communist Regime's Legacy

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II. Introduction

After World War II, Albania retreated into a dictatorship based on Marxism-Leninism that ruled through persecutions and silencing opposition, thus severely limiting civil society. In 1990, the authoritarian communist regime in Albania fell as Albania began transitioning into a democracy during what Samuel Huntington called the "third wave" of democratic transitions.[1] Since its isolation and autarky, Albania has improved relations with its neighboring countries, joined NATO, and signed the Stabilization and Association Pact with the European Union in an effort to rejoin the international community as a democracy. However, despite improvements in democratic governance, Albania faces a rough transition to democracy due to a lack of democratic political culture. In the 2010 Democracy Index of 165 countries, Albania ranked 84th with a score of 5.86 out of 10. With the exceptions of Russia and Bosnia, Albania is the only Eastern European country categorized as a hybrid regime instead of a flawed democracy, thus ranking below its neighbors.[2] Furthermore, while Albania has re-entered the arena of international relations, its citizens have yet to strongly exhibit values of global citizenship that are necessary for taking action in issues of global importance today. Albanian democracy faces low levels of civic engagement, as well as low levels of rule of law due to corruption and weak capacity of state institutions.[3]

Civil society in Albania has risen to meet the challenges of the emerging democracy in a new global context with an emerging international framework of values. After 1990 civil society organizations (CSO) first formed, focusing on issues of human rights, humanitarian aid, and good governance. But the effects and remnants of the communist past in Albanian society and politics impede its work in democratization and citizens' engagement with global issues. While it has had some successes, Albanian civil society post-1990 has been mostly ineffective in helping Albania to democratize because its internal structure and external environment is influenced by the Communist legacy.

III. Theory and Literature Review

Democracy, Civil Society, and Trust

A democracy is a form of government where the governed rule directly or through elected representatives. Theorists like Locke and Rousseau base the emergence of democracy on the "Social Contract;" a group of people come together to form a government by consenting to its rule and to each individual's responsibility in said government.[4][5] Rule of law in a state and in global governance is defined by states', institutions', and citizens' open and fair adherence to

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[1] Theodore Kaltsounis, *The Democratization of Albania: Democracy from within* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 148, accessed December 2, 2013. http://fairfield.eblib.com.libdb.fairfield.edu/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=652710.

[2] *Democracy index 2010: Democracy in retreat,* Economist Intelligence Unit, 2010, accessed December 7, 2013, http://graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy_Index_2010_web.pdf.

[3] David L. Phillips, "Albania," *American Foreign Policy Interests* 27.4 (2005): 309-330, accessed October 20, 2013, Doi: 10.1080/10803920500235137, EBSCOhost (18605996).

[4] John Locke, *The Second Treatise on Civil Government* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1986). 54 - 55.

[5] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On Social Contract or Principles of Political Right,* in *Rousseau's Political Writings* edited by Alan Ritters and Julia Conaway Bondanella (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 34-36.

justice, with accountability according to set standards and laws.[6] A democracy has checks and balances in which different government branches exercise oversight of one another and prevent abuse. Checks, pluralism of interests, and political actors characterize a free democracy. In a democracy, citizens have civil liberties and rights that are immune to government intrusion.

One theory about how democratization can come about is the political approach. This states that democracy can be achieved if actors like political parties, politicians, and local or international civil society organizations press for democratization. The premise of civil society leading to democratization follows this approach.[7]

The engagement of citizens is essential to a democracy and to global citizenship because democracy and international governance require the input of the governed in decision-making. Jean Louis Cohen says, "Civil society as the sources of influence and control of representative political institutions is the heart of a liberal democracy."[8] Citizens act collectively to positively influence their local or international community through civic engagement.[9] Citizens' actions and the associations that they form, independently of government, constitute the civil society of a country. Out of the experience of individuals, government, and civil society, there develops a certain political culture, a system of "values and beliefs about government." [10]

The idea of civil society has become an indispensable feature of Western democratic identity.[11] Major thinkers contributing to the modern idea of civil society are Alexis de Tocqueville, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Robert Putnam. Tocqueville admired civil society in the United States as the vast volunteer associations that dealt with civil and political life.[12] [13] Some sources limit the definition of civil society to formal institutions like non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs). This paper uses a broader definition of civil society, encompassing all collective actions by citizens in the public sphere with the aim of improving their national and international community; religion, culture, activism, literature, academia, and art are all part of civil society.

Mainstream theorists from Tocqueville to Putnam believe that civil society fosters trust, which builds peaceful and stable relations necessary for cooperation in a democracy with global humanitarian values. Hardin defines trust as a person's belief that others will not harm him on purpose, and that people may act in the interest of others.[14] Voluntary organizations teach trust, tolerance, and appreciation for diversity by bringing together people of different background, elements that are all essential in global citizenship. Putnam's Social Capital Theory states that

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[6] Phillips, "Albania," 317.

[7] Cemal Baltaci and Reina Zenelaj, "Democracy Promotion in Albania." *Electronic Journal Of Social Sciences* 12.44 (2013): 9, accessed October 3, 2013, *Academic Search Premier*.

[8] Peter Burnell and Peter Calvert, editors, *Civil Society in Democratization*, (Portland: Taylor and Francis, 2004), 8. http://fairfield.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=183204.

[9] Joseph Losco and Ralph Baker, *Am Gov* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011), 3.

[10] Ibid., 127.

[11] Bernhard Vogel, "The formation of active civil societies in post-communist states: The challenges and opportunities of a political foundation." *European View* 7.1 (2008): 129-130, accessed December 2, 2013, doi: 10.1007/s12290-008-0022-1.

[12] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* in *Political Thought in America*, edited by Michael B. Levy (Illinois: Waveland Press, 1992), 300-301.

[13] Ivelin Sardamov, "'Civil Society' and the Limits of Democratic Assistance," Government & Opposition 40.3 (2005): 379-381., doi: 10.1111/j.1477-7053.2005.00156.x., Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (17392531).

[14] Kenneth Newton, "Trust, social capital, civil society, and democracy," *International Political Science Review* 22.2 (2001): 201-202, accessed November 12, 2013, Academic OneFile.

voluntary and citizen associations and organizations are crucial in democracy because they create trust, social bonds, and solidarity between citizens.[15] Trust is also necessary for people to have good relations with their government and view it as legitimate. How much trust individuals have in their government indicates how well the government is performing according to the people.[16]

Relationship Between Civil Society and Democracy

Mainstream theorists believe that a healthy civil society leads to democratization. As Karatnycky writes, "It is the third sector of civic nongovernmental life that can create an atmosphere that ensures the healthy functioning of state institutions, combats corruption, protects respect of the rule of law, and acts as a defender of free media."[17] Scholars like Putnam and Tocqueville say that through civil society, citizens learn skills, knowledge, and values of democratic practices, and bring such values to government.[18] Citizens then utilize these same values in advocacy for transnational issues and engagement with institutions of global governance. For example, such is the case when CSOs consult with major intergovernmental organizations like the United Nations. Traditionally, civil society teaches and reinforces values necessary to democracy and global citizenship like reciprocity, solidarity, cooperation, and appreciation for cultures and diversity.[19]

Local, national, and international civil society acts as a balanced opposition to states in favor of society. It provides a venue for people to develop ideas, agendas, and deliberate, thus facilitating dialogue in governance, which is a main feature of democracy. Furthermore, CSOs speak for groups of citizens, representing different sectors of society. Thus, civil society fosters plurality, which is a necessity in democracy and in global deliberations which must represent the diverse voices of many. Civil society is a mediator between the state and society by transmitting interests and demands of the population to the state and to global governance institutions.[20]

Finally, civil society plays a "disciplinary role" for the state by forcing it to adhere to public morality and standards of the population, eliciting accountability. According to Putnam, the state must have autonomous institutions to check its power, and civil society provides these institutions.[21] This is especially true regarding CSOs' role in fighting government corruption through tools like corruption perception indexes, anti-corruption public awareness campaigns, and education.[22]

There is very high correlation between civil society, democratization, and global citizenry, but Sardamov and Green caution that civil society may not necessarily be pro-

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[15] Ibid., 206.

[16] Newton, "Trust, social capital, civil society, and democracy," 205.

[17] Adrian Karatnycky, "Making Democratization Work: Overcoming the Challenges of Political Transitions," *Harvard International Review* 24.2 (2002): 54, accessed January 4, 2014, Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost.

[18] Eric Uslaner and Gabriel Badescu, *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy* (London: Routledge, 2003), 59, 125. http://fairfield.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=182240.

[19] Newton, "Trust social capital, civil society, and democracy," 4.

[20] Nevila Xhindi, "The Complex Relationship Between Government and Civil Society in Albania (Twenty Years in Focus: From 1990 till 2010). *European Scientific Journal* 9.17 (2013): 69-70, accessed October 20, 2013, http://eujournal.org/index.php/esj/article/viewFile/1158/1174.

[21] Uslaner and Badescu, editors, *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy*, 56.

[22] Lejla Sadiku, "Civil society and anti-corruption: experiences from Albania, Kosovo and Serbia," *Romanian Journal of Political Science* 10.1 (2010): 34. http://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-321056573/civil-society-and-anti-corruption-experiences-from

democracy, or even capture the diversity of their society.[23] [24] Nevertheless, this does not refute the mainstream theory that if it has democratic principles at the core, civil society should lead to democratization and foster global citizenship.

Global Citizenship, Democratic Value, and Good Governance

Global citizenship carries characteristics similar to those of democratic societies: a sense of community, pluralism, appreciation for diversity (especially multicultural), civic engagement, and advocacy among others. A global citizen identifies himself or herself with a new emerging "global community" in addition to the local community.[25] Such a global community has a set of values, beliefs, and practices, often informed by those of mature democracies. It has emerged through globalization and an increase in communication, transportation, and travel, as people feel more connected with the world and different populations, regardless of geography.[26] Like a national democracy, global citizenship assumes an awareness and sense of responsibility to issues and people, including those in different areas of the world. Both democracy and global citizenship are associated with advocacy in national and world issues. As such, civic engagement and civil society are essential to taking action for international causes and to finding global solutions for such issues. In fact, some argue for the emergence of an international civil society. Much like with traditional western democracy models, global citizenship supports rule of law, human rights, tolerance for religious and cultural diversity, gender equality, participation and civic engagement, environmental sustainability, poverty alleviation, good governance, and humanitarianism among other causes.[27] [28]

A new philosophy of education, global citizenship education aims to promote such values as peace, human rights, respect for diversity, and justice.[29] An example of this global citizenship education is the Secretary General's Education First Initiative. In purpose and scope, it is similar to the "Democratic Citizenship Education" model proposed by Theodore Kaltsounis, and to the "Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights" of the Council of Europe.[30] Such initiatives aim to teach values and philosophies that would enable people to operate within their national political system and beyond using ideals of human rights, democracy, non-violence, and peace.

