

## MAKING DEMOCRATISATION WORK

*From civil society and social capital to political inclusion and politicisation.  
Theoretical reflections on concrete cases in Indonesia, Kerala, and the Philippines.*

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### **Introduction**

If most of us can agree that the bottom line of modern democracy is sovereignty of the people in accordance with the principle of constitutionally guaranteed political equality among citizens or members who are independent enough to express their own will,<sup>1</sup> then democratisation may be defined as the process to democracy, *and* to its consolidation and deepening. It is true, of course, that many such processes have not come from below, but are outcomes of war and international pressure, or of attempts by enlightened leaders to legitimise rapid modernisation from above.<sup>2</sup> And much of the recent democratisation has been crafted through negotiations and pacts within the political, military, and economic elites.<sup>3</sup> Yet it is high time to study the processes from below. Not because there is a need to expand the limited definition of democracy as such, but because the dynamics of democratisation is an altogether different matter. Not because enlightened and developmental elites, and their negotiations, are unimportant, but because there is also much to the results which indicate that popular demands and strength are often fundamental.<sup>4</sup> And not in order to focus on grassroot movements as such (like most students of 'new' social movements), or 'only' on the structures and institutions that condition their actions (like most resource mobilisation theorists), but on the process as a whole (including state, society and the governing of them) from below – primarily by way of critical empirical analysis of subordinated actors' view of it and their strategies and actions to affect it. But then, how should one go about this?

### The civil society/social capital paradigm

The paradigm in vogue is of civil society, and of civic community generating social capital. *Civil society*, to begin with, is usually defined as a sphere of what is sometimes called 'self-constitution and self-mobilisation', aside from the family and independent of the state. It consists primarily of voluntary associations and public (though privately controlled) communication. It is institutionalised through various rights vis-à-vis the state (but also upheld by the state); and it has emerged through the rise of relatively independent socio-economic relations as against the family, the feudal lord and the absolutist state. Hence, corporate activity in the market is also included in classical analyses of civil society, but not the intimate sphere, the family. For liberal theorists like Tocqueville, civil society is rather civilised social interaction in between the 'mob' and the state. In the contemporary and often more radical social

movement discourse, on the other hand, civil society is also (or should also be) independent of the economy. Just as the state, the capitalist economy is seen as a threat to autonomous social relations and co-operation. And in this case identity-based social movements, including those related to ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or alternative life-styles, and at times the family as well, may also be part of and strengthen the autonomy of civil society. To 'new' movement analysts, 'even' people traditionally included in the 'mob' or the 'mass' may associate and act as rational as well-behaved burghers.<sup>5</sup>

The common thesis on civil society and democracy, therefore, is that the former is a precondition for the latter; that civil society is a guarantee against "totalitarian democracy"<sup>6</sup> and dictatorship; that the stronger (or denser) the civil society, the better the democracy; and that just as civil society is threatened by 'too much' politics and an extended state, so is democracy. To favour democracy one should instead strengthen civil society as against state and politics, including, some say, by supporting the growth of capitalist market economy, or, others say, by simultaneously promoting the autonomy of civil society (including identity-related movements) against the market.

The slightly extended proposition about *social capital* is that civil society is not enough – but that it takes a civic community. This is more than a debate between libertarians, emphasising markets and rights, and communitarians, stressing deep rooted communal relations. Much of the current ideas of civic virtues is based on Robert Putnam's enticing book *Making Democracy Work*.<sup>7</sup> Putnam studies similar institutional reforms of local government in different parts of Italy, finds markedly better democratic performance in the North than in the South, and argues that this is due to more social capital in the former than in the latter. Social capital is primarily defined as interpersonal trust that makes it easier for people to do things together, get rid of free riders, and, for instance, agree on sanctions against non-performing governments. Trust in turn, according to Putnam, varies mainly with the vibrancy of associational life, including comparatively unhierarchical choirs, football associations and bird watching societies. And this rich associational life in the North, he concludes, is due to its path dependence on the late medieval city-state culture – in contrast to autocratic feudalism in the South. Consequently, if there is hardship, social disintegration, inefficient government performance and lack of democracy, one should support the creation of networks and co-operative community development schemes.

#### Four kinds of criticism

Is this civil society and social capital paradigm really relevant and fruitful? I do not think so. I shall dispute the paradigm in four sections: firstly by recalling vital critique

related to the paradigm's own theoretical and empirical premises; secondly by questioning its generalisation to third world contexts; thirdly by arguing that it does not address the most relevant societal problems in these contexts; fourthly (and mainly) by showing how empirical results from my own comparative studies of civil society/civic community movements which really give priority to democratisation speak against the theses. These results suggest instead that it is both more relevant and analytically fruitful to study *politics* of democratisation. Finally, therefore, I shall also discuss how this may be conceptualised, and suggest an approach in terms of political space, inclusion and politicisation.

### **Theoretical and analytical weaknesses**

To use a common formulation, civil society, and social capital may be fine as normative concepts (and personally I subscribe to most of the ideals), but I do not find them to be effective analytical tools in studies of democratisation.<sup>8</sup>

Firstly, relations of power in civil society are set aside and citizens are assumed to be equal. Yet most social science research indicates that conflicts over power, like those related to class and gender, and differences, like those associated with ethnicity and religion, are absolutely fundamental – including in processes of democratisation.

