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Threading the Waves of Development in East Central Europe. Democratic Transition and the Crafting of Emerging Donors' Development Policies¹

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The main goal of this research is to explore the ways in which civil society and academia became intrinsically connected to each other in post 1989 East Central European countries as revealed through comparative analyses of their recent international development policies. While most East Central European countries were involved in offering aid during communism, they have also benefitted from such assistance themselves after 1989. The simultaneity of being both a donor and a recipient of development funds that these countries faced, created a rather unique occasion for postcommunist civil society and academia to become involved in the process of setting the policy agenda and policy formulation. I argue that the interaction between scholars, civil society and governments in the process of constructing international development policies is unprecedented in both scope and substance and consequently led not only to raised awareness on the importance of international aid, but that it also consolidated democracy within each new donor country through more participatory policy making and the strengthening of the dialogue between civil society, academia and the government.

In this paper I explore how civil society and state actors interacted in the process of development policy making in East Central Europe. I chose international development because it makes for a special case of policy that allows/requires more input from the citizenry than traditional foreign policy making.

In NMS, civil society and state (and academia) interacted atypically in order to respond to EU pressure to form/adopt a development policy. I argue that in this case, because of both top down (from the EU) and bottom up (from the civil society) pressures, development policy got onto the agenda, formed more effectively and more democratically than other (especially foreign) postcommunist policy areas. Furthermore, I also argue that because of the democratic design/process of this policy, there were

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positive effects on the general public, through a sort of feedback loop/by product effects (at the level of political values), thus also contributing to strengthening support for democracy in NMS.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, I briefly review concepts and ideas from civil society in postcommunist countries, participatory policy making and political opportunity structure in order to prepare an analytical framework. Second, I discuss the origins and evolution of development policy making in East Central Europe, and I briefly touch upon the ways in which the process of formulating this policy impacted broader societal political values. Third, I draw a case study on Romania, in which I fully develop my argument, based on both secondary data analysis and on interviews I conducted with stakeholders involved in the policy making process. In the concluding section I discuss the limitations of my research and directions for future exploration.

1. Analytical framework.

In post-communist East Central Europe the issue of civil society has been thorny from the very beginning of the transition process. On the one hand, there was significant talk about the need to “construct” a vibrant civil society, in a Toquevillean train of thought, one which is a true arena of representation of various interest, that puts pressure on governments for further change, one that represents those who do not feel represented by political parties (and given the low confidence in political institutions in the area, those were many!). Consequently, many authors deplored the fragility and indeed sometimes the crass inexistence of such civil society in post totalitarian states. The idea of civil society (mostly NGOs) felt foreign, especially after branches of international/transnational NGOs failed to secure popular support and legitimacy (according to surveys). On the other hand, in some countries, the lively and committed opposition to communist regimes (especially in Central Europe) could have been perceived as civil society actors with high legitimacy that need to re-convert their interests/strategies in the post 1989 decades and could have successfully become major actors on the civil society stage. Nevertheless, nobody could also preclude emerging civil society from also embracing somewhat less democratic ideals – as testified by many groups/associations leaning towards New Right movements and supporting anti-liberal/populist/radical goals. Finally, acceptance by the state of the roles/importance of the civil society in post communist East Central Europe has been cumbersome at best. In this context, in the year 2013, one is more than two decades away from such early efforts to (re)construct civil society: “Among the man challenges of transition, the task of rebuilding a civil society able to provide underpinnings for working democracy was considered especially difficult. Yet, despite well-founded doubts about whether civil societies would be able to recover from decades of communist suppression, we have seen significant gains across the region in many countries vibrant and well-organized civil societies have emerged. [...] there are also very few instances of significant grass-roots extremist movements of civil-society actors mobilized in support of illiberal values and policies” (Ekiert, 2012).

I. Civil society in CEE

Civil society is usually connected with associationalism (Kaldor and Vejvoda, 1997). Multiple non-governmental organizations that determine split loyalties and overlapping identities are at the base of

American pluralism. However, Cohen and Arato (1994) qualify the term, and ask what is the probability of seeing multiple groups in Central and Eastern Europe as compared to cases of consolidated democracies. Carothers (1999) explains that foreign imported associations, or associational ideas do not grow roots in Central and Eastern Europe because there is no tradition for them. In addition, Kaldor and Vajvoda (1997) explain that civil society is a more familiar term for some countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Hungary, Slovakia and, in the late 80s, Poland becomes the epitome of civil society through the Solidarity movement) while the rest are not familiar with the concept. Ekiert (1991) also asserts that the breakdown of the communist regime created a dramatic decrease in popularity and authority of both state and civil society, and resulted in apathy.

Even if Putnam is offering fairly detailed recipes for a flourishing civil society that will benefit the democratic polity, different countries follow these recipes differently, according to their respective historical, social and cultural contexts. It is thus important to focus on the effect on civic skills and political participation from those organizations that actually seem to fare better after the breakdown of the communist regime in terms of popularity and participation rates.

According to Mishler and Rose (1997), disappointments caused by democratic transition creates political malaise, observable in decreasing rates of turnout among other things. According to Barnes (2001), there are few political institutions that have been left uncompromised by the communist regime. For example, trade unions represent part of the communist inheritance. High rates of participation in trade unions after 1989 are to be understood by their quasi-mandatory membership status.

Civil society in development in Romania and Hungary – through the lens of political opportunity structure

The difference in measurement – how people feel about NGOs and how many NGOs there are actually and what they do (Ekiert, 2012).