Among the many global issues of interest to global citizens, democracy and good governance have become increasingly important causes. This is evident when examining the numerous democratic transition efforts in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world. In fact, "democratic governance and peaceful societies" appears a priority to global citizens, as attested

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[23] Sardamov, "'Civil Society' and the Limits of Democratic Assistance," 401.

[24] Andrew T. Green, "Comparative Development of Post-communist Civil Societies." *Europe-Asia Studies* 54.3 (2002): 467, doi: 10.1080/09668130220129560, *Academic Search Premier*, EBSCO*host*.

[25] Israel, C. Ronal. "What Does it mean to be a Global Citizen?" *Kosmos: Journal for Global Transformation*. Summer 2012. http://www.kosmosjournal.org/article/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-global-citizen/.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] United Nations Global Education First Initiative. "Priority #3: Foster Global Citizenship." 2014. http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/220.htm.

[29] Oxfam. "Global Citizenship." 2014. http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship

[30] Council of Europe. "Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights. 2014 http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/default_en.asp.

to by the UN's Post-2015 Development Framework and the World We Want Survey.[31] As of September 2014, this survey showed that "an honest and responsive government" ranks fourth out of 16 top priorities voted on by over 5 million people from around the world.[32] Additionally, several international NGOs such as Freedom House and CIVICUS focus on meeting civil society demands for good governance by supporting democratic governance in different countries and areas. The case of democratic transitions in Albania, in Easter Europe, and in other parts of the world fits into this context.

Movements to mainstream democratic and global citizenship values developed in the western world as a result of historical events, conflicts, and world leaders. This was especially so after World War Two with the emergence of international organizations and civil society. However, Eastern European populations did not experience the rise in global citizenry, as the iron curtain prevented them from doing so by discouraging democratic ideals and contact with the Western word. Global citizenship relies on awareness and information of international issues so that people may act in the global sphere. This phenomenon of international engagement was discouraged, stifled, and in some cases like Albania, it was outlawed under the totalitarian Communist regimes.

Authoritarianism and Democratization in Eastern Europe

Up until 1990, Eastern European countries had authoritarian regimes whose legacies today make democratization and active global citizenship engagement difficult. In an authoritarian government, the state determines rule of law, and there are few if any checks and balances.[33] For instance, Soviet communist regimes ruled arbitrarily through persecuting opposition. Scholars and populations of Eastern Europe believed civil society to be key in overthrowing dictatorships and establishing democracies in the region.[34] After the Eastern European dictatorships fell, the challenge that Albania and other Eastern European countries face today is democratization.

Albania in particular has struggled the most with the transition to democracy because of its exceptionally harsh dictatorship. There is a consensus among Eastern European scholars that Albania is a unique case within Eastern Europe as it had one of the fiercest authoritarian regimes, the highest level of isolation from the world, and the most loyal regime to the ideologies and methods of Stalin.[35] In fact, journalists, scholars, and laypeople like bloggers often make the comparison between Albania and North Korea because of their isolation from other countries, silencing of opposition, and feelings of near-worship towards their respective party leaders.[36] Despite local and international civil society efforts, Albania's communist history continues to hinder its transition to democracy today.

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[31] UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda. *Realizing the Future We Want for All: Report to the Secretary General*. New York. June 2012. P. 18-19 http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Post_2015_UNTTreport.pdf

[32] My World 2015. "My Analytics." My World United Nations Global Survey. http://data.myworld2015.org/

[33] Locke, *The Second Treatise on Civil Government*, 54.

[34] Burnell and Calvert, editors, *Civil Society in Democratization*, 8.

[35] Sabrina P. Ramet, editor. *Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture, and Society Since 1939* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 1998).

[36] "Albania: Addressing the Image Problem," *Economist.com*. 2007. http://www.economist.com/node/9321421

IV. Historical Background

Repression in Communist Albania

Like other Eastern European countries, after World War II Albania adopted a communist dictatorship. The People's Socialist Republic of Albania rose in 1946, headed by Enver Hoxha. Albania had arguably the most ruthless, Stalinist regime out of the Eastern European states, perhaps with the exception of Ceausescu's Romania.[37] [38] [39] It had the highest percentage of executions, imprisonment, and political exile than any other Eastern European country.[40] The state maintained control through the military, a robust omnipresent secret police (*Sigurimi*), and a general reign of terror that eliminated opposition.[41] The ruling party officially sentenced an estimated 6,500 people to execution. In a population of three million people, the Communist party imprisoned, internally-exiled, and executed about 100,000 people[42] compared to Czechoslovakia's 65,000; Hungary's 27,000; Poland's 22,000.[43] [44] Through collective punishment, an entire family could be internally exiled or imprisoned if one family member was judged to be against the government. Another estimate states that 200,000 Albanians were in prison camps at some point in their lives.[45]

In the 1960s, Hoxha pursued his own version of the Chinese Cultural Revolution by severing contact with the West and other countries, closing down religious institutions, destroying mosques and churches, and imprisoning and executing religious leaders, as well as intellectuals in order to instill the communist values and mindset into the entire population.[46] At the end of the Cultural and Ideological Revolution, Hoxha declared Albania to be the world's first atheist country. Albanian communism outlawed religion and the traditional Code of Leke

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[37] Baltaci and Zenelaj, "Democracy Promotion in Albania," 5.

[38] Michael John Montias, "Communist Rule in Eastern Europe." *Foreign Affairs* 43.2 (1965). http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/23673/john-michael-montias/communist-rule-in-eastern-europe.

[39] Stephanie Schwander-Sievers and Bernd J. Fischer, editors, *Albanian Identities; Myth and History*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press (2002), 48.

[40] Lori E. Amy and Eglantina Gjermeni. "Where is the 'State' in Albania? The unresolved contradictions confronting civil society in the 'Transition' from communism to free markets." *Studies of Transition States and Societies* 5.1 (2013): 8.

[41] Robert C. Austin and Jonathan Ellison, *Post-communist Transitional Justice in Albania*. East European Politics & Societies 22.2 (2008): 377. Doi: 10.1177/0888325408315768.

[42] Sara Malm, "Albanian protestor turns himself into human torch in row with government over compensation for ex-political prisoners," *MailOnline.com,* October 10, 2012, Accessed December 8, 2013, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2215878/Lirak-Bejko-Albanian-protester-human-torch-row-government-compensation.html.

[43] These figures are not entirely certain because statistics and files containing such information have been destroyed or lost. Remaining secret police files are still closed to the public and have been tampered with. Only estimates with large ranges are possible.

[44] Scott Manning, "Communist Body Count, *Historian on the Warpath*, December 2006, accessed December 2, 2013, http://www.scottmanning.com/content/communist-body-count/.

[45] Aleksandra Bogdani, "Victims of Albanian Communism Struggle for Closure," *The Atlantic*, December 7, 2012, accessed December 2, 2013. http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/12/victims-of-albanian-communism-struggle-for-closure/265956/

[46] Raymond Zickel and Walter R. Iwaskiw. *Albania: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress,1994), accessed December 3, 2013, http://countrystudies.us/albania/index.htm.

Dukagji.[47] It persecuted Albanian tribe leaders in an attempt to rid the country of what it called barbarism of tribes and clans.[48] The regime instituted a strict ban on private property and forced collective land work. It propagandized against other countries, peoples, cultures, and societies, especially western nations like the US.

While other regimes in Eastern Europe were opening up after the 1970s, Hoxha pursued an isolationist policy and tightened control of Albanians. The country cut off relations with Yugoslavia, the USSR, and China after accusing them of betraying the ideals of Marxism-Leninism. Albania's isolationist ideology, "Hoxhaism," [49] became increasingly totalitarian. Exiting or entering the country was illegal, making international contact nearly impossible for Albanian citizens. By the late 1980s, Albania was experiencing mass deterioration in standards of living as a result of its attempted autarky. With worse resource shortages than Romania, Albanians were pushed to survival limits until the regime fell.[50]

At the same time, the methods of silencing opposition during Socialism threatened any notion of civil society, especially global civil society. The government banned any contact with the international world, including listening to foreign music, radio, or watching foreign television. It attempted to construct a strict "Albanian" Communist identity. The government's formula for eliminating opposition through "state terror" created a "unique communist mentality in Albania" that thwarted organized resistance like through CSOs.[51] By law, formal institutionalized group association was a criminal act, and those who engaged in it were imprisoned. This is partly why formal civil society opposition movements like Solidarity and Charter 77 rose in other Eastern Europe states but not in Albania. About one third of Albanians experienced secret police harassment or were in labor camps.[52] A history of fear and threat by the regime made open and collective dissention via civil society virtually impossible. In addition, the government created its own associations to squash independent civil society, such as through forced volunteering. It used professional and vocational schools to inculcate obedience and the Communist values (against a bourgeois culture) into the people.[53]

Nevertheless, some form of civil society activity continued to barely survive in the private sphere as citizens retreated from the public sphere. As McFadden says, civil society survived in Stalinist regimes despite totalitarianism because rulers never quite succeeded in extinguishing it.[54] Civil society acted through literature, culture, and hidden religion. Writers and poets, like Ismail Kadare,[55]continued to express some free thinking using allegories and concealed meanings. In the home, some Albanians practiced religion and listened to western radio in secret against the law.[56]

Fall of the Communist Regime and Transition to Democracy

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[47] The Code of Leke Dukagji, written by a Catholic Albanian nobleman, defined traditional law and conduct of the household, the community, and tribes.

[48] De Waal, Clarissa, *Albania Today: A Portrait of Post-Communist Turbulence* (New York: I.B. Tauris&Co Ltd, 2007), 5.