Secondly, hardly anyone would dispute the importance of associations and public discourse relatively independent of the state, and, even better, of the market as well – but the processes behind are also set aside. Historically civil society signifies a politically created society of citizens as against slaves, mobs, natives, immigrants ... and, of course, against 'anarchy'. (The Greeks explicitly talked of *politike koinonia*, political community, and the Romans distinguished *societas civilis*, society of citizens, from non-citizen societies like those based on residence or kinship.) Hence one should be careful in contrasting or even inciting politics and society against each other. On the other hand it is fruitful, of course, to distinguish between civil government of the society as a whole (including through parties and parliamentarians) and the administrative and military state apparatuses. We need to allow for the power that flows out of hierarchies, legal authority, guns, common resources and the executive control of them. But even in the few cases where civil society theorists distinguish between state and political government there is a lack of interest in the extent to which governments are in command of the state apparatuses, and citizens are in command of their governments. For instance, in the almost 800 pages radical standard work on civil society and politics by Cohen and Arato there is hardly any theoretical or empirical reference to the pro-democratising effects of close to a decade of north European co-operation between popular movements, government and state at various levels; parts of which have also been labelled social corporatism and

associative democracy.<sup>9</sup> Yet I believe most of us would agree on the difference between state/civil society relations in well established democracies and in dictatorships like Poland under the communists or Latin America under the juntas.

Thirdly, there is ambiguity on the importance of the economy. As already indicated, most analysts agree that modern civil society emerges with the rise of relatively independent socio-economic relations as against the family, the feudal lord, and the absolutist state. And some add the mixed blessing of capitalism in terms of its anti-social effects. But the civil society paradigm offers no precise tools to analyse these dynamics. In this field it is rather the Marxist oriented framework that is most sharp and critical, stressing the atomisation of people under 'bourgeois' division of labour and a social plurality which, if not resisted politically, tends to produce bureaucratic authoritarianism rather than a political plurality. But even in Cohen's and Arato's radical theorisation on civil society this is hardly discussed nor made use of. Rather is it *assumed* that the best way of fighting the negative effects of capitalism is to further deepen the same civil society that it has given birth to, and to bet on 'people themselves' and their autonomy (including their special identities) as against, *and* in order to influence, state and politics.

Fourthly, the existence and strength of civil society are poor historical explanations of democracy. Civil society has coexisted with very different types of regime - including fascism in Italy and Germany. And to take but one additional example, the very dense Swedish civil society with deep historical roots stands in sharp contrast to the country's comparatively late democratisation.

Civil rights, of course, are of vital importance for any democrat, and once the right to vote is added, rights and suffrage together form much of the basis for the particular way of governing society at large, its resources and its organs, that we have called democratic. But never are civil rights the same as democracy. Before becoming part of democracy they are rather elements of constitutionalism. And even though the free 'space' of some civil rights usually turns into a hotbed for popular participation and struggle for democracy, we should remember that democracy has often come about through illegal means and despite the lack of civil rights. Anyway, democratic struggles within or outside such a liberal space is more a question of socio-economic conflicts (such as on class) and of politics to alter the rules as well as the division of labour and resources (at least to such an extent that both civil and political rights become universal) than of civil society associations to amuse and help each other, no matter how important, within the framework of existing rules and inequalities. It is true that civil society activists who fought the totalitarian regimes in Poland and Latin America consciously limited themselves to the strengthening of civil society, and to

the democratising of some of its associations, to thus influence and undermine the regimes – as it was impossible to conquer the state, fight the armies, and democratise the society and its institutions as a whole. But it is equally true that the very processes of transition to democracy soon called for political organisations and actors – and that many well intended and hard working grassroots activists were then set aside. Some of the leading civil society theorists themselves began to write about this.<sup>10</sup>

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What, then, of the extended ideas on the importance for democracy of a dense civil society in terms of vibrant associational life in civic communities; an associational life that (allegedly) is due to path dependence on old city-state cultures, generates *social capital* in the form of trust which facilitates interpersonal co-operation, and in the final instance produces good democratic government as well?

Firstly, one may question the "big bang"<sup>11</sup> path dependence explanation. The thesis does not help us to analyse the reproduction of history, to explain what survives and why, and to account for the fact that seemingly similar phenomena like associations may not have the same function (e.g. to promote democratic government) under different conditions. What happened, for instance, during fascism? In fact, scholars of Italy's history convincingly argue that Putnam has not accounted for changes over time, that the degree of civicness is much more fluctuating than stated, that vital norms are fairly similar in the regions, and that the critical differences between them were rather "megaconstraints imposed by geography, location (earthquake areas in the south), economics, and politics"<sup>12</sup>. According to Sidney Tarrow, "(e)very regime that governed southern Italy from the Norman establishment of a centralized monarchy in the twelfth century to the unified government which took over there in 1861 was foreign and governed with a logic of colonial exploitation (and) southern Italy's semicolonial status (did not) suddenly disappear with unification".<sup>13</sup> The only plausible reason for why a well read scholar like Putnam could miss this, Tarrow argues, is that there is something wrong with "the model with which he turned to history."<sup>14</sup>