II. Participatory policy making

Participatory policy making is at the core of democracy. Schneider and Ingram (1997) propose a new model of public policy making that draws from critical theory, but tries to apply abstract ideas to the field of pragmatic policy making, and to see how democracy itself is affected by public policy. Their thesis is that "policy designs have significant consequences for democracy" (Schneider and Ingram, 1997: 67). They construct a causal chain that shows the course of policy making. Three important units are interconnected by mechanisms of communicating and information transmission. The three units are: the societal context, the issue context and the policy design. The societal context is the prevailing "democratic status" of a society in terms of democratic values, norms and rules, and people's attitudes towards the system. The societal context affects the issue context by mechanisms. Interpretations of the societal context, of events, groups and knowledge determine which issues are put forth. The issue context is thus constructed by those actors who have an interest in it, but also reflects the distribution of power and prevailing institutional cultures. An issue context originates in interpretations of reality,

offered by those interested in the issue, and not in facts of reality, as many previous approaches argue. The issue context then affects the policy design by a process of design dynamics. The policy design contains goals and objectives, agents and implementation structures, targets, rules and tools, and rationales and assumptions. Design is then critically important for democracy because it formalizes who gets what, when, how and why. Often, as the authors imply, the result of policy is heavily influenced by the construction of target groups and social construction of knowledge. Extensive reliance on these two mechanisms leads, in the authors' views, to degenerative policy making, because policy design closes the feed-back loop. Design affects the societal context by a process of translation dynamics.

Schneider and Ingram's argument, according to which the policy design influences the development of democracy, is persuasive. Their theoretical causal chain has as originating point the issue context that determines the policy design that eventually affects the societal context, and thus the value of democracy itself. I build on this causal chain, but I adapt it to conditions of democratization. I claim that in the policy design for democratization the causal chain starts with the policy design that creates democratic values and norms, and is thus the manufacturer of a societal context. Schneider and Ingram's model works best in consolidated democracies, particularly the American one, in which by more democratic policy designs, extant inequalities can be remedied. I show that the causal chain can be adapted to democratizing cases and discuss the consequences of this adaptation.

In the context of the role of policy design on democracy, the differences between consolidated democracies and transitional ones are the following. First, policy design has an impact on democracy, in good or bad terms, only when people have internalized the rules of the democratic game. Only when certain groups are not expected to attack other groups violently, can the policy design be considered an efficient tool in ensuring more democracy. Second, the effect of empowering citizens by policy design is possible only when there are existing inequalities, which translates into the idea that there are groups that have been traditionally advantaged, and groups that have been traditionally disadvantaged, and thus a shift in a balance can be operated. Briefly, the "democratizing" role of policy design, as originating in social constructions of the issue, is such only when there are inequalities to be remedied and a commitment to remedy them by democratic means.

Transitional democracies do not dispose of any of those conditions, especially those that operate a change from a highly egalitarian communist system. My claim is then the following: in transitional democracies the design of certain policies creates "value", in both showing what is valuable, and who is valuable. Policy design, then, becomes a resource for the government by entitling some groups and building the new citizenry. The policy design framework is useful in its emphasis on social constructions and the dynamism of public policy.

Pre-communist and communist pasts are relevant factors in explaining democratic outcomes (Ekiert, 1991).

III. Political opportunity structure

There are three major schools of thought within social movement literature. The classical model focuses on the importance of grievances: either a strain at the system level or at any individual/group level, this

strain results in a social movement, by a variety of mechanisms, from alienation and anxiety to cognitive dissonance, and normative ambiguity (McAdam, 1982). The people play the most important role in this approach, albeit the only role. The pitfall of this theory is thus its ignorance of the context. If, in general, explanations of the demise of communism in Central and Eastern Europe emphasize the importance of the structure, the grievances model focuses solely on agency.

The second model is the resource mobilization approach. Conceptualized by McCarthy and Zald, but widely used in an elite approach to politics, the approach stresses the importance of resources that groups can secure, as opposed to a more or less constant ever present amount of grievances. The difference between this and the previous model resides in the fact that the resource mobilization approach connects grievances to the context by introducing resources in the equation. Agency thus enters in contact with structure. The major deficiency though resides in the inability of making a distinction between social movements and mere interest groups. In the context of the 1989 revolutions, what can constitute a resource, and are those resources available at the same time in every country?

Finally, the third approach is the political opportunities model that stresses the importance of openings at the power structure. According to Tarrow (1998), political opportunities are “consistent – but not necessarily formal, permanent or national – dimensions of the political struggle that encourage people to engage in contentious politics” (19-20). Donatella Della Porta adds that the political opportunity structure is “the set of environmental opportunities and constraints available to social movements” (Della Porta, 1995:10). In the Eastern European context, Oberschall (1996) uses this approach to explain the non-violent character of the uprisings of 1989.

Every explanation of the five listed above falls into one of the three models of social movement formation literature. The predominance of structure is obvious: external things happened that triggered the mobilization of agency. Grievances exist and so do resources and opportunities, but what is the bridge that unites these three units. How do people interpret grievances, what constitute resources and how are they used? How are political opportunities interpreted?

These questions suggests a need in shifting the focus from either agency or structure, to both of them, to their mutual constitution. Constructivism is the approach that brings valuable insight in this project.