[49] Baltaci and Zenelaj, "Democracy Promotion in Albania," 4.

[50] Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, "Democratization Without Decommunization: The Balkans Unfinished Revolutions." *Romanian Journal of Political Science* 5.1 (2005): 15, accessed October 28, 2013, Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (17862594).

[51] Amy and Gjermeni, "Where is the State in Albania?" 30.

[52] Austin and Ellison, editors, "Post-Communist Transitional Justice in Albania," 397.

[53] Baltaci and Zenelaj, "Democracy Promotion in Albania," 5.

[54] Dr. David McFadden, interview by Klevisa Kovaci, Fairfield University, October 8, 2013.

[55] Award-winning author and nominee for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

[56] De Waal, *Albania Today: A Portrait of Post-Communist Turbulence,* 4.

Albania was the last country to exit the totalitarian system, and in 1991 it opened up to democracy with overwhelming support from Albanians. Ramiz Alia succeeded Hoxha in 1985 and relaxed rules for travel, contact with other countries, and free association. Contact with different countries became permissible. Due to internal pressure, in 1990 Alia established a multi-party system for the first time, thus opposition could finally organize. Albanians, inspired by the international events in the countries and societies around them, harnessed the values of democracy and acted upon them. After seeing the surrounding totalitarian governments fall around them, students and masses in Albania began demonstrations against their own regime. Law and order broke down, and agencies could no longer contain the protesters or destruction of state property. By 1990, there was mass economic breakdown: food rations and bread lines. Mass exodus occurred as Albanians crossed over to Greece and Italy.[57]

In 1991, the remnant of the Albanian state called for an election. The Labor Party, later named Socialist Party, led by Fatos Nano won through manipulation. But demonstrations, riots and economic breakdown forced it to resign. Protests began in the north, a traditionally anticommunist area, and spread to the capital, Tirana. Fatos Nano's government fell and the first democratic government in Albania came into being during the "Third Wave" of democracies in the world.

In March 1992, the Democratic Party won elections. While the new government worked to establish order, there was still a lack of rule of law while lootings and destruction of infrastructure continued. As structural adjustment policies of the IMF and international economic institutions prescribed, Albania immediately underwent a rapid transformation through decentralization and neoliberalism to distance itself as far as possible from its prior command-control economy. Privatization was accompanied by corruption and little media or public scrutiny.[58] Global financial institutions promoting capitalism and liberal economics hailed "shock therapy" in Albania and pointed to its high GDP growth. However, international actors failed to recognize dangerous trends behind this deregulation: high unemployment, a remittance rate of over 20 percent fueling the GDP, uncontrolled migration, alienation of societal groups, organized international crime and corruption.[59] According to Kajsiu, this rapid privatization and deregulation was the price that people were willing to pay to shake off the communist past.[60] Despite warnings, global actors were shocked when Albania almost disintegrated into civil war in 1997.

In the Pyramid Scheme of 1997, about two thirds of Albanians invested money and life savings into the private embezzled investment scheme in order to gain wealth. When the pyramid collapsed, Albanians lost $1.2 billion in US dollars in total.[61] People reacted in violent uprisings against the state, which they believe to be associated with the scam. As the state was fast collapsing and gangs took over cities, Berisha declared a state of emergency. About 2,000 people were killed during this conflict.[62] The UN Security Council sent foreign forces to restore order in Albania and monitor elections in 1997.

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[57] Ibid., 6.

[58] Sadiku, "Civil society and anti-corruption: experiences from Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia," 45.

[59] Ibid., 45.

[60] Blendi Kajsiu, "Down with politics: The crisis of representation in post-communist Albania," *East European Politics & Societies* 24.2 (2010): 237, Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (49758689).

[61] Christopher Jarvis, "The Rise and Fall of Albania's Pyramid Schemes," International Monetary Fund, *Finance and Development* 37.1 (2000). Accessed January 4, 2014, http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2000/03/jarvis.htm.

[62] Ibid.

The 1997 emergency elections brought into power the Socialist Party, which continued neoliberal reforms. Despite the catastrophe of mass deregulation, people still favored a liberal economy in order to transition away from the Communist legacy of state controlled economy. The 1999 Kosovo refugee crisis brought further strain on the weak Albanian economy as over 400,000 Kosovar refugees sought refuge in Albania.[63] This crisis placed a focus on the values of humanitarianism, as well as peace and conflict among Albanians. While winning Albania acclaim for its welcome of the refugees, the crisis exacerbated Albania's economic troubles. Throughout all these developments, institutionalized Albanian and international civil society organizations rose for the first time and are now charged with the task of alleviating the above struggles, as well as with transforming Albania into a strong democracy with an informed and active global citizenry.

Rise of Civil Society

In the early 1990s, the fall of neighboring communist regimes incited Albanian students, human rights groups, and some previous communists against the old regime. Protests in Albania were anarchic rather than organized because the Secret Police was still active. Some scholars and journalists make the case that Albanian communism fell, not because of authentic grassroots movements which had been brewing for decades like in the more liberal Eastern European states, but because Albanians became aware of the fall of all other dictatorships around them and faced the worst economic degradation in Europe. This is similar to the domino fall of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East in 2011, fueled by an international civil society that called upon the ideals of freedom, and democracy. Once protests began, the government could no longer preserve itself.[64] In 1991, protesters effectively forced the newly "elected" Socialist Party to resign. Civil society was finally being revived through mass protests, and, for the first time, through rising formal associations.

After 1990, hundreds of NGOs and civil society groups opened up in Albania, largely due to the influence of international CSOs. During the decentralization period, the state withdrew and could not address human rights abuses, violence against women, trafficking, and other issues. Therefore civil society organizations formed to fill the void.[65][66] Meanwhile international CSOs moved into Albania to address the humanitarian crises, such as those involving refugees. They first worked with human rights and social issues like women and children's rights, illiteracy, poverty, and health care.

Throughout the early to mid-1990s, the relationship between government and civil society was very weak. Civil society actors hesitated to work with the state because of its hostile attitude towards independent journalists, the press, and opposition. The legal status of CSOs in Albania improved as the government passed laws legitimizing and supporting their existence. For instance, the Civil Code of 1994 further improved the legal basis for NGOs, but prevented them from engaging in economic activities, hindering them economically.[67]

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[63] "Refugees flee Kosovo Horror," *BBC News*, 1999. Accessed October 18, 2013. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/307057.stm.

[64] Mungiu-Pippidi, "Democratization Without Decommunization," 15.

[65] Elda Gjergji, "Vulnerable Groups in Albania and their Protection," *European Scientific Journal* 8.19 (2012): 35-36, accessed October 12, 2013, Academic One File.

[66] Amy and Gjermeni, "Where is the State in Albania?" 17.

[67] Xhindi, "The Complex Relationship Between Government and Civil Society in Albania," 71-74.

From 1997-2005 civil society in Albania grew significantly in mission, scope, funding, and visibility with foreign aid and support from the US and other western countries. Hundreds of NGOs registered with the state, many of them international. In 1997, NGOs supported by international donors focused on emergency aid and relief. Afterwards, they began to train political figures and civil society leaders in democracy. One large project that taught democratic citizenship education was Kaltsounis's Democratic Education Project, a partnership between USAID, University of Washington, the Albanian Ministry of Education, Albanian universities, and the George Soros Foundation. CSOs began forming coalitions and partnering more frequently with government on legislation.

Figure 1: Mapping Albanian Civil Society

(CIVICUS 2010, 11)
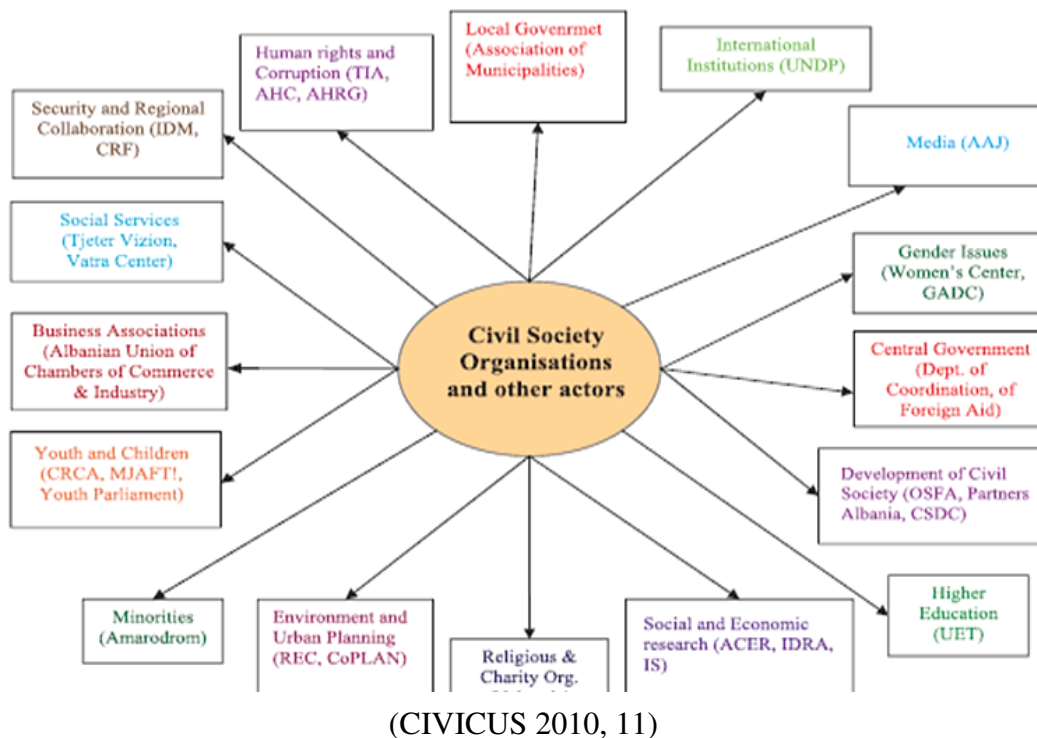
From 2002-2005, with the influence of international agencies, CSOs in Albania worked to improve governance via political development. For instance, civil society assumed the role of monitoring elections. NGOs worked with the government to initiate the 2001 Albanian Coalition against Corruption Plan on Anti-Corruption Awareness.[68] Awareness of NGOs which help to progress democracy and good governance, have increased over the past few years.[69] Such CSOs include the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) and *Mjaft!,* a youth-led NGO that tackles political and social problems in Albania.