Secondly, yet other and neglected factors seem to be important – both to account for the form of government (including democracy) and the very rise of social capital. How to explain, for instance, that Sicily, by 1922, had the "highest number of locally constituted and operated farmer cooperatives and the second highest number of locally established (...) rural credit institutions in Italy"? Why did the labour movement in the Capitanata region of Apulia really fight fascism and why was it "stronger and more powerful than its counterpart in Emilia Romagna"?<sup>15</sup> Why did fascism emerge in Putnam's northern civic and therefore inherently pro-democratic communities in the first place? What of their contemporary scandals over bad

governance and corruption - and of the rise of civic associations in the South?<sup>16</sup> (Or what of the governing of neighbouring France – generally perceived of as poorly embedded in civic associations and yet comparatively efficient?<sup>17</sup>) Most important of all: what of the deliberate and powerful efforts of the Italian communists, and many socialists and Christian democrats too, in vital parts of the North since the late nineteenth century to constitute and work through civic associations?<sup>18</sup> Given the weakness of the path dependence explanation, it is plausible that this kind of politics is of vital importance both in the process of democratisation and in the creating of social capital.<sup>19</sup>

Thirdly, one may also specifically question how and why social capital would translate into democratisation and efficient democratic government. In Putnam's study there are correlations but few causal chains and no agents of change. Why and how would football clubs always promote co-operation outside the clubs and in wide societal fields? What is "the causal chain between bird watching and political activism"?<sup>20</sup> How are people capable of really standing up against non-performing governments and suggest other policies? And again: how and why do Putnam and his followers exclude other plausible explanations for all this – including state and politics?

Finally: why would civic community demands have to be democratic? Actually, on a closer look one finds that the dependent variable of the social capital analysts is neither democratisation nor democratic practice (despite the titles of books and applications for funds) but government performance – which is not part of 'normal' definitions of democracy but rather used to be stressed by instrumental Leninists, among others.<sup>21</sup> The content of democracy, of course, has some bearing on its consolidation, but as we know from fascism in Europe or the contemporary East & South East Asia, government performance is not very clearly related to a democratic type of regime.

### **Problems of generalisation**

Applying the civil society/social capital paradigm outside its primarily European framework also means that historical realities tend to be set aside. For instance, while Göran Therborn's studies on the rise of modernity and democracy point to the importance of civil society (and even civil war) in the European framework, they also make clear that the shaping of citizen societies, or the demos, in the New Worlds was rather directed against former colonists and natives, that the externally induced modernisation and subsequent steps towards democracy in countries like Japan was mainly carried out through the state from above, and that the initial modernisation in the colonies was first imposed by conquerors but later turned against them by

nationalists, who often added initial democratisation and always made use of state and politics.<sup>22</sup>

Of the latter third world context Mahmood Mamdani, for instance, has recently published a forceful study of the problematic usage of the civil society/social capital paradigm in view of the legacy of late colonialism.<sup>23</sup> "Actually existing civil societies" were primarily in urban areas, the rest, the subjects, were under customary rule, which, however, was integrated, refined and made use of by the colonisers. Much of the nationalist struggle was about deracialising the civil societies – while the world of subjects was either governed through clientelism or 'enlightened and developmental' one-party states. Democratisation among the subjects at the grassroots level was rarely even attempted at. The few real efforts are still lacking firm coordination with urban civil society movements. And equally isolated civil society movements, including many of the recent pro-democracy ones, either turn shallow and formalistic – or approach, again, the world of subjects through potentially explosive clientelistic linkages based on e.g. ethnicity or religion. Similar stories could be told of many other parts of the third world. (Of Asia, though, one might add that there were more and stronger, but not necessarily more successful, efforts to create real citizens and promote democratisation through 'anti-feudal' rural struggles.)

It is true that commerce and capitalist relations are also spreading. But this comes far from always with the kind of politically rather independent business and middle classes, and the relative separation between state and civil society, with which modernisation is often associated. Even in dynamic Indonesia, for instance, there is some dismantling of the state, but primarily by factions which monopolised its resources even earlier, rather than by strong new capitalists and members of the middle classes from 'outside' (who usually become partners instead). Surviving rulers and executives re-organise their 'fiefdoms' and networks, and are able to legalise privatisation of formally public resources which they have already laid their hands on.<sup>24</sup>

Finally the specific attempts to export the social capital thesis are up against additional problems, primarily the inability of the thesis to account for the legacy of late colonialism (already displayed in Putnam's study of the relations between North and South Italy) and its difficulties in handling social capital related to ethnicity and religion or coexisting with authoritarian rulers like the Indonesian ones. Moreover, believers who apply their thesis do not even bring it to test for its much criticised path dependence explanation of the rise of social capital and for its negligence of 'intermediary' variables between social capital and efficient democratic governance (including socio-economic dynamics, government intervention, and political

organisation). Just about the only thing they ask is instead whether their thesis is better than outdated and similarly deterministic ideas about connections between economic development and democracy.<sup>25</sup> In fact one may well equate the social capital school of the 90's with the capital logic school of the 70's.