Ekiert (1996) offers a quasi-constructivist account of the revolutions of 1989. His strategy is a macro-historical comparative approach that leads him to believe that critical junctures in history determined the breakdown of communism. Budapest in 1956, Prague in 1968, and Poland in the early 80's are arenas of dissidence, that transform both the regime and the people and prepare them for the events of 1989, and perhaps for the phase of transition. The author groups the five classical explanations into one overarching constructivist approach and tries to make sense of them. Legitimacy and economics together with international political opportunities influence each other and concur in preparing the field for the final revolutions. However, his account fails to specify the creation of dissidence as groups at either moments in time, and he ignores the issue of identity.

I argue that the way development policy is constantly constructed and reconstructed can be best understood by reference to both social movements and policy design literature, and I argue that, at least in Romania, from the interaction between civil society and the MFA, multiple positive results came, that did not only impact the shape, scope and objectives of the policy itself, but it also contributed to the democratization of the Romanian society – by some sort of feedback/backfire positive effect.

2. International development

Usually associated with a certain post-colonial flavor, and with contradictory motivations ranging from international solidarity to instrumentalization towards promoting economic strategic interests, international development entered relatively late the practice and especially the theory of international relations. Initially designed as a top-down approach, related to Rostow's neoliberalism as blueprint for development, conventional development focused on the IMF and the World Bank as main actors in orchestrating aid/assistance to underdeveloped countries. Grounded in the modernization paradigm, at the very beginning, the focus fell almost exclusively on economic development. Later on, specialists started to talk about alternative development, the term receiving broader understandings, to include more areas in addition to economics, such as political, cultural or even gender perspectives, an approach in which the direction was more from the bottom up, acknowledging that recipient countries know best what works and does not work for them, and the principle of ownership was coined. NGOs became major players in this paradigm, especially those working at the grassroots level. Finally, critical developmentalist/postdevelopmentalist approaches, associated with the works of Escobar, Esteva or Sassen, started to inquire into the overall usefulness of international development, seen as indeed only preserving inequality, and not really improving the lives of those in need. For instance it was found that the discourse on poverty alleviation actually creates more poverty by the ways in which poverty is constructed and measured as both academic concept and working strategy.

The policy of development cooperation assistance is implicitly included in the sphere of foreign policy, although it is not always explicitly done so. The special regime of development as policy is caused by several factors. First, development is often conceived of as multilateral concerted effort, which is a departure from classical/realist conceptualizations of foreign policy, traditionally associated with the state. Second, development policy brings together state and non state actors, with NGOs playing a more important part in policy making (formulation, priorities, instruments, legitimacy) than in traditional foreign policy making. Third, development seems to include much more public opinion than foreign policy, with donors (both state and supranational structures) conducting multiple surveys in order to measure the public support for such projects (Otter, 2003).

I. Foreign policy and public opinion

The importance that public opinion is commonly believed to have in the context of foreign policy ranges from minimal – an ill-informed, passive, manipulable audience, to more rational, analytical people, understanding the priorities and interests of each state's international role. One of the traditional views was formulated by Almond (1961, not coincidentally the same author of the Civic Culture), according to which the American public would accept almost any foreign policy as long as it fit within some vague

limits (non-interventionism for a while, for example; Cold War mentality for another while, etc.). Moreover, foreign policy is the one policy with the least restricting relationship with public opinion. Hence, scholars in the 1960s considered the Almond-Lippmann Consensus as the quintessential view on the irrelevance of American public opinion on foreign policy matters. Of course, since then, significant research was conducted that contradicts it, or at least amends it. For example, Page and Shapiro (1984) showed that public opinion is rational and consistent, while Mueller (1973) argued that the American public is able and willing to express informed opinions even in matters of defense and military policies. More recent research (Powlick and Katz, 1998) asserts that the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy is intermediated by the mass-media (like it is the case with any policy). Risse-Kappen (1991) argues that domestic structure and coalition building processes mediate and condition the effect of public opinion on foreign policy, in liberal democracies (US, UK, Germany and Japan).

Although the impact of public opinion on foreign policy seems to be conditioned by many aspects (institutional, cultural), the core values that citizens hold are difficult to unpack, and they do not necessarily refer only to the state level, but rather reflect views of the world, of the international system, and of the roles that one's country has to assume on the international stage (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993). Diven and Constantelos (2009) explored the previous idea further and found that the ways in which people portray international aid is filtered through their beliefs systems, and engage their views on the role of government, on individualism, their trust of the state institutions, their education and information.

The book edited by Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane *Ideas and Foreign Policy. Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change* (1993) explores the ways in which ideas influence policy, and, more specifically, what types of ideas, under what circumstances and in what contexts determine what kinds of policy outcomes, when speaking about foreign policy: „ideas as well as interests have causal weight in explanations on human actions” (4). The role of ideas is discussed in response to rationalism in international relations and also to „reflectivism” (in fact constructivism). While the constructivists claim that identities and interests are endogenous to interaction is accepted as a valuable starting point, the authors criticize the antiempirical bias extant in much reflectivist work.