In the mid to late 2000s, the Albanian government and civil society collaborated somewhat more on policy. Parliament consulted with civil society, private sector leaders, trade unions, and academics to formulate the 2007 National Strategy for Development and Integration. In 2009, government established the Civil Society Support Fund (CSSA) to encourage

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[68] Ibid., 72.
[69] Sadiku, "Civil society and anti-corruption experiences from Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia," 18-19.

development of civil society, although funding is perpetually low.[70] Civil society helped form the Social Inclusion Strategy in 2008 to make social inclusion a high priority in Albania.[71]

V. Weak Democracy and Low Civil Society Impact in Democratization

Figure 2: Key Indicators of Albanian Democracy

| Key indicators	
UN Human Development Index, 2011	Score: 0.739. Ranked 70 out of 187
Freedom House Freedom in the World rating, 2012	Status: partly free. Political rights score: 3. Civil liberties score: 3
Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, 2011	Score 3.1. Ranked 95 out of 183
World Bank Governance Indicators, 2010	Government effectiveness: -0.27. Percentile rank: 45.5. Rule of law: -0.44. Percentile rank: 40.8
Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, 2011	Score: 34.4. Ranked 96 out of 178
Global Integrity Report, 2010	Status: moderate. Score: 74 out of 100
Failed States Index, 2011	Score: 61. Ranked 121 out of 177
EIU Democracy Index, 2011	Status: hybrid regime. Score: 5.81. Ranked 87 out of 167

(CIVICUS 2011, 164)

Now open and even welcoming to internationalism, Albanians strongly support democracy, and Albania has made efforts to transition to a democracy with the help of international actors. In less than 25 years, Albania managed to transform from the most repressive totalitarian system to a partly free democracy with an arguably free market system. But even though Albanian democracy has greatly improved since its inception in 1990, it still has major flaws. In Albania, there is little experience with democratic culture and thus democracy in Albania struggles today. As Figure 2 shows, Albania is categorized as a hybrid regime that is only partly free. Its main governmental deficiencies are in rule of law and corruption, including major organized crime such as human trafficking. The judiciary lacks independence and is prone

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[70] Xhindi, "The Complex Relationship Between Government and Civil Society in Albania," 72-75.
[71] Gjergji, "Vulnerable Groups in Albania and their Protection," 47.

to manipulation by the executive branch and political parties.[72] According to the Freedom House Nations in Transit Ratings and Averaged Scores, since 2000 Albania has stagnated in key aspects of democratization while worsening in others.[73] The indicators on Figure 2 show that Albanian democracy today struggles. Albania has lower scores on the above indicators when compared with other Eastern European countries.

Figure 3: Perception of CSO Impact[74]   (CIVICUS 2010, 21)
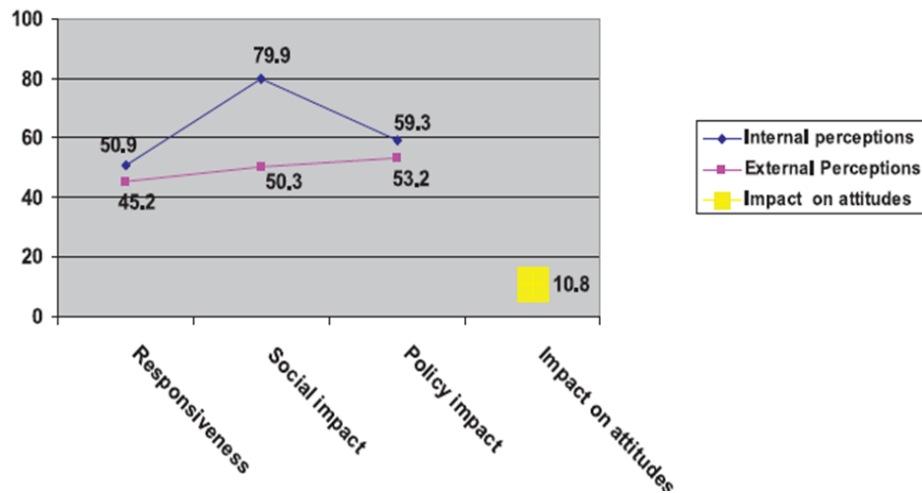
The perceived impact of civil society in Albania is also low. In Figure 4, about half of Albanians surveyed feel that CSOs make a relevant contribution to political and social changes.[75] As illustrated in Figure 3, the general Albanian population is more skeptical than CSO workers towards the positive impact of CSOs in political and social change. Vurmo says that Albanian civil society is "struggling to add value to national transformation efforts," [76] let alone to global change. CSOs have likewise had mixed success in pushing government accountability and transparency. On the other hand, the area where civil society has the made most impact is in social and human rights, a key element in democracy and in global citizenship. In fact, associations have worked to develop a family code, laws on domestic violence, and gender equality - many of these issues are also priorities of global citizenship. Yet, despite the high number of organizations working with human rights, there have been little results in social issues like domestic violence and nondiscrimination in Albania, as both continue at high levels.[77] Areas

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[72] FRIDE, "Democracy Monitoring Report: Albania," FRIDE: A European think Tank for Global Action (2010): 2, accessed January 3, 2014, http://www.fride.org/download/IP_Albania_ENG_ap10.pdf.

[73] See Figure 6 for the Freedom House index.

[74] "Internal perceptions" refers to how CSO workers perceive their own impact. "External Perceptions" refers to how the public and external actors perceive the impact of CSOs.

[75] CIVICUS, Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM), and UNDP. *Civil Society Index Analytical country Report for Albania* (2010), Accessed January 5, 2014. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/albania/docs/Civil%20Society%20Index.pdf.

[76] Gjergji Vurmo, "What are donors, states and the civil society getting wrong?" Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM), January 2013, accessed January 2, 2014, http://idmalbania.org/sites/default/files/publications/pb_gjv_jan_2013.pdf.

[77] CIVICUS, *Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Albania,* 38.

where civil society has had weak impact in helping to democratize Albania and inculcate global citizenship values include civic engagement, democratic governance, and rule of law.[78]

Figure 4: Civil Society Index Diamond for Albania 2009
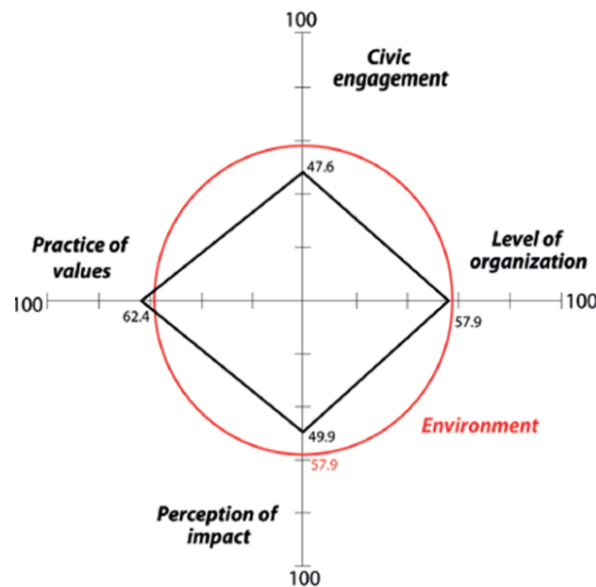
(CIVICUS 2010, 1)

VI. Shortcomings of Civil Society: Communist Legacy in Political Culture

Lack of Democratic and Global Citizenship Values and Skills

The above weaknesses in civil society and its work towards pushing Albania for democracy are best explained by the cultural legacy of Albania's dictatorship. Perhaps Communism's most detrimental legacy to democracy is a political culture almost opposite that of a democratic one with an active citizenry in national and international issues. Albanians very much supported the decision to switch to democracy, but Albanian society and leadership did not have the tools, knowledge, and political culture to realize democracy effectively. So democracy promotion mainly came from the outside, especially Westerners working in Albania.[79] Albanians, and even elites, did not know what their human, social, economic, and political rights were. Democratic concepts and processes like government accountability, institutional transparency, and compromise in legislation were alien to Albanians because the previous government functioned in violation of them. Albanians also had very little experience with global citizenship ideals such as human rights and environmental sustainability, again due to being closed off from such ideas in other parts of the world during communism. This isolationist, authoritarian experience stands in contrast to Kaltsounis's Democratic Citizenship Education and Global Citizenship Education, which both aim to train citizens with values of peace, dialog, human rights, and awareness of global issues.

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[78] CIVICUS, "Civil Society Profile in Albania," (2011): 163, accessed October 20, 2013, http://socs.civicus.org/CountryCivilSocietyProfiles/Albania.pdf.
[79] Baltaci and Zenelaj, "Democracy Promotion in Albania," 8.

Moreover, Albanians' concept of the "common good" during communism differs greatly from the democratic meaning of this term. As Kaltsounis writes, in a democratic society, people work together to deliberate and determine the "common good" through a consensus of what is best for society regarding freedom and human rights. Likewise, the "common good" in global citizenship represents the well-being of the planet and of members in different societies, in alignment with international human rights and development frameworks. Meanwhile, the Albanian Labor Party defined the "common good" in terms of the masses working for the Communist Party, whose members obtained great wealth while the common people experienced poverty.[80] The education system pre-1990 propagated the Communist definition of the common good. More than any other European country, Communist Albania was "fundamentally committed, nationally and internationally, to a hard "Marxist-Leninist" policy." [81] It mimicked oppressive and even dehumanizing values and methods of Stalin, which inevitably contradict a free democracy that respects human rights.