### **Dubious relevance**

Social science is also about societal relevance, beyond the curiosity of applying and testing theses around the globe. Do researchers and their analytical tools tackle really existing and vital societal dilemmas? Since the 80's, the civil society/social capital paradigm has been widely acclaimed. This is not the place to discuss why,<sup>26</sup> but at least the paradigm is not particularly helpful if one considers, as many of us do, the lack of popular political organisation and representation based on interests and ideologies to be the most serious problem in current democratisation – (1) because the genuine efforts at democratisation which emerged in course of the liberation struggles were undermined both by the deterioration of the movements themselves,<sup>27</sup> and by the rise of other and usually more powerful forces which repressed the former and reduced ambitious land reforms and health and educational programmes, all aiming at turning subjects into citizens; (2) because the then emerging civil movements which finally contributed to the undermining of the authoritarian regimes (as in Latin America and the Philippines during the 80's) were unable to generate efficient *political* organisations and representatives – wherefore the inevitable horsetrading associated with most transitions to democracy was captured by the traditional political elites, their clientelism, and their (sometimes) emerging state-corporatism;<sup>28</sup> (3) because the related problems of consolidating democracy may best be summarised, with Adam Przeworsky et.al., as "something more profound (...) than institutional factors" namely "the absence of collective projects, of socially integrating ideologies, of clearly identifiable political forces, of crystallized structures of interests to be represented";<sup>29</sup> (4) because the still persisting (and re-emerging) authoritarian rule, even in dynamic East & South East Asia, goes hand in hand with the rise of capitalism, general modernisation, elements of civil society, and the creation of social capital – and there is no indication that this social-economic process in itself will generate democracy.<sup>30</sup>

### **The weakness of politics against fragmentation**

Finally, the new paradigm is not only questionable but out rightly insufficient if there is something to my own results from some seven years of 'going down' to renewal-oriented popular movements in the field (since old parties, strategies and scholarly theories are getting increasingly invalid)<sup>31</sup> to study over time the process of democratisation from below through the movement's way of promoting similar ideas



of civil society/social capital *and* democratisation under very different conditions:<sup>32</sup> (a) in economically dynamic but politically repressive Indonesia, where the old popular movements are eliminated and new are only beginning to occur; (b) in Asia's Latin America, the Philippines, where the old Left became irrelevant and new movements try to make their way; (c) in the most impressive case of attempts to renew the radical and democratic nation-state development project from below through popular movements *and* government policies, that is in the south-western Indian state of Kerala. In all these three cases the scholarly puzzle and the real societal problem is namely that even movements actively favouring civil society and social capital in different contexts – including in Kerala with the most vibrant civil society one can think of – and doing their best to promote democratisation in different ways, face great difficulties in tackling fragmentation of 'popular' interests, 'good ideas', and well intended groups and actions. In other words: there is a lack or weakness of *politics* of democratisation.

### Indonesia<sup>33</sup>

The basic problem in Indonesia is that new dissidents are isolated from people in general – because of the destruction of the broad popular movements in the mid-60's and the authoritarian rule during the New Order. Usually it is even impossible to form membership based autonomous organisations. There are hardly any movements among people themselves to relate to. The same holds true in terms of critical ideologies and historical consciousness. Most of the dissident groups have to work from above and out of the main urban centres where civil society is somewhat more developed and certain protection is available from friends and temporary allies with influential positions. This way layers of fragmented dissidents have developed over the years.

The expansion of capitalism may indirectly promote democratisation, but is a double edged sword. On the one hand, the expansion is related to both authoritarian state intervention and to a division of labour that often breaks down old class alliances and give rise to multiplicity of interests and movements. On the other hand, liberalisation has created some space which may allow people to partially improve their standard of living by different local efforts – not having to always grab political power on a central level first, thereafter to rely on state intervention. And this local space, and this need to overcome socio-economic fragmentation, have spurred pro-democracy work from below. Despite everything, it has, thus, been possible for a lot of development oriented NGOs to relate to new social classes in society, and for a new generation of radical students to relate to peasants (hard hit by evictions) and new industrial workers. Hence the new movements are potentially significant and more than a

product of the global wave of democracy and the divisions within the ruling coalition (which are only likely to generate turbulent transition to less authoritarian rule) – they are also conditioned by the expansion of capital and the new classes thus emerging.

Moreover, there is a tendency since the early-90's to link up alternative development and human rights work in civil society with politics. But while major groupings try their best to relate specific issues and special interests to more general perspectives, they also tend, despite good intentions, to exacerbate either their limited kind of politicisation with some social foundation among the grassroots, or their attempts at broader perspective without much social basis – finally even causing trouble for each other, and for their followers. Hence, they themselves are not able to generate a democratic opening. Instead, 'external' rallying points may give rise to a more general movement for transition from authoritarian rule. And within this broader movement many of the outright democrats may relate to legally accepted populist democrats, while others hold on to fragmented activism and development work, or insist on 'consistent' top-down party building. This is what happened in mid-1996 when the government ousted moderate opposition leader Megawati Sukarnoputri, while many genuine democrats tried to relate to the recognised political system by mobilising as many as possible behind her in face the 1997 elections. Finally the regime displayed its incapacity to reform itself, having instead to crack down on demonstrators and the democracy movement in general with brutal force (generating riots with ethnic and religious characteristics instead). But simultaneously the basic weakness of the movement itself became equally obvious – its fragmentation and its separation between top-down activists who tend to run offside and grassroots activists who have not yet been able to generate interest-based mass organisations from below.