My conceptualization of ideas and their roles in international relations is very similar to the one adopted by Goldstein and Keohane, and refers to „particular beliefs – shared by large numbers of people – about the nature of their worlds that have implications for human action. Such beliefs range from general moral principles to agreement on a specific application of scientific knowledge” (7). Although in this paper I don't show how ideas impact behavior, the approach mentioned above shows proof that ideas matter. I also consider useful the tripartite categorization that Goldstein and Keohane have of beliefs, namely into worldviews, principled beliefs and causal beliefs. The world views are a type of very broad and broadly accepted ideas – for instance religion, or big paradigms such as sovereignty, human rights. The principled beliefs consist of „normative ideas that specify criteria for distinguishing right from wrong and just from unjust” (9). It is in this second category that I believe the political culture approach can find its way into international relations research. These principled beliefs „mediate between world views and particular policy conclusions; they translate fundamental doctrines into guidance for contemporary human action” (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993, 9). Thus, when asked how they feel about citizenship,

freedom, safety, alliances, and so on, citizens respond according to broader beliefs that reflect their world views, but the questions tap into more specific beliefs, composing the respective world view. The third category is even more specific, causal beliefs referring to „cause-effect relationships which derive authority from the shared consensus of recognized elites’ (10). Although it is possible and helpful to distinguish between these three categories analytically, „in social life, all three aspects of ideas may be linked” (10-11).

From this last perspectives, development policy has the potential of influencing democracy within the donor’s political community since questions are often structured along the lines of core political/democratic values, such as solidarity, freedom, human rights, etc. This is not to say that development policy does not include a strategic element, but rather that it enjoys a more privileged status, a status, I argue, is important in placing it between national/domestic policy making (mostly legitimated through public opinion) and traditional foreign policy making, and a status that makes it a potential vehicle for further democratization both within and outside the country.

II. Development policy in NMS

It is important to understand to what extent the NMS managed to switch from a receiver to a donor country mentality (Rehbichler,2005). Because of their communist past, these countries are considered as not having a tradition of offering international aid or offering it through rather ideological channels (Carbone, 2004, Michaux, 2002). It is unclear whether NMS knew what the EU’s expectations from them was (the 32nd chapter of integration, out of 31 sic!). Some NMS use their debt cancellations to some countries, such as Iraq and report it as aid (the same with Romania and aid to Moldova). NMS like the concept of tied aid because it is easier to legitimate the policy in their countries (Hayes, 2007). Lightfoot describes CEE aid according to quantity of aid, quality of aid, and the geographical focus and scope of aid. Regarding the geographical focus, there were suspicions that the NMS will not focus on ACP countries, since they have limited experience with these countries and not a significant foreign policy extending beyond Europe. Only Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland are presumed to have such policies, and, not surprisingly, Poland identified Angola and Tanzania as countries in focus, both former socialist countries (Baginski, 2007). Some things and priorities changed with the EU enlargement; for example, the gender equality/reproductive rights issues are heated debates in CEE, and these countries are more into promoting democracy and good governance.

International development policies in new EU member states became pressing once these countries entered the union. The need for formulating and indeed implementing such policies is part and parcel of the *aquis communautaire*, and, for the most part, NMS handled it as yet another requirement to fulfill, rather than a substantive issue area. Perceiving it as a legal/contractual obligation is no surprise when one considers the fact that NMS do not have a colonial past, and, consequently, do not feel postcolonial

guilt. By the same token, NMS do not have significant experience with offering international assistance aid, having more experience as recipients of funds rather than donors. In this context, NMS' approach to IDC was characterized by a patchwork/intuitive character, understanding IDC as a component of their foreign policy and their quest for establishing/consolidating themselves as regional leaders, complemented by an attempt to revive their former communist alliances (most of them having had the experience of offering international assistance before 1989, with the inherent ideological/Cold War limitations). Some authors (Oprea) argue that postcommunist EU member states should indeed capitalize on their pre-democratization donor experience, rather than follow shyly in the footsteps of major donors such as the EU.

Therefore, according to Vegh (2013) "the international development cooperation (IDC) policy documents of NMSs, the influence of the general values, goals, priorities of these organizations (i.e. EU, OECD) along with those of the United Nation's Millenium Development Goals (MDG) are clearly visible" (1). The Monterrey Consensus, reiterated by the EU Council Conclusions in 2005 set the financial targets for NMS amounting to 0.17% of their GNI by 2010 and 0.33% of their GNI by 2015, ultimately reaching the more ambitious 0.7% of GNI, decided upon in the article 42 of the Monterrey consensus. None of the postcommunist EU member states reached their financial targets so far.

In addition to contributing to development through multilateral channels, thus implicitly adhering to the EU's wide development goals, the NMSs tried hard to identify a niche for their modest yet potentially significant contribution, and that niche was to capitalize on their democratic transition experience (most of the NMSs having successfully consolidated as democracies – sic!) and turn it into an exportable product (somewhat core to principles such as good governance but also including experiences with transition to market economy). Securing such a niche was important given the NMSs' lack of experience with offering international assistance, while it also offered a possibility for strengthening their regional contribution within the EU, raising their status and constructing a positive image of pro active innovating actors. Consequently, Article 33 of the European Consensus on Development (2006) established transition management as a new element in the EU's development strategy, although without having clearly operationalized it.