The communist regime left a value legacy that makes democratization very difficult for civil society today. As Feilcke-Tiemann writes, communism placed Albania in extreme isolation with no experience with democracy.[82] Most Albanian adults today have little experience with democratic and global citizenry norms and skills, having grown up for most of their lives in an isolationist system that abused or negated democratic values and freedoms. The political culture during communism perpetuated a mentality of stereotypes, simplification, and dichotomous thinking, especially about other peoples and cultures.[83] Thus critical thinking of Albanians and analysis of social and political issues is not very rich. Albanians were politically socialized by the Communist Party into a culture of separateness, authoritarianism, unquestionable obedience, fear, and distrust. People still are not skilled at deliberating and respectfully challenging other ideas because during autocracy, such independent thinking and expression was prohibited. People sacrificed democratic ideas of fairness, trust, and decency to survive under the government's iron fist.[84] Albania's new "hybrid regime," has the formal characteristics of democracy, but it lacks liberal standards and still functions using old communist mentalities.[85] But, Mungiu-Pippidi makes clear that no Eastern European state can have true democratization without "decommunization," as the legacies of communism are powerful and harmful to democracy.[86]

The political elite governing the country today were educated and socialized under the rule of the Communist or Labor Party [87], and thus they demonstrate similar mindset and habits as during the old regime, which is unhealthy for a democracy.[88] Even though political parties wanted to destroy communist remnants in the system, they were not trained for such a regime

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[80] Theodore Kaltsounis, *The Democratization of Albania: Democracy from within* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 52-53. http://fairfield.eblib.com.libdb.fairfield.edu/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=652710.

[81] Montias, "Communist Rule in Eastern Europe."

[82] Adelheid Feilcke-Tiemann. "Albania: Gradual Consolidation limited by Internal Political Struggles." *Journal of Southeast European & Black Sea Studies* 6.1 (2006): 25-26. *Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost.*

[83] De Waal, *Albania Today: A Portrait of Post-Communist Turbulence*, 35.

[84] Theodore Kaltsounis, "Democratic Citizenship Education in Albania." *The Social Studies* 90.6 (1999): 248, http://search.proquest.com/docview/274770577?accountid=10796.

[85] Sharon L. Wolchik and Jane L. Curry, editors, *Central and East European Politics-: From Communism to Democracy*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010). http://fairfield.eblib.com.libdb.fairfield.edu/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=662203.

[86] Mungiu-Pippidi, "Democratization Without Decommunization."

[87] The Communist Party's name was changed to the Labor Party.

[88] Feilcke-Tiemann, "Albania: Gradual Consolidation limited by Internal Political Struggles." 34-35.

overhaul, as they were all educated under communism.[89] The new political parties following the fall of communism were made up of former communists. Politicians, governmental leaders, and Albanians grew up in a society with no democratic political culture so what occurs in the Albanian public sphere is "elite reproduction, not elite replacement."[90] For this reason, many Albanians today believe that democracy, and a will for national and global engagement will develop in Albania when the current generation of political and civil society leaders leaves and a new generation of Albanians enters; new leaders who are better experienced with Western democratic political culture.[91] Others look to the diaspora from Western states to return and bring democratic values and skills to the country.[92] Trained internationally in societies where global citizenship ideals have already taken root, this diaspora may present hope in diffusing democratic and global responsibility into Albanian citizens.

The lack of democratic values inherited from a period of autocracy cripples CSOs today. As these democratic values parallel those of global citizenship, their absence in Albania also negatively impacts the development of global citizenry there. Vurmo notes that civil society in Albania is not always run using clear standards for ethics and transparency, two essential pillars of democratic values.[93] The CIVICUS 2010 report echoes this concern and adds that CSOs in Albania lag in transparency, accountability, and democratic decision-making to set example for democratic governance. Similarly, these are all elements that were absent during communist rule in Albania. 38 percent of CSOs leaders surveyed believe that the third sector experiences corruption.[94] Over 50 percent of them think that civil society does not have enough transparency. Out of people who were surveyed from outside of the CSOs, 56.25 percent said that "most CSOs lack transparency."[95] For example, low transparency in CSOs is evident because many are hard to reach by e-mail and reluctant to share information about finances and evaluations. Even USAID has said that civil society organizations in Albania need to communicate their activities to the public more effectively.[96] The fact that CSOs continue to work in somewhat undemocratic manners and adhere to practices from the old regime make it slower for democratic change to take place.

Trust Deficit

One of the main legacies of the Communist regime that has hindering the democratization process via civil society in Albania is a lack of trust and community within the Albanian population. During Communism, the state pitted citizens, neighbors, and friends against one another and against foreigners through forcing complicity for survival. In Albania, a quarter of citizens worked for the secret police to report treason against neighbors.[97] [98] Strangers

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[89] Baltaci and Zenelaj, "Democracy Promotion in Albania," 7.

[90] Austin and Ellison, "Post-Communist Transitional Justice in Albania," 380.

[91] Kaltsounis, "Democratic Citizenship Education in Albania," 1999, 245.

[92] Maria Koinova, "Diasporas and democratization in the post-communist world," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 42 (2009): 41-42, doi: 10.1016/j.postcomstud.2009.02.001.

[93] Vurmo, "What are donors, states and civil society getting wrong?" 4.

[94] CIVICUS, *Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Albania*, 21.

[95] Ibid. 21

[96] Sadiku, "Civil society and anti-corruption: experiences from Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia," 50.

[97] Austin and Ellison, "Post-Communist Transitional Justice in Albania," 376-377.

[98] Cynthia M. Horne, "Still Addressing Communist Legacies across Central and Eastern Europe: Complicity, Trust, and Lustration" (2012): 1. http://cynthiamhorne.weebly.com/uploads/8/9/9/8/8998042/horne--trust_and_lustration-bbc.pdf.

were not to be trusted, for anyone could be working for the government. Even near the end of Communism, people from other countries were to be eschewed, for fear of the government accusing the Albanian of being in complicity with foreigners. The resulting low sense of community among Albanians renders Albanians less likely to identify with a broader international community towards common goals. In Albania, there also exists a low level of confidence in political and social institutions. The older generations still use conspiracy theories to analyze political events and government decision. [99] The proclivity for conspiracy theories came about from living under a secret, oppressive regime in which the state did not justify its actions and where people speculated to try to understand its workings. Distrust and paranoia are still present today in Albania.

There is an overall lack of trust in CSOs, political institutions, political parties, parliament, and politicians.[100] On a survey about trust among 28 Eastern and Central European countries, Albania ranked lowest; the only Eastern European citizens with less faith in their politicians than Albanians are Greeks and Croatians.[101] When surveyed, 92.5 percent of Albanians said that one must be very careful in dealing with people and only 7.5 percent say that people can be trusted.[102] Again, this distrust is a result of living under an abusive political rule where the Communist Party governed arbitrarily and forced people into complicity with the secret police.

Figure 5: Summary of Trust and group Membership in the West and Former Communist States

Trust/group	Western states	Former communist states
Trust	0.436	0.230
Total memberships*	1.997	1.079
Any membership*	0.787	0.403
Church group memberships	0.469	0.227
Sports clubs	0.387	0.181
Arts groups	0.242	0.148
Political parties	0.151	0.125
Environmental groups	0.126	0.097
Professional groups	0.197	0.127
Charitable organizations	0.219	0.122
Other groups	0.215	0.115
Unions	0.297	0.278

Notes
All differences significant at $p < 0.0001$ or less
* Excludes unions.

(Uslaner and Badescu 2013, 89)

As a consequence of this lack of trust and social capital, most Albanians today want to engage in neither national nor international politics, thus reflecting Newton and Putnam's belief that deteriorated trust harms the development of civil society. Albanians, like other post-socialist populations highly distrust formalized and institutionalized organizations because during the

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[99] Schmidt Fabian, "Conspiracy Theories in Albanian Politics and Media," in *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, ed. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd Jürgen Fischer, (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002. Bloomington & Indianapolis), 226-230.

[100] Vogel, "The formation of active civil societies in post-communist states," 132.

[101] Besar Likmeta, "Albania is Europe's Most Homophobic Country Survey Says," *BalkanInsight*, 25 March 2013, accessed November 20, 2013. http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/albania-is-the-most-homophobic-country-in-europe-survey-says.

[102] CIVICUS, *Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Albania*, 24.

authoritarian times organizations like these were used to coerce loyalty to the Communist Party.[103] As Figure 5 shows, lack of trust directly correlates with lower participation in CSOs. Citizens of Eastern European countries which have the least amount of trust because of their experience with communism, also show the least amount of involvement in CSOs.

Volunteer CSOs face impediments in their present work to democratize Albania because Albanians may associate them with negative connotations of institutionalized "volunteer" work that was forced upon them under communism.[104] However, democratic and global advocacy is dependent upon volunteer engagement. Meanwhile, the totalitarian system, volunteerism and civil society had no true definition because the government combined public and private spheres; civil society was not truly independent of the state. Today, Albanians distrust political parties and labor unions the most, as these had historically represented the Communist Party. Likewise organizations of international scope did not exist because they were forbidden, so Albanians had little experience with the world beyond their borders. Albanians trust religious, humanitarian, and women's organizations slightly more. The institutions that Albanians trust most are international and supranational governance bodies like the EU, UN, and NATO, which are not part of Albanian civil society.[105] This trend shows that Albanians actually trust other countries and international institutions more than their own government and organizations. Yet, it does not mean, that a strong sense of global citizenship exists within Albania, as international institutions of global governance work mainly with the Albanian government rather than with the Albanian people through a bottom-up approach. They do not directly mobilize the Albanian population for involvement in national democratization or international issues.

Antipolitics Discourse

There exists in Albania an "antipolitics discourse" that has brewed since the failures of the previous and current governments to represent the people. In an ideal democracy described by Locke and Tocqueville, citizens should have faith in their institutions and be engaged in the political and civil processes. Today, such trust in institutions should also mean that citizens can use their government for advocacy regarding global issues of concern. Contrastingly, in Albania politics and CSOs analyzing national and global politics have become segregated from daily life and the masses. Politics and advocacy, whether national or international, are a separate sphere of activity for politicians, intellectuals, and analysts who function as translators of politics because the people are no longer presumed to understand politics on their own. Albanians today tend to stay away from politics and collective action in a phenomenon in which politics has become the "other" against "the people." [106]

Moreover, public opinion of Albanians towards politics and civic engagement is negative. Because of their history with communism, Albanians today have a "kind of politics-phobia," [107] and they see politics as an evil in itself and corrupt by nature.[108] Just as there existed

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[103] Vogel,"The formation of active civil societies in post-communist states," 132.

[104] Baltaci and Zenelaj, "Democracy Promotion in Albania," 7.

[105] Likmeta, "Albania is Europe's Most Homophobic Country Survey Says."

[106] Kajsiu, "Down with Politics!" 243-244.