### The Philippines<sup>34</sup>

The perhaps most astounding breakthrough for the third world's new democratic middle class uprisings took place in the Philippines in February 1986. Peaceful mass demonstrations and protests against massive electoral rigging incapacitated the military and brought down the Marcos regime. The communist led "national-democrats" and their mainly peasant based New Peoples Army, who until then had continuously gained strength, swiftly lost the initiative. Corazon Aquino became the new president. Economic and political liberties were saluted. The Philippines became in vogue in the international aid market. Almost immediately, however, the many NGOs and popular movements that had contributed to the undermining of the regime began to lose ground. Even today the polity continues to be almost a caricature of the individualising, personality-oriented and ideology resistant American settler-democracy – which was exported to the former US colony and was then conformed

with and taken advantage of by feudal-like clans and bosses. Of course, much of the old socio-economic basis of the restored Philippine 'cacique democracy' is falling apart, but new solid forms are failing to appear, though there is now some economic progress and relative political stability in the fringes of the East Asian dynamics. The widely esteemed middle-class democratisation, however, has still no solid foundation, including reasonably clear-cut representation of different interests and ideas of societal change.

The most vital question, therefore, is whether and how new popular movements and organisations could instead become vital in anchoring democracy. For most of the old 'national democrats', political democratisation in general and electoral politics in particular were simply not meaningful.<sup>35</sup> In the early 90's I decided instead to follow the experiences of three renewal-oriented sections of the Left.<sup>36</sup> None of them were parties but significant groups promoting slightly different ideas about 'new politics' and linked up with like-minded cause-oriented organisations, NGOs, and unions. In face of the 1992 elections they formed an electoral movement which adopted an agenda generated by various broad progressive movements as its own programme. The key-words were "people's interest", "participatory democracy", "sustainable development", and "genuine structural reform". In the spirit of realism leading members also brokered an alliance with the liberal electoral coalition, with respected senator Salonga as its presidential candidate. Most movement activists, however, were eager to stress that the new political efforts were subordinated to their basic tasks as e.g. unionists or NGO-workers "in support of people's own initiatives". The few electoral activists had previously limited themselves to lobbying and various forms of extra-parliamentary pressure politics. Now they simply wanted to supplement and make use of all this to mobilise votes for progressive political representatives.

The results, however, indicated that the certified capacity of the new movements and associated organisations to carry out actions, conduct alternative development work, nourish civil society and support 'ideal' community networks and co-operation could not be transformed into votes and a more widespread and dynamic politics of democratisation. For instance, most activists gave priority to their 'normal' progressive work beyond partisan and especially electoral politics. Many groupings did not link up with the new efforts at all. It was an uphill task to convince radical people, whom the Left had been telling for years and years that it did not matter which way they voted, that this time it would really make a difference. As a result, rival candidates gained a lot of votes even from people who otherwise fought against them, for instance within a union or an action group or a co-operative. Collective interests such as those ascribed to peasants or workers or co-operative members were usually not

strong enough to generate votes for progressive candidates. Outright vote-buying could not be resisted even in the stronghold of the huge co-operative in Tarlac lead by Ka. Dante, dissenting and retired legendary founder of the New People's Army. And as the electoral movement basically carried the same issues as its constituent groupings otherwise used to emphasise in their extra-parliamentary work, and paid little attention to how one should govern public resources and implement their great general ideas, the field was open instead for populist candidates and clientelist politics.

In spite of these experiences the electoral movement was not sustained and institutionalised after 1992. Moreover, in face of the 1995 elections the various progressive groups and movements had further disintegrated. The renewal-oriented organisations were still there but related themselves to the support of various 'reasonable' individual candidates and to certain local efforts where there should be more space for progressive grassroots organisations and NGOs thanks to decentralisation towards the mid-90's of state powers. Simultaneously, however, the implementation of the Local Government Code also paved the way for traditional bosses and their client-organisations. And though much experiences have now been gained, civil society is stronger and social capital has been promoted, the basic problem is still to transform fragmented interests and groups and actions into extended politics of democratisation. It remains to be seen how much work is put into the rather new permanent political vehicle, the Citizens' Action Party, and what may come out of it.