The European Transition Compendium initiated by DG DEV "a collection of the new member states' transition experiences [...] [which] serves to create the foundation for a structured approach to the use of transition experience on the EU level, and by doing so, it contributed to the fulfillment of the European Consensus. The document intends to enhance the contribution of the new member states, and by making their expertise available for wider audiences, it is assumed to increase the countries' involvement in the EU's development policy (European Commission n.d., ii.) (Vegh 2013, 2). The European Transition Compendium thus includes six policy areas connected to democratic transition and consolidation in postcommunist countries EU member states which could potentially include valuable lessons for beneficiary of development assistance, areas considered at the same time to circumscribe the Central and Eastern European success stories and lessons learnt. Those 6 areas are: Agriculture, Land Market Reform and Environment Related Issues, Democracy, Human Rights and Political/Institutional Reforms, Economic Reforms – Transition to a Market Based Economy, Human Development, Management of External Aid and Regional and Local Development. From the perspective

of this paper, the general message of the ETC revolves around two key issues. First, the postcommunist member states raise EU's awareness vis-à-vis the importance of taking into consideration the needs of recipient communities, very much along the lines of ownership. Second, donor countries and organizations should include all stakeholders in the donor country when formulating and implementing development policy, especially civil society actors – thus representing an implicit recognition of the major role of local/national civil society actors in each new donor. Indeed, as this paper suggests, in both Romania and Hungary, civil society was more informed, proactive and better equipped to draw a development strategy than were the Ministries responsible for it (in both Romania and Hungary, the ministry responsible with ODA is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – MFA).

III. Development policy and public opinion in NMS

- There is a lot of variety within the EU (the Scandinavian countries are though consistently the highest supporters of development)
- Poland (2010): significant support for development (growing, despite recession); increased awareness of MDGs; two reasons widely accepted: “moral duty” and “clear conscience”
- Romania (2009) - mixed results: most people think rich countries have to help poor countries (less so the women, and the very educated); reasons: moral duty, Romania is a poor country, reciprocity
- Public opinion results
- In this section I review the quantitative data sets that could be employed in order to test my research question. The ideal dataset would have to fulfill three criteria simultaneously First, it should include different countries in order to allow for comparisons. Second, it should have also been conducting for a number of years in order to allow for comparisons in time. Third, the data should include both traditional measures of political culture and attitudes/values towards international objects. As the story shows, there are very few such datasets. My goal in this section is two-fold. First, I discuss the availability of data. Second, based on primary exploratory analysis and/or analysis of data reports I aim to see whether the modernization of values thesis may find support.
- The Transatlantic Trends Survey is an annual American and European public opinion database, exploring the relationship between the US and the EU, and their views on important aspects of foreign policy. The countries surveyed are the US, Turkey and 12 EU member states: Bulgaria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. It is a very important database because it allows comparisons in both time and space. Although initially it started with one survey (reflecting mostly Transatlantic views on foreign policy), in the last years the authors started collecting data for two subsequent datasets: one on immigration and one of how the political/administrative elite in the countries under analysis see issues of foreign policy (thus allowing for comparisons between elites and the masses).

- Their 2009 report indicates that the Obama effect in Central and Eastern Europe did not have such a strong impact as it did in Western Europe. It is known that the postcommunist member states of the EU were favorable to president's Bush foreign policy ambitions (the coalition of the willing), while most of the traditional EU members states were not. Under these circumstances it was to be expected to see this reverse situation with Central and Eastern Europe becoming less supportive of the Obama presidency, while Western Europe rejoiced. Within the group of new EU member states, Romania remained the most fervent supporter of America, followed by Poland, and at great distance by Slovakia and Bulgaria. Western Europe was also much more concerned with Russia's weakening democracy, in comparison to East Central Europe. Finally, East Central Europe was much less inclined to get involved in the fight against climate change, and, consequently, it was not supporting plans that curtailed economic growth in order to fight global warming. These findings confirm the preference for a rather „realist” view of foreign policy – observable both in the support of the Bush administration's war on terror and in the support of „modern” core values rather than postmaterial values (in the Inglehart/Welzel understanding of these terms). This indicates a potential embeddedness of political values at the domestic level with those guiding foreign policy.
- This very idea finds further support in the 2005/2006 reports from the same survey, that show that democracy promotion is supported more in the EU than in the US, a rather counterintuitive result. Nevertheless, there are large differences between the ways in which democracy promotion should take place, with Europeans supporting more „liberal” methods, such as the monitoring of elections or support granted to political dissidence, while the US prefers more „realist” methods including economic and political sanctions, and, of course, the use of military force. Not coincidentally, the preferred courses of action of the European public are very similar to the views of those self-declared as Democrats in the US. It is therefore obvious that matters of foreign policy are filtered and internalized through the lenses of domestic policies (the set of core values that Keohane talked about being consistent).
- The declared aim of this exploratory research was to see whether political values relating to domestic, transnational and international objects are correlated in any way. Unfortunately, Eurobarometer 67.1. from 2007 is the only one that includes measures of political values within the society, and also attitudes towards the European Union and international aid (as a proxy of foreign policy object).
- Not surprisingly, in both non and post communist parts of the EU, „peace” is the value that enjoys the most support from all the respondents. Nonetheless, there are also differences between core political values in postcommunist countries and those of the people in the West. For instance, postcommunist citizens value entrepreneurship and respect of history more, while Western EU citizens value freedom of opinion, tolerance and solidarity more. These differences are interesting especially because they reflect differences along the lines of modernization/postmodernization theses; while postcommunist citizens are at the beginning of a sequence of modernization, thus emphasizing competition, their western counterparts are at the postmaterial end of the spectrum and value identity issues more (solidarity is stigmatized in

East Central Europe). Correlatively, postcommunist citizens are much more supportive of EU as a continent of culture, as a culture of diversity, as common history, suggesting that the official discourse at the leadership of the union has more appeal there. It is also interesting to note that Bulgaria is the country with the highest level of support for all these historical „definitions” of the EU. The Eastern and Western parts of the EU public opinion differ as well on the reasons and goals that people believe are at the basis of involvement in international development. Thus, while postcommunist citizens believe that getting involved is motivated by the need to construct political allies and avoid emigration, citizens in the West believe that these reasons revolve around democracy promotion, helping the poor people, or even self-interested strategies. Correspondingly, postcommunist respondents think that the main goals of their countries’ involvement in international development revolve around health and poverty issues, while their counterparts place a heavier emphasis on gender equality, sustainable development and the global partnership for development.