[107] Belinda Bedini. "Albanian Political Culture in Transition: Helping or Stumbling the Democracy's Consolidation?" *International Journal of Arts and Sciences* 3.8 (2010): 20-28. http://www.academia.edu/508946/Albanian_Political_Culture_in_Transition_Helping_or_Stumbling_the_Democracys_Consolidation#.

[108] Kajsiu, "Down with Politics!" 245.

a gap between the majority of the population and the few elite leaders of the Communist Party, the same phenomenon of people separated from politics exists today. As the Communist Party and today's political parties did not represent Albanians, people have turned against the parties and politicians. About 70 percent of Albanians in 2003 thought that political parties either do not serve the public interest, or serve it very little, staying consistent with the low public approval ratings.[109]

Another part of the reason why politics are viewed in such a negative light in Albanian society is that political parties unsuccessfully tried to represent the people as masses against communism. After the fall of communism, parties claimed to represent "the people" under a fake democratic ideal and protect them from external threat, usually communism. This approach put all individuals of different classes and needs into the same category of "the people," ignoring diverse existing socioeconomic, religious, and gender groups. Ironically, this is exactly how communism qualified and defined the population by failing to recognize and work with different groups. Such a generalized treatment of the entire population contradicts a democracy and the spirit of internationalism, where all different groups are to be acknowledged and play a viable part in their own governance (plurality or group theory). Throughout the 1990s, the Democratic Party engaged in an anticommunist discourse to distract the population from lack of economic development and infighting.[110] The Democratic Party's concept of "the people" against communism meant to bring together (against the previous dictatorship) groups that may have otherwise been in opposition with one another or with the government.. The anticommunist discourse also aimed to distract the population from an unaccountable government, troubling economy, and the daily problems that the people faced, such as poverty and violence. Counteractively, this negative campaign and hysteria further polarized people from the public sphere and fueled Albanians' contempt for government and organizations. It created an adverse outlook towards government and efforts to bolster the new democracy.

Low Civic Engagement, Apathy

During the communist regime, Albanians developed passive and neutral attitudes towards public and civic engagement, which carry on to today's emerging democracy. Figure 4 points out that today, the lowest score of Albanian civil society is in civic engagement. Many Albanians have "high level indifference" and "widespread apathy" when it comes to taking action in the public sphere.[111] There is no strong philanthropic, volunteer, or international advocacy culture because people distrust or are apathetic towards NGOs. Consequently, Albanians are less willing to support NGOs.[112]

Apathy resulting from the communist regime is largely responsible for the low level of civic engagement. The Communist Party forced people to mobilize in support of the party, using top-down institutions. This coercion resulted in a lack of desire and even fear of involving oneself in the government's "civil society" and volunteerism. By the time of Hoxha's death in 1985, the Albanian population had become "largely dispirited and apathetic."[113] The majority of

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[109] Ibid., 229.

[110] Ibid., 240.

[111] CIVICUS, *Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Albania*, 15.

[112] Ibid., 18.

[113] Ramet, Sabrina P., editor. *Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture, and Society Since 1939*, (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 1998), 259.

Albanians' attitude of passivity partly formed as a result of the government making almost all decisions for them, including career and housing for families. It may have also been a defense mechanism against arbitrary threats from the government. Meanwhile, the absence of freedom to choose and associate freely contributed to a general sense of hopelessness and futility. During the communist period, rather than working with the governmental system to reform it, citizens withdrew into private networks of families, the aspect of life which was least touched by the state. Private networks, like family relationships, became more trusted than democratic voluntary networks.[114] To this day, Albanians closely trust private relations with family (including extended family) and friends, but tend to avoid the public sphere of Albanian and international civil society and politics. Yet, passivity (or hostility) towards the public sphere is detrimental to an emerging democracy, which requires that people voice their opinions and be actively involved in shaping policies that affect them. It is not conducive to global citizenship because international advocacy relies upon people's awareness and active engagement in local, national, and international events and issues.

The low level of civic engagement in Albania is also due to the Albanians' unfamiliarity the third sector because such a concept was part of the public sphere of the government during communism. When NGOs first began moving to Albania or opening up there immediately after the fall of communism, Albanians did not understand their role, nor did they trust them, let alone desire to become involved. Many Albanians also worry about transparency and donor agenda of CSOs.

Civil society's largest deficiency in Albania is civic engagement. Today only 18 percent of Albanians say they are active members of social or voluntary organizations, while about 28 percent participate in individual activism (like signing petitions or demonstrating).[115] Citizens feel that the only way to have a say in the government is by voting. Some Albanians fail to recognize the value in action beyond voting, such as by joining volunteer organizations or advocating for a cause. On their part, Albanian and international CSOs have not worked to mobilized the Albanian population in volunteerism and politics. Similarly, the intellectual elites have not been involved in leading civil society and bringing it to the mass population.[116] CSOs have made little effort to try to engage citizens in their projects or to develop an active citizenry. Reporters and scholars like Xhindi and Kaltsounis make the case that NGOs need to raise more awareness about the significance and benefits of civic engagement, because there is not enough outreach and communication to invite citizens to participate in civic life. There is a gap between CSOs and the masses; there exists little interchange, dialogue, and knowledge exchange between the two.[117] [118]

Acceptance of Authoritarian Governance

A dangerous legacy of communism in Albania is a political culture that is accepting of an authoritarian system of governance. As Mungiu-Pippidi says "Albania has still the strongest former Communists, and therefore the greatest contestation, which shows in the fact that Albanians, unlike in the other countries, still identify political conflict as the number one source

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[114] Vogel, "The formation of active civil societies in post-communist states," 131-132.

[115] CIVICUS, "Civil Society Profile: Albania," 165.

[116] Ilir Gjoni, "Cleansing the Augean stables: Corruption in Albania disrupts democratic development and undermines quality of life." *Mediterranean Quarterly* 13.3 (2002): 39. http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/mediterranean_quarterly/v013/13.3gjoni.html.

[117] CIVICUS, *Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Albania*, 35.

[118] Amy and Gjermeni, "Where is the State in Albania?" 17.

of social conflict."[119] Since its inception through the Constitution, the new government gave the executive branch in Albania's new democracy too much influence over the other branches, even though the new government was supposed to be a parliamentary republic.[120] The strength of the political party and executive branch leaves little independence to courts and police officers, which makes for a difficult atmosphere for pro-democracy reformers.[121] Party and government leadership continues to be authoritarian through hierarchies that discourage or sometimes threaten dissention. Hoxha purged many members and top officials within the Communist Party and administration because he saw them as threats. In the same manner, political parties in Albania post-1992 eliminated dissidents within their own party and opponents from the competing parties. In fact, the Democratic Party used the 1995 law on "On Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity Committed in Albania during the Communist Regime for Political, Ideological and Religious Motives" opportunely to silence opposition rather than for post-transitional justice.[122]

Although the Albanian government today does not use force as it did during the totalitarian period, it still constitutes an acceptance of violence in maintaining control. Albanian political culture among government leaders and the population to some extent condones authoritarian practices As Fischer writes, "some aspects of its [Albania's] authoritarian rule live on: the elite's general disregard for the well-being of the people and for the best interests of the state, brutal and intolerant politics, and the lack of a rule of law."[123] To illustrate, politicians, legislators, and senior officials often have their own bodyguards who fire and hire customs officers and other officials. Politicians use coercion and blackmail to meet their goals.[124] While Albanians now have civil rights, the practice of torture persists. The current authoritarian governance style in Albania is an inheritance of the Communist regime, and therefore the process of "decommunization," which Mungiu-Pippidi explains, has not succeeded in Albania. The use of force and authoritarian methods to maintain power is counterproductive to a democracy and global dialog, which require discourse instead of force, and plurality of voices instead of silencing of voices.

Moreover, manipulation of elections by political parties show an adherence to old political values and is another detriment to democracy left over by the old regime. The Socialist and Democratic parties intimidated the judiciary and media, contested election results, and thwarted government operations if they were denied power. The willingness to succumb to almost any means in order to win elections comes from the previous government, in which loss of political power was disastrous. It is difficult for Albanian politicians to adjust to a democratic sharing of power with minority parties and accept electoral loss and succession after living for in a regime that annihilated opponents through mass purges by the secret police.

In general, rule of law, a prime component of democracy, is weak and corruption high (more so than in the other western Balkan countries). This presents major challenges to civil society in its efforts to press for democratization. During communism, the undisputed law was what the Communist Party dictated. Likewise, today the state is identified with the party in

[119] Mungiu-Pippidi, "Democratization Without Decommunization," 27.
[120] Wolchik and Curry, *Central and East Eurpean Politics.*
[121] Gjoni, "Cleansing the Augean stables," 33-39.
[122] Austin and Ellison, "Post-Communist Transitional Justice in Albania," 385.
[123] Bernd Fischer, "Albania and Enver Hoxha's legacy," *Opendemocracy.net*, June 10, 2010, accessed January 3, 2014, http://www.opendemocracy.net/bernd-fischer/albania-and-enver-hoxhas-legacy.
[124] Gjoni, "Cleansing the Augean stables," 35.

power instead of the rule of the Constitution.[125] Politicians interfere on judiciary rulings. As Baltaci and Zenelaj indicate, "what remained most alarming were Berisha's inclinations to change the rules of the political game when they did not suit him."[126] Corruption leads to disputed leaders of state, uneven distribution of public goods, state capture, public procurement, and condoning of organized crime.[127] This personalization of institutions comes from living in a system that thrived on such tactics. Today a lack of respect for rule of law has enabled organized crime of human trafficking and drug trade. Corruption creates an extremely difficult environment for CSOs to operate in. Weak rule of law undermines democracy and contradicts values of global citizenship. The enormous challenges of corruption, organized crime, and lack or rule of law greatly impede civil society's work today. [128] These problems are of such a large scale that it is very difficult for civil society to tackle them without adequate collaboration with the government and justice system.