### Kerala<sup>37</sup>

Kerala is different. It has won international reputation for having accomplished, in addition to stable democracy, comparatively high levels of health, education, and social welfare despite a gross national product per capita lower than the Indian average. This has been related to a long history of an unusually vibrant civil society (and much of what would now be called social capital) with deep roots, particularly in the South, in various socio-religious reform movements and later on in many other citizen associations as well, such as co-operatives and a library movement. It is true that this Kerala model of human development despite slow growth is no longer valid, among other reasons because of stagnant growth and India's structural adjustment. But a new generation of civil society movements, including the most impressive People's Science Movement (KSSP) have been vital in generating huge campaigns for civil action and community development co-operation. Since the late 70's there have been forceful campaigns against environmental destruction and for literacy, decentralisation, community based group farming and resource mapping. Definitely,

this have also generated further democratisation and positively effected government performance. At present, for instance, genuine decentralisation and an absolutely unique process of planning from below is going on with extensive popular participation.<sup>38</sup>

This, however, is only one and an often distorted side of the coin.<sup>39</sup> One must also add that the positive results vary over time – but far less with the vibrancy of civil society or a rough estimate of social capital, as these factors have been rather stable, than with popular politics and state government policies .

In a comparative Indian perspective, to begin with, Amartya Sen et.al. have recently concluded that "determined public action" explains the positive human development in Kerala as compared to less impressive West Bengal and miserable Uttar Pradesh. Liberation of economic initiatives, they argue, must therefore be accompanied with more or less government intervention.<sup>40</sup> In addition to this, while Putnam claims that it is difficult to test the competing hypothesis mentioned earlier that radical politics rather than path dependent social capital explains both citizen co-operation and good democratic government – because leftists never even come to power in southern Italy, whereafter one could have studied their performance –<sup>41</sup> we may now do it in Kerala and West Bengal. In Kerala the strong leftist movement is rooted in the former British Malabar in the North – with much less civil society and social capital than in the subordinated princely states of Cochin and Travancore in the South. And thanks to popular pressure and state intervention, those socialists and communists have not only managed to implement India's most consistent land reform in the state as a whole, but also to create much more civic communities in the previously so feudal North than in the South where e.g. caste identities still plays a more important role. Even right now the campaign for popular planning from below is markedly more successful from Trichur in the centre and further north than down in the old civil societies of the South. Similarly, the communists in West Bengal do not only have their main base in rural areas with deep feudal roots, but have also, right here and since the mid-70's, managed to generate India's most impressive democratic decentralisation, and a good deal of community co-operation and development too, (despite using some alternative patronage and much more top-down policies than in Kerala) – which is a bit beyond what one can say of the eastern part of Bengal, Bangladesh, with, in the late-70's, similar landlordism and ideas about democratic decentralisation but then a myriad of voluntary associations (promoted by all kinds of foreign agencies in favour of civil society and social capital) rather than forceful democratic communists.

Back in Kerala, as should be clear by now, it was thus the broad, radical, and politicised popular movements – beyond communalism and on the basis of general

interests of workers, peasants, teachers and others – that from about the 20's generated (from outside as well as later on from inside state government and administration) much of the democratisation and positive human development in the state. A major problem, though, is the discouraging results from the impressive land reform in terms of stagnant growth and civic co-operation. But this problem is primarily related to the consistent bourgeois character of the reform which, to the benefit of initial democratisation (and in contrast to West Bengal), did promote quite independent citizens – but also economically rather non-co-operative individuals and families. Hence, while intensive political organisation and state intervention survived, this 'old' organisation and politicisation were increasingly affected by privatised and atomised economic activities and interests – soon extending beyond farming into commerce, real estate, etc. So even though many now talk of 'over-politicisation', this is only true in the sense that atomised economic actors often make selfish and non productive use of state and conventional politics. The root-cause is, thus, privatisation and atomisation causing lack of co-operation among the producers and the citizens at various levels. And the altering of this in turn, as we shall see, requires a good deal of political facilitation.

Moreover, while it is true that much of the renewal-oriented work to promote alternative development by way of further democratisation has grown out of civil society movements like the KSSP, the latter has often been accused of abstaining from the otherwise 'normal' NGO-pattern of neglecting the importance of radical politics and established leftist organisations.<sup>42</sup> More importantly, I have instead explained the problems of extending and sustaining much of the remarkable popular campaigns from the mid 80's till early 90's by the lack of efficient movement politics. For lack of space, let us turn directly to the common denominators: Firstly, in the social setting of Kerala marked by the expansion of petty capitalist relations after the land reform and with incoming migrant money from the Gulf there did not seem to be widespread immediate interest among the many dispersed framers in the movements' ideas about joint democratic control and management of land and other resources to improve production. Despite the campaigns, no powerful social movement (like the one for land reform) came forward. Secondly, most non-party development alternatives that were suggested made little if any sense within the logic of the institutional and political-cum-economic interests of the public administration and the established leftist movements and parties – aside from when such activities formed part of the Left front government's top-down development policies. The activists were politically isolated, therefore, and left without such necessary measures as a consistent democratic decentralisation. Thirdly, the reformists themselves found it difficult to explicitly politicise their development actions (by which is not necessarily meant party-politicise; we shall soon come back to this concept). Or perhaps they were

incapable of, or uninterested in, so doing. The reformists (besides first linking up with, and then suffering from the fall of, the leftist government in mid-1991) rather restricted themselves to creating preconditions for major social and political forces to move forward – which the latter did not do. Fourthly, analytical reductionism and/or political considerations prevented the reformists from dealing with the origins of such problems, including the multiplicity of socio-economic interests and conflicts, *plus* their links with vested interests within the obstructive logic of established politics, conservative as well as leftist.