- The Eurobarometer findings are confirmed by the last wave of World Values Survey data, in which a comparison between Poland, Romania and Bulgaria on the one hand, and some Western EU countries and Norway on the other, reveals differences in the emphasis placed on core political values. For instance, postcommunist citizens value „secure surroundings” more than Western citizens, reflecting both the high conditions of living in the latter category and, implicitly, the validity of the modernization thesis. This finding is corroborated by the fact that Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian citizens value more the importance of being „rich” or „successful” and less the importance of „helping others”, and „having a good time”. The same views impact the ways in which postcommunist people perceive the international system. For example, more postcommunist respondents than Western citizens believe that international peacekeeping should be decided by the nation state rather than by regional organizations or the United Nations (33% of the postcommunist subsample, in comparison to 23% of the non-communist subsample). The same stands for the view on who should decide in matters of human rights, with the differences being more marked here (46.7% versus 22.4%). The centering on the nation state as the ultimate international actor, and which should keep all its attributions while not delegating to intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations is similar in postcommunist countries to the position held by citizens in the United States. Interestingly, there are less postcommunist than Western citizens that believe that international aid should be more of a state’s’ privilege.
- In terms of international development the Eurobarometer 73.5 from 2010 was specifically aimed at gathering attitudes towards aid, but, unfortunately it does not include measures of „domestic” political culture. Overall, all members of the EU (new and old) tend to have consistently high support for international development, and commitment to development, at least at the level of principle, is uniformly distributed. Nevertheless, there are differences in awareness of what development is or can be between East and West. Additionally, and not unexpectedly there is a rather large difference between volunteering and money giving for causes related to international aid, with about 37.8% of the Western respondents having done

either, while only 11.2% of the postcommunist respondents did so. There are also differences in perceptions of Africa as the most important target of international aid policies; while the West looks at poverty alleviation and democracy and human rights policies in Africa, the postcommunist perceptions believes that more attention should be given to corruption amelioration and to peace and security, as global issues. This is somewhat in line with the modernization/postmodernization theses and will be discussed at greater length in the following analysis.

- I also looked at two national surveys, conducted with the specific goal of finding out people's awareness and support for development. The Polish survey from 2010 reveals that there is growing support for development, despite recession and increased awareness of the Millennium Development Goals (probably a consequence of efficient policies in the realm of awareness education). Moreover, the two widely accepted reasons for supporting development are "moral duty" and "having a clear conscience". In 2009 a similar survey was conducted in Romania (although less comprehensive) and the results are similar to the Polish survey's findings. Thus, a majority of Romanians believe that rich countries need to help poor countries (it is interesting to gather whether the public believes Romania to be rich or poor), and the women and the highly educated people support development less (probably a consequences of the right wing economic preference of the educated young people). The reasons for supporting such policies are, again, centered upon "moral duty", and "reciprocity" (Romania was/is also a poor country that needs help). The focus on "moral duty", "clear conscience", "reciprocity" attest a modern mentality regarding development, in which the altruistic reasons or even the economic reasons are suffocated by preoccupations with global security and Christian piety.
- This cursory glance through the available data suggests that attitudes and beliefs reflecting both national and international dimensions of the "political" may be inter-linked. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about the literature(s) discussing the roles and effects of societal attitudes in domestic and international matters respectively. The research agenda should thus include efforts at interdisciplinary hybridization, especially since comparative politics and international relations are not necessarily such different matters.

3. Romania's ODA policy

Romania's ODA strategy reflects a constant and beneficial process of interaction between the MFA (the Ministry in charge of ODA and NGDOs, non governmental organizations involved in development, grouped in a federation FOND).

I. The view from the top

The Romanian ODA strategy (2011-2015) is officially formulated as complementary to both its foreign and commercial policies and to its other domestic policies and to the EU's wide development strategy. From the very beginning, the MFA recognizes the merits of multilateral coordination/implementation of ODA (namely through the EU), warranted by both its organization and coordination advantages, and by Romania's limited experience and funding with providing development assistance. Nevertheless, bilateral agreements, bilateral development aid is also included in the beginning paragraph, albeit of a lesser importance than multilateral policy making. The strategy states both general and specific objectives. The main general objective is the reduction of poverty, through multilateral channels, while ODA is also viewed as one of the most importance vehicles for attaining the general foreign policy objectives of the country, namely: active involvement on the security-good governance-sustainable development dimension, concentrating on transversal topics where Romania has a comparative advantage, raising the country's profile (presence and quality of involvement) in conceptual debates, and better representing the country in (capital/profile) within international organizations. There are 7 specific objectives that operationalize the main idea:

1. Participating in the EU's issue oriented or regional initiatives, including both those in which Romania identified geographical and substantial priorities and those specific to the EU's collective engagements/development policy, especially regarding Africa.
2. Fulfilling the engagements regarding the percentages from GNI destined to ODA (0.17% until 2010 and 0.33% until 2015) and also regarding offering assistance in field in which there commitments towards the EU, fields in which Romania does not have the expertise or the resources necessary for bilateral contributions.
3. Intensifying participation in the system of international organizations, especially the UN agencies, whose activities are directly related to the MDG.
4. Fulfilling the engagements related to the EU for financing globally measures to fight climate change and adjustments to their negative effects.
5. Facilitating access in the administrative structures responsible for multilateral projects and funding, especially regarding UN projects and other various executive and decision making structures, in the case of significant and constant contributions.
6. Ensuring presence in both central and field missions of international organizations that present multiple benefits: on the one hand participation has an important role in the process of selecting technical assistance, and, on the other hand it offers the possibility of capitalizing (at the state level "in calitate nationala") on good work relations with governments, NGOs and private actors in the recipient countries.
7. Ensuring increased visibility through the use of multilateral channels.