Figure 6: Albania Democracy and Civil Society Scores[129]

Capital:	Tirana
Population:	3.2 million
GNI/capita, PPP:	US$8,520

Source: The data above were provided by The World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2012.*

Nations in Transit Ratings and Averaged Scores

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Electoral Process	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.50	4.00	4.00	3.75	3.75	4.00	4.25
Civil Society	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Independent Media	4.00	3.75	4.00	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	4.00	4.00	4.00
Governance*	4.25	4.25	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
National Democratic Governance	n/a	n/a	4.25	4.00	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.50	4.75	4.75
Local Democratic Governance	n/a	n/a	3.25	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	3.00	3.25	3.25
Judicial Framework and Independence	4.25	4.25	4.50	4.25	4.00	4.00	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.75
Corruption	5.00	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Democracy Score	4.17	4.13	4.04	3.79	3.82	3.82	3.82	3.93	4.04	4.14

* Starting with the 2005 edition, Freedom House introduced separate analysis and ratings for national democratic governance and local democratic governance to provide readers with more detailed and nuanced analysis of these two important subjects.

Freedom House (2012, 47)

Figure 6 of the Freedom House chart illustrates several points already made about the weak level of democracy and civil society. It confirms stagnation or worsening of corruption, democratic governance, media independence, and strength of civil society.[130] The higher the

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[125] Feilcke-Tiemann, "Albania: Gradual Consolidation limited by Internal Political Struggles," 39.
[126] Baltaci and Zenelaj, "Democracy Promotion in Albania," 21.
[127] Mungiu-Pippidi, "Democratization Without Decommunization," 1.
[128] CIVICUS, "Civil Society Profile: Albania," 163.
[129] Each score is out of a total of 7 points. 1 represents the highest level of democratic progress and 7 represents the lowest.
[130] Gladis Gjipail, *Albania*, Freedom House, 2012.

score between 1 to 7 appears, the lower the level of Albania's democratic progress is. From 2003 to 2012, most of the democracy indicator scores for Albania increased or remained the same, revealing less progress with each year.

Like in the Albanian government, CSOs sometime also feature a top-down hierarchy in administration with strong power concentrated at the top. In the CIVICUS Report, 48 percent of CSOs made decisions through appointed leaders, or an appointed board rather than democratically through elected leaders, staff, and members.[131] Hirst argues that civil society organizations contain an authoritarian hierarchical structure that limit freedom and give power to the few elites who control the organization.[132] This is the case with many NGOs in Albania.

The authoritarian and hierarchical nature of institutions involved in the public sphere is also present in the highly centralized education system. The way that decisions in university departments are taken is not typically democratic. Few educators participate in the deliberation of curricula, whereas a few leaders make the majority of the decisions about curricula with the input of the state. This decision-making process allows little chance for interaction and dialogue, going directly against decentralization and de-politization in the education system, which are important for democratic and global citizenship education. In the past, government's say in the curriculum interfered with deliberation and did not allow civil society actors adequate freedom in designing curricula.[133]

VII. Shortcomings in Civil Society: External Environment

The external environment in which civil society operates can hinder civil society initiatives in democratizing Albania's government. External environment refers to the political, social, economic, and cultural setting where CSOs operate and where civic engagement takes place. In 2013, Albania scored 55 on the Enabling Environment Index[134], and ranked 52 out of 109 countries. The only Eastern European countries ranking below Albania were Serbia, Bosnia, and Kosovo.[135] Reports like the CIVICUS assessment of civil society in Albania say that the Albanian third sector functions in a "generally enabling environment," but that CSOs do not consult regularly with the people or government in policy. In addition, there is a gap between CSOs and the masses because little interchange, dialogue, and knowledge exchange takes place between CSOs and the rest of Albanians.[136] Gjipali comments, "Albania's civil society sector remains weak and struggles to find space for meaningful activity in a highly politicized environment."[137]

Looking at the political environment, the government in Albania harbors distrust towards civil society. Like new Eastern European democracies, Albania's government faces the difficulty

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[131] CIVICUS, *Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Albania,* 19.

[132] Hirst, Paul, *From Statism To Pluralism: Democracy*, *Civil Society And Global Politics* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013): 119-120. http://fairfield.eblib.com.libdb.fairfield.edu/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=1123079. 119-120).

[133] Kaltsounis, *The Democratization of Albania*, 83.

[134] This index measures the strength of civil society in a country by analyzing legitimacy, transparency, accountability, and corruption in CSOs. It factors in political environment and public perception towards civil society in a given country.

[135] CIVICUS, *Enabling Environment Index*, 10, 25. https://civicus.org/eei/downloads/Civicus_EEI%20REPORT%202013_WEB_FINAL.pdf

[136] Amy and Gjermeni, "Where is the State in Albania?" 18.

[137] Gledis Gjipali, "Nations in Transit 2011: Albania." *Freedom House* (2012), 49. Accessed October 30, 2014. http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2012/albania.

of encouraging civil society without allowing it to challenge the legitimacy of new democratically elected institutions.[138] The Albanian government is still weary of bringing civil society into governance, such as in global issues of concern like environmentalism, for fear of opposition. Historically, the Communist state banned independent civil society because of the threat it would present to the state's power. As Kuti writes, "governments did not trust [associations] at all, the most dictatorial ones even tried to completely eradicate them.[139] Like during communism, today those who want to change the system are intimidated and kept out of influence by the state while anti-corruption rules become empty.[140] The government still intimidates journalists and free press. While there is much more freedom in civil society today than during the Communist regime, present government distrust of civil society partly originate from the negative interaction between the two in the past. The government sees civil society as a check, or rather a threat, to its power.

Legal Framework and Relations with the State

The relationship between civil society and government continues to have tension through the legal framework of civil society, that is, the registration procedures for CSOs, taxation treatment, and pathways for CSO input in governance. Albania lacks clear and formal developed pathways for the involvement of civil society with Parliament, like via consultation.[141] In fact, few NGOs work routinely with government to prepare laws; as mentioned, there does exist a partnership between government and civil society, but it is small even with municipal governments, let alone national government of issues of global importance. In cases where CSOs do provide input in legislation the state is not always receptive to it.[142] Seventy-five percent of CSOs in Albania reported that they did in fact push for policy change in the last year, but only 38 percent of them said that they were successful. This indicates that there must be barriers to advocacy.[143] Laws governing CSOs often impede civil society in post-communist countries. Even where laws allow for the protection of Albanian and international CSOs, the rules are not always enforced. Some Albanian civil society leaders and heads of CSOs experience unfair treatment and even harassment from the state.[144] Thirty-nine percent of surveyed CSO leaders believed that the legal framework is restricting for CSOs and 28 percent of leaders reported that they experienced illegitimate restrictions from their local or central government.[145] In this sense, government directly obstructs the work and project of NGOs and their leaders. Overall 56 percent of CSOs judge the interaction between civil society and state to be limited.[146]

Another problem to civil society impacting democracy in Albania is that after 2005 some civil society leaders leave the third sector to work in government. Some civic activists believe that they can only make an impact by working in government, and in 2011 many ran for

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[138] Vogel, "The formation of active civil societies in post-communist states," 133.
[139] Uslaner and Badescu, editors, *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy*, 125.
[140] Gjoni, "Cleansing the Augean stables," 6.
[141] Vurmo, "What are donors, states and civil society getting wrong?" 2.
[142] Ibid., 3.
[143] CIVICUS, *Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Albania*.
[144] Vurmo, "What are donors, states and civil society getting wrong?" 2.
[145] CIVICUS, "Civil Society Profile in Albania," 164.
[146] Ibid., 164

office.[147] The loss of civil society leadership to the state weakens and contributes to the deficiency in human resources of CSOs. As a result, some NGOs no longer continue functioning or many lose donor funding. Counterintuitively, the move of CSO leaders to the public sector is not conductive to democracy because there is no spillover effect to the government from former CSO leaders who have been trained using democratic values. Their democratic training and values corresponding with those of global civil society do not "take root" in the transitioning democracy through their new work in the public sphere.[148] On the contrary, CSO workers who enter into the government environment begin to play by the rules of politics,[149] which reverses the NGO teachings in democratic and global citizenship. These blurred lines between the public and third sector create even more distrust of CSOs in the eyes of Albanians,[150] who view this phenomenon as collusion between the two.

Next, the lack of financial viability of CSOs also leaves them open to manipulation by political parties.[151] Some think tanks focusing on democracy and international affairs affiliated themselves with political parties post-1997, thus no longer produced authentic research.[152] Independence is especially an issue with media where there exists a triangle between the media, parties, and business. Newspapers often align along political party lines. Deviation or attack of major parties can lead to physical assault or shut down of a media outlet. Investigative reporting like "naming and shaming" is relatively new in Albania, although certainly increasing.[153]

Sustainability: Civil Society as Driven by Outside Donors

Civil society has been inefficient in spurring democracy in Albania because it is not entirely a grass-roots initiative like the volunteer associations that Tocqueville observed in the US, or like the advocacy of global citizens. Since the Albanian population is hesitant to work with civil society associations due to its troubling experience with communism, foreigners have mainly promoted civil society development within Albania. International agencies and a few Albanian elites impose certain goals, approaches, and projects instead of gathering information and input from the people about which goals and approaches are most important for them. On their part, Albanians do not articulate their issues or agendas to CSOs due to a lack of engagement and trust towards CSOs, as already discussed. A top-down approach by CSO cannot substitute grassroots-led action that a democracy and global citizenship require to tackle issues important to the public. These movements must be led through ground initiatives from people educated in social, economic, and political issues of their community and abroad. Current bottom-up initiatives are not widespread and strong enough to support democracy and an emerging global citizenship in Albania.

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[147] Gjipaili, "Albania," *Freedom House*, 49.

[148] Amy and Gjermeni, "Where is the State in Albania?" 13-14.

[149] Ibid., 13-14.

[150] CIVICUS "Civil Society Profile: Albania," 164.

[151] Adam Fagan and Indraneel Sircar, *Promoting Democracy in the Western Balkans after the Global Financial Crisis*, LSE The European Institute: Research on South Eastern Europe (2012): 27. http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/48036/1/__Libfile_repository_Content_LSEE_Papers%20on%20South%20Eastern%20Europe_Promoting%20Democracy%28author%29.pdf.

[152] Amy and Gjermeni, "Where is the State in Albania?" 9.

[153] Sadiku, "Civil society and anti-corruption: experiences from Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia," 14-15, 48.