Again there was thus a lack of convergence of fragmented issues, groups and actions – despite one of the most vibrant and dense civil societies one can think of – because in the last instance the renewal oriented groups could not master the politics of promoting it, while the established parties and institutions abstained from promoting it.

Activists, however, have learnt their lesson. Most of the campaigns could not be sustained when the Left Front lost the elections in 1991.<sup>43</sup> But after some time reformists managed to turn instead a decentralisation scheme imposed by New Delhi against the dubious ways in which the new Congress-led Kerala state government tried to undermine the same. Hence the reformists succeeded also in getting the opposition Left front politicians, who used to be hesitant while in office, to jump on the bandwagon and to commit themselves to more consistent decentralisation, if and when voted back in office. Interestingly, this did neither cause the Left front to really use the 1995 *Panchayat*<sup>44</sup> elections to develop local demands, initiatives, and visions, nor to give decentralisation and local development top priority in the following 1996 Assembly elections. Such an orientation, quite obviously, called instead for alternative forces and pressure from below. But now (as compared to the previous 'campaign period' until 1991) this pressure has been rapidly and skilfully facilitated. Once the Left had won the elections and communist patriarch E.M.S Naboodiripad insisted in consistent decentralisation, scholarly as well as politically very able activists managed to get access to the state planning board, to use years of experiences from KSSP projects to immediately launch a well prepared massive popular campaign for planning from below, *and* to simultaneously have leading politicians to proudly promise that no longer would only a few percent of the state development budget go to all *panchayats* that seriously involve themselves in the programme, but between 35 and 40%. Hence there is new space for the previously contained popular efforts – but only thanks to elections, political pressure and to government intervention. The local governments have got some real powers (and many fresh politicians have been elected, particularly women). The centralised parties must produce results at the new development arenas, which give some elbowroom for reformists. Supported by

reformist experts local governments may alter the centralised and compartmentalised administration, try to co-ordinate various measures on the district, block, and village levels, and most importantly facilitate the coming together of the myriad of dispersed voluntary associations (and the fragmented social capital that they have come to nourish) for joint societal efforts. The earlier kind of popular movement campaigns may be more institutionalised and legitimate (including from a democratic point of view) when carried out in mutually respectful co-operation with elected local governments. Anglo-Saxon scholars might talk of associative democracy.<sup>45</sup> In Scandinavia we may recall 'the good old' co-operation between popular movements and governments at various levels. At any rate, many obstacles are still ahead in Kerala. (I am particularly worried that politicians and bureaucrats with factional and personal vested interests may cause the impressive planning from below to not be followed up rapidly and efficiently enough by new laws and regulations *and* an equally impressive campaign to institutionalise both the fruitful efforts and new or reformed political and administrative rules and organs – to thus facilitate local co-operation and government, so that the panchayats and the many voluntary organisations are able to really implement all the local projects now planned and very soon approved of.)<sup>46</sup> Yet, a politically further developed society of citizens stands a good chance of taking crucial steps ahead.

### **Fragmentation of interests and democratisation**

To sum up so far, *politics* of democratisation is more decisive than a dense civil society with social capital. Even in such societies the major problem of democratisation is fragmentation of interests, groups and actions, no matter if well intended. To overcome this, links must be developed between various civil society efforts and between them and state or local authorities – i.e. politics and a political society.

Against this conclusion on the special importance of politics one may argue that the very fragmentation of interests and its socio-economic roots are more fundamental. The division of labour, the subordination of people, and the appropriation of surplus are extremely complex and contradictory under the present expansion of capitalism. This breeds individualistic strategies of survival, clientelism, group-specific organisation, and mobilisation on the basis of religious and cultural identities. We are far from a classical protracted industrial and cultural transformation in general and the emergence of large and comparatively homogeneous working class movements in particular.

Much of this process, however, is also politically facilitated. Many vital resources and other preconditions for profitable business (including the subordination of labour and



regulation of the markets) are controlled through the state and frequently monopolised by special groups and individuals. The currently best example, of course, is the way in which the Suharto family make use of the state to get privileged access to profitable sectors of the Indonesian economy as a whole. But semi-private political control in Kerala of a rural co-operative bank or the assignments of contractors is also important. This political facilitation of capitalism through monopolisation of various important resources was neglected by the old leftist movements and parties. They gave priority instead to privately controlled land and capital. Hence they could not fight effectively the simultaneous rise of economic and political monopolies, rather they sometimes even promoted it.<sup>47</sup> But things have changed, some lessons have been learnt, and the new realities have given rise to new conflicts, interests, and movements. Close studies of many years of movements' efforts in three different contexts show that the major reasons for why they give priority to democratisation are: (a) that they need to fight politically the monopolisation of many different vital resources and regulations, and (b) that they must find a way of mobilising and co-ordinating efficient action among people and groups whose interests are not unifying enough to allow for more superficial forms of government. For instance, displaced peasants, marginalised traders, repressed workers, or frustrated students who try to improve their lives in Indonesia are almost immediately facing the state at various levels. Land reform but also commercialism in rural Kerala necessitates new forms of co-operation over the use of scattered resources – including land, water, inputs and labour – which in turn calls for political decentralisation and improved institutions for democratic local government. Ka. Dante's negligence of internal democratisation in 'his' huge co-operative in Tarlac (in order to move on as rapidly as possible to more advanced political tasks) proved as disastrous as the nearby eruption of Mt. Pinatubo when members did not act in accordance with the basic interests as 'genuine peasants' that he had ascribed to them.

At any rate, as the problem of socio-economic fragmentation is a general one and of similar importance in the three different contexts, it is only a fundamental background factor for studies of democratisation, not a good source for describing and explaining different processes and outcomes. Rather we must first study the kind of democratisation that the movements attempt at and then analyse how they go about with it.

The movements, of course, have different views of democracy and democratisation. Yet they would probably agree with the minimum definitions in the introduction of this essay. They neither subscribe to the post-modernist idea of everything being culturally specific, nor to the neo-nationalistic and authoritarian idea that there is some kind of 'Asian value democracy'. They have no problems in separating democracy as a procedure from its content in terms of the particular alternative

development that they like to use democratic methods to decide about and get implemented. And there are no serious problems of distinguishing between the various forms (or procedures) of democracy that they like to give priority to, such as more or less direct popular control and participation. But this goes for democracy as a rather static and universal method. Democratisation (or the way to democracy and to its consolidation and deepening) is quite something different. It includes various ideas of preconditions for democracy and of its extension. And these preconditions and this extension vary, of course, with the conditions in the different contexts and with the perspectives of the different movements. Some may limit democratisation to the introduction of some basic civil rights, while others may argue that it also calls for land reform, total literacy, education and other basic entitlements.<sup>48</sup> Some may say that democratisation may be limited to the conventional political sphere, while others would like to extend it to parts of the economy and civil society. My point, however, is not to make a full list or to produce a normative definition but to allow for an open and critical analysis of actors' various positions on preconditions for and scope of democracy.

### **Towards the study of politics of democratisation**

Equally important: besides aiming at certain forms of democracy, and then propose a way of getting there through democratisation, the actors also require efficient means to be able to really travel that path. It is precisely this process of developing and applying the means of getting movement's ideas of democratisation off ground in terms of *politics* of democratisation that we need to concentrate upon. And the question, then, is of course how to approach and analyse this process, to finally at best explain it and help shaping discussions on support for politics of democratisation.

As we are now beyond the paradigm of civil society/social capital, and focus rather on links between various movements in civil society, and between them and state or local authorities, we have to look instead for analytical tools among scholars of socio-political movements and parties,<sup>49</sup> and of relevant institutional linkages between state and society.<sup>50</sup> I suggest that to study the process of democratisation from below by analysing movement's politics of democratisation we should concentrate on three aspects. Firstly, given the "political opportunity structure" that movement analysts use to talk of, what is the *space* for the pro-democracy efforts? Secondly, as people also have to come together and affect politics, what are the "mobilisation structures" (to talk with the same theorists) that movements' apply, i.e. how are people *included* into politics? Thirdly, as these people are included into politics to put forward their interests and ideas, how are these interests and ideas *politicised*?

#### Political space

It is reasonable to distinguish four dimensions of factors which together constitute the political opportunity structure conditioning the movements' politics: (a) the relative openness or closure of the political system; (b) the relative stability or instability of the alignments among dominating groups constituting the basis for the established polity; (c) the possibilities for movements to link up with sections of the elite; (d) the capacity and propensity of particularly the state to repress movements.<sup>51</sup> However, I am in full agreement with the conclusion that "(t)he core idea weaving together the disparate threads (...) is the opening and closing of political space and its institutional and substantive location."<sup>52</sup> On the one hand we may then study this space as such. On the other hand we may also analyse how the movements themselves read the opportunities and what they therefore conclude in terms of space available for their work. I myself make basic studies of the opportunity structures in 'my' various cases, but focus then on analysing what the movements arrive at. This may be categorised along two dimensions. Firstly whether or not they believe that there is space enough for meaningful work within the established political system. Secondly whether they believe that it is possible (or necessary) to promote democratisation directly in civil society under the prevailing conditions (including unequal division of power and resources) – or if they feel that one can (or have to) first create or capture political instruments like party and state institutions, at best democratise them, and thereafter politically facilitate civil rights and a 'good' civil society.<sup>53</sup> Hence we arrive at four basic positions:<sup>54</sup>

Figure 1: Movement's basic positions on space for political work.

		Space for meaningful work within the established political system?	
		No. Must work outside	Yes. Can work inside
Space for meaningful direct work in civil society?	No. Must be politically facilitated	<b>I</b> Unrecognised avant-garde policies to alter the system and then promote democratisation	<b>II</b> Recognised political intervention to adjust the system and then promote democratisation
	Yes. May be strengthened directly	<b>III</b> 'Empower' civil society and, some add, harness popular movements to promote democratisation	