The priorities in allocation multilateral ODA reflect a constant preoccupation with the selection of the international organizations to whom Romania commits for the implementation of development policies. The Romanian MFA prefers to allocate resources to a limited (reduced) number of organizations, which

are relevant and whose objectives concord with those of Romania, an efficacious organization, although not always necessarily an organization that specializes in development per se (one should not exclude organizations that do not have as central mandate cooperation for development, but nevertheless play an important role in the field, at global or regional level). The contributions will be made according to a coordinated action plan and continuity (of annual contributions) should be an important principle (when there is a specific foreign policy goal (for example holding or winning a position in an international organization) punctual/one time only contributions will also be considered.)

The priority domains/topics/fields are established in concordance with Romania's previous 2006 ODA strategy. Multilateral assistance is deemed the main instrument through which the country can get involved actively in regions and domains not directly related to bilateral policy objectives but to which Romania committed as an EU member state (e.g. support for sub-Saharan African countries, fighting HIV/AIDS, supporting education, climate change). Romania will work in principle with international organizations with whom it had previous successful experiences and with whom long lasting strategic partnerships will be sought. The MFA also considers an organization's administrative costs in deciding where to pledge its support, although those are not a principal selection criterion. The funds that Romania dedicates to multilateral ODA do not have a special destination, instead, the strategy insists on strategically and responsibly using them. The MFA aims to dedicate 75% of its ODA budget to bilateral assistance granted through bilateral and multilateral channels and 25% to multilateral assistance, by 2015. Bilateral assistance through multilateral channels will benefit from most of the budget since Romania, allegedly does not have sufficient expertise and qualified human resources to get engaged in more bilateral activities.

II. An NGDO response

In response to MFA's official rather non engaging and fundamentally multilateral approach, the Romanian civil society specialized in development oppose a more substantial/proactive plan, designed to increase Romania's visibility as emergent donor, and strengthening its profile, by capitalizing on its historical relationships with developing countries (capital of image, Mirela Oprea) and especially on the already impressive record of NGDO's activities.

During its 2009 annual meeting, FOND elaborated a document that both criticizes Romania's passive/peripheral approach to development and suggests directions for improvement. The representatives of Romanian NGDOs see 4 causes for the unsatisfactory status quo, namely: the Romanian's government lack of interest in the potential impact of ODA and its advantages in terms of visibility, the continuous rotation of MFA personnel assigned to the ODA unit, the rather small budget allocated for ODA (after contributions to the EU and the European Development Fund and the money for scholarships disbursed through the Ministry of Education are taken into consideration), and, perhaps, most importantly, the MFA's preference towards externalizing its ODA activities through UNDP Romania, thus both deliberately diminishing indigenous expertise and also overpaying in international organizations' budgets, since Romania already pays dues to the UN.

The Director Council sees several benefits and positive consequences for a new and coherent development policy for Romania:

1. Raising Romania's visibility and credibility as a responsible actor within the framework of EU's External Relations
2. Creating contacts and relations with partner states (beneficiaries) which can lead to economically mutually advantageous relationships and also to the diversification of these relationships (considering the desirability of reducing dependence on the EU market)
3. Raising Romania's awareness to act diplomatically through making new allies
4. Changing the country's image in Europe and in the world (as a credible and involved donor, not just beneficiary and a country where all the beggars are coming from)
5. Improving the level/performance of human resources (both governmental and non-governmental, corporate, youth, etc.) through acquiring new competences, abilities, etc.
6. (consequence) by rerouting funds to more bilateral ventures (Romanian's NGOs could work on MFA money and so some of the development would come back to Romania).
7. (consequence) attracting qualified work force in Romania (reversing the effects of migration)
8. Creating comparative advantages for Romanian's companies on emerging markets.

The fact that MFA only gives little money to Romanian NGOs is deplorable, especially since those proved their competence and worth by applying both as main applicant and as partners in many competitive European grant competition, and having already run projects (in development) for a lot of money. According to the authors, Romanian's NGOs attracted during the years of 2007-2009 about 1.5 million Euros – external money.

Under such circumstances, FOND makes a few proposals: raising the attention given to ODA by MFA and the government in general, developing a local/owned/indigenous ODA mainly geared around bilateral aid, multiannual planning, creating/perfecting the legislative framework (money disbursement ability, etc.), cooperating more with the civil society, elaborating bilateral assistance with Moldova, Serbia and Georgia in partnership with governmental and non-governmental actors in those countries, forming a national agency for planning and implementing ODA, encouraging the formation of a commission on cooperation for development in the Parliament, promoting education for development cooperation. They also have specific requirements to the state in what their activities are concerned: ensuring co-financing of their European Commission projects (already won, as is the practice most places in the EU), introducing a grant program for nongovernmental organizations in development, in order to create local capacity, offering direct support for the functioning structures of NGOs in order to promote the development of their capacities (international representation, professional development, fund raising/accessing), taking measures to ensure the organizations of periodical consultations with NGOs.