Another main environment reason for the failure of NGOs to radically bring about democratization is that CSOs in Albania are, for the most part, not financially sustainable.[154] CSOs in Albania do not have a great amount of financial capacity. During communism, Albania had the worst economic breakdowns, and today it continues to struggle economically as one of the poorest European countries. Albania's economic problems discourage an already poor population from providing CSOs routinely with adequate funds and donations. Few Albanians donate time, money, and work to CSOs because they lack wealth or do not want to associate with the public sphere. Today this cripples the financial viability and human resources of CSOs in Albania. Organizations cannot carry out democratization and other projects regarding transnational issues of concern if they are financially unstable and so dependent on outside donors.[155] Figure 6 points out that the biggest struggle for CSOs is financial dependency. NGOs depend on short term grants even though funding must be sustained over long periods of time to allow for the success of long-term projects. Cuts in funding further hinder democracy-focused projects in civil society.[156] In fact, outside donors have failed to provide an adequate exit strategy, so many Albanian CSOs were not able to adapt to the donor withdrawal after 2000.

Figure 6: Evaluation of CSOs in former communist countries/ region
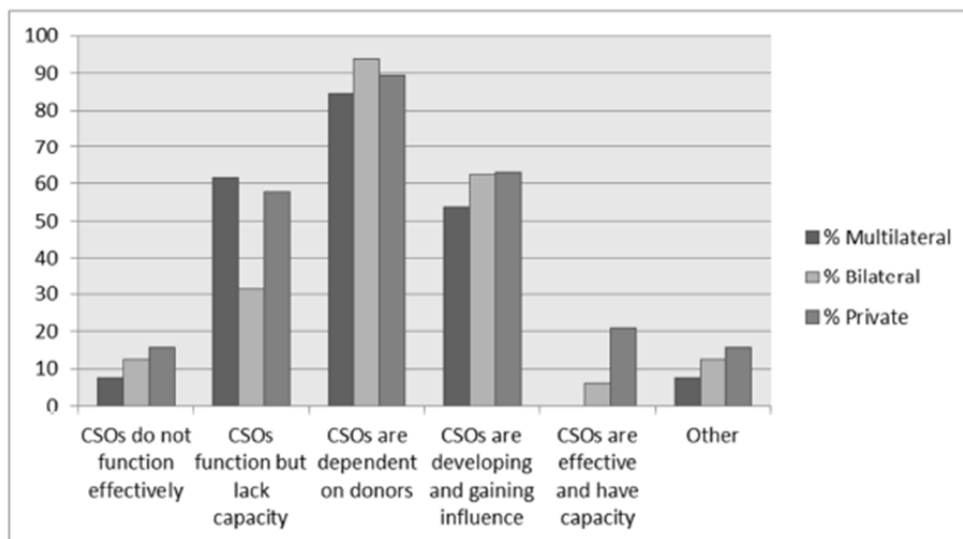
NOTE: Respondents were asked how they would evaluate CSOs in the country / region. They could select as many as they felt were relevant (n=48)

(Fagan and Sircar 2012, 22)

Lastly, donors drive Albanian CSOs to compete with one another for funding. Such an environment forces CSOs to allocating resources to this competition rather than understanding social issues, defining problems, coming up with solutions, and forming partnership.[157] This type

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[154] Fagan and Sircar, "Promoting Democracy in the Western Balkans after the Global Financial Crisis," 28-29.

[155] German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), "Strengthening civil society and democratic structures in Albania: Lessons learnt" (2010), http://www.gtz.de/en/dokumente/en-civil-society-democratic-structures-albania.pdf, 7.

[156] Amy and Gjermeni, "Where is the State in Albania?" 14-16

[157] Ibid, 15-16.

of environment is detrimental to a healthy civil society that in theory depends on collaboration to bring about democracy and fight for global causes. The communist legacy has left behind an economic and legal environment not hospitable for civil society, therefore CSOs in Albania struggle to exist and make an impact today.

The unsustainability of Albanian CSOs in democratization projects can be summed up by their overall lack of capacity (see Figure 6) due to a weak enabling environment. Again, CSOs often are missing adequate human and financial resources because Albanians do not often volunteer, engage in, or donate to CSOs. The low political, legal, and financial support from government exacerbates the lack of capacity that CSOs face. The move from CSO leaders to government likewise decreases the human capacity. Root causes in political culture for these phenomena have been discussed.

No Reconciliation with the Communist Past

Lastly, failure in reconciliation with its Communist past has impeded Albanian democracy and civil society's impact in democratization. Post-communist transitional justice failed in Albania because of a lack of political will on the part of Albanian politicians to punish perpetrators of human rights.[158] The state did not address gross human rights violations or bring to trial perpetrators who had committed crimes against the people during the authoritarian regime. Nor did it keep the participants of abuses during the communist regime from further pursuing their careers through new political positions. In Albania, politicians who had been active during the communist period, like Sali Berisha, took charge of new political parties after the transition to democracy. In fact, the Socialist party was originally an offshoot of the past Communist Party. As noted, when the new democracy attempted post-transitional justice in 1995 through the "Genocide Law," it hijacked the post-transitional justice process to persecute political opponents. Today there is no reconciliation between former communists and former victims. People who were imprisoned wrongly as victims of the regime now struggle to cope psychologically with their experiences and receive promised monetary compensation by the government for their imprisonment.[159] [160] Moreover, there are no truth commissions in Albania to openly discuss and share the past government's wrongdoings with the public.[161] The absence of resolution through post-transitional justice "ultimately led to loss of trust from the general public failing to detach the Albanian political scene from its communist past."[162] This failure in reconciliation and justice denied victim closure. It set up a negative environment upon which to build democracy and move forward into global integration.

Another example of Albanian society refusing to reconcile with its past is the case of the secret service files which remain closed to the public. This clear lack of transparency endangers open democracy by perpetuating the culture of distrust in Albania. Only few government officials have opened and used some of the secret files, usually to attack opponents.[163] However, many people doubt that the files are still authentic because it is most likely that the Communist party destroyed the files that would cause it harm and kept the ones that portray it more

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[158] Austin and Ellison, "Post-Communist Transitional Justice in Albania," 373.

[159] Bogdani, "Victims of Albanian Communism Struggle for Closure."

[160] Malm, "Albanian protestor turns himself into human torch."

[161] Horne, Cynthia M, "Transitional Justice and Social Trust in Post-Communist Countries." *Warsaw East European Review* 3 (2013): 140-141.

[162] Austin and Ellison, "Post-Communist Transitional Justice in Albania," 374.

[163] Bogdani, "Victims of Albanian Communism Struggle for Closure."

favorably. Albanians have little enthusiasm for opening the files, mostly because some view it as futile, and others do not want to revisit old pains.[164] [165] Few fervent Albanian intellectuals and civil society actors, like literature author Ismail Kadare, call for making public the secret service files. But this does not appear to be on the political or civil society agenda.

Civil society is also not doing its job of providing support in acknowledging and addressing the country's dark history. Civil society is not facilitating a public discourse on totalitarian ideas, decommunization,[166] and a "culture of remembrance."[167] Instead there is a culture of amnesia because most Albanians prefer to forget and move on from a sensitive and dark past. This hinders Albania's transition to democracy and participation in a global civil society because the country has not acknowledged honestly the effects of communism in order to determine how it will move forward. Civil society organizations like think tanks, NGOs, and education centers are not focusing on resolving conflicts between the old communist structure and the new "democratic/ market paradigm" that Albania is attempting to adapt.[168] Hence, Albania continues to show many traces from the totalitarian system despite technically having democratic institutions in place and a spot in world affairs.

VIII. Conclusion

According to mainstream political theorists, there exists an inherent relationship between civil society and democracy. Civil society is said to lead to democracy, while democracy is dependent on civil society. Moreover, the values of democracy, civil society, and global citizenship overlap, as a citizenry with democratic ideals often also contributes actively beyond the national layer to a global civil society. However Albanian civil society faces a major unique obstacle: the exceptional legacy of its past government, as Albania has one of most repressed histories under Hoxha's communism. Now one of the "third wave democracies," Albania is altering its political structures to meet the international standards for good governance and rule of law. Albania, which was arguably the most suppressive Eastern European totalitarian state, has made progress towards an open democracy, considering the short time period. After 1990, Albanian civil society grew from being almost nonexistent to filling in areas where the government was deficient in, such as social protection. Civil society's main job now is to facilitate Albania's democratization, to support the new democracy, and to engage in issues of global concern such as human rights and environmental sustainability. CSOs have begun to do this through training, advocacy for rule of law, and anti-corruption campaigns.

Yet Albanian civil society faces difficulties in its tasks because it functions in a country and society where the communist legacy is all too prominent. Albanian politics and civil society internally reflect aspects of the past communist rule. They harbor values and skills that are not well-suited for democracy or global citizenship (like a deficiency in civic engagement and advocacy) because the public sphere leaders today were educated and trained in the political culture of the authoritarian period. Albanians have little trust towards their government and civil society. As a result of oppression under the Communist Party, Albanians engage less in the public sphere whether for domestic or international matters. They maintain negative opinions

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[164] Austin and Ellison, "Post-Communist Transitional Justice in Albania."
[165] Malm, "Albanian protestor turns himself into human torch." 2012.
[166] Austin and Ellison, "Post-Communist Transitional Justice in Albania," 375
[167] Vogel, "The formation of active civil societies in post-communist states," 135.
[168] Amy and Gjermeni, "Where is the State in Albania?" 16.

towards politics and to some extent civil society itself. Furthermore, government, political parties, and civil society institutions seem to use authoritarian-like forms of ruling and decision-making, which are counteractive to an open democratic society.

Next, civil society has not been very successful in bringing about democratization because the external environment in which it works holds on to some detrimental influences from the previous regime. There is still tension between government and civil society, as the government fears opposition from civil society actors, just as it did during the dictatorship. The lack of advocacy and financial support from Albanian society and government has kept civil society relatively weak, and global citizenship rudimentary in Albania. Consequently, foreign donors have promoted civil society most, but have made CSOs financially unsustainable and top-down in the process. Albanian CSOs lack financial and human capacity largely because they do not operate in an encouraging, enabling environment.

Lastly, Albania's moving forward with democratization and international causes is hindered by the fact that the country and people have not reconciled with their own dark history through adequate post-transitional justice. Addressing these internal and external factors of civil society and its environment gives insight into why civil society struggles to lead Albania toward democracy today. With these root issues being laid out and examined, Albania has the potential to move forward and become a democracy that is led by an active citizenry in national and world affairs.