A more in-depth/academic analysis of Romanian ODA, emphasizing the importance and influences of Romania's pre-1989 history of offering development assistance was realized by Mirela Oprea and Rodica Novac (year??). The authors are keen on the fact that because of Ceausescu's de-alignment foreign policy, in the 1960s and 1970s Romania started to play an increasing part in offering development assistance, in both communist and non communist countries. They offer both local evidence (official communist newspaper reports) and Western based research and making a compelling case according to which during those decades Romania was actively seeking to make as many diplomatic alliances and offered assistance in many different countries. It is true that it is impossible to gage the amount of assistance given that official statistics were no reliable. What is certain though is that Ceausescu encouraged the export of Romanian's technical assistance and engaged in offering scholarships to many foreigners from underdeveloped countries to study in Romania. Ceausescu also played an important role in supporting the cause of developing countries in international organizations – such is the idea of creating a common fund for international development – some fraction of the funds dedicated to this fund would come from the countries' commitment to decrease military spending. The authors conclude that the pre-1989 Romanian experience with development assistance can be used in establishing (indeed continuing) bilateral relationships with countries where Romania has a capital of image and prestige, thus also closely following its trade objectives and decreasing dependence on the EU market.

The same authors also conduct a critical analysis of Romania's post EU accession ODA in which they show how the latter is portrayed mostly as an obligation brought about by the need to internalize the EU acquis, and thus it follows closely EU's development policy (the authors believe that this is problematic especially as mainstream discourse on development, on "big plans" Easterly, is being questioned more and more). The initial phase of "structuring" ODA and "fitting" it into the ministerial mayhem consisted of a twinning project with the German Federal Ministry for Cooperation. Playing on the new donors' card, on lack of resources and expertise, the Romanian MFA prefers to either funnel most of the ODA money through multilateral assistance (mostly in the EU budget) or externalize it through UNDP – in the context in which Romania as a vibrant NGDO network. NGDOs have already gathered significant experience in development work, either in projects in which Romania was beneficiary (so they feel that they can export knowledge regarding how to apply and use external funds, more so in the context of an emerging/transitioning democracy) or in transborder cooperation projects (Moldova, Ukraine, Serbia) where the principle was "co-development" (highly promoted by the authors to also become more visible in ODA). They have formed national platforms in all NMS and they also establish transnational relationships. Therefore, the MFA should capitalize and indeed promote them, especially by making them reputable and "solid"/"traditional" partners. This is also a way of avoiding the EU's "the West and the Rest" approach to development.

III. A few interviews

During the last few months I conducted interviews with both government officials and NGDOs members part of a broader postdoctoral research in which I will also interview the same categories of respondents in other NMS. According to the interviews that I conducted in Romania, the relationships between the MFA and civil society in the sphere of development is rather unique, since the non governmental sector was involved in the policy making process from the very beginning, which is not altogether common in

postcommunist policy making. Although the representatives of NGOs are still unsatisfied with the roles assigned to them by the MFA, they all admit that the relationship improved in time, especially through the implicit creation of a network of people interested in development and committed to Romania's role as emergent donor, beyond their institutional affiliations. Differences remain though; for instance, while the MFA plays the European card and supports more multilateral development assistance, civil society advances a more participatory/pro active role for Romania, mostly along the lines of capitalizing on its pre-1989 lines of involvement in development, and also on more bilateral involvement – a position also supported by some MFA members, because of the ways in which it makes Romania more visible in the process, a more visible and higher profile donor. Indeed, NGOs argue that the MFA externalized a large part of their development policy activities (either through other line ministries and through UNDP) instead of recognizing the civil society's competence and capacity in running development projects, but the MFA does now support the importance of consultation of the civil society organization in most significant decisions regarding development policy. Indeed, deliberations, at least at some visible level, seem to be orchestrated along democratic lines. Finally, because of the sustained effort towards promotion of education for development cooperation from the part of NGOs, the MFA now made this a priority of its development policy, and survey data discussed in the previous section proudly shows the impact of this emphasis on education to have positively impacted the Romanian society.

Conclusions

The pressure from the EU towards adopting and formulating a policy on development had both positive and negative effects. The positive effects include the fact that with EU pressure the need for a development policy became legitimate, no country could go around avoiding it, and, most importantly, the EU pressured for the state to make partnerships with the civil society, thus indirectly strengthening democratic policy making. The negative effects revolve mostly around NMSs' development policies being easily assimilated into the European development policy/consensus, thus implicitly refusing these countries the option to construct their own policy and also, consequently, around the populations' perceptions of this policy as rather remote, unnecessary, etc.

The pressure from the civil society also had positive and negative effects. The former are indeed fundamental and they revolve around the advantages of NGOs towards promoting a development policy more driven on the recipients' needs, more towards ownership of development, and towards the importance of grassroots activities; also, NGOs are very efficient at awareness raising, thus transporting development policy towards other policy sectors, such as education. Finally, NGOs and their commitment to development also worked towards making civil society a necessary and legitimate partner for the state in policy making. The latter include the NGOs' preference towards placing themselves in oppositional/critical terms towards the state, thus rendering partnerships more problematic (although the Romanian case disconfirms this hypothesis), and also the fact that NGOs are constantly looking for funding options of their projects, thus marring the more fundamental relationship with governmental structures, and filtering them through a financial lens.

Bibliography:

To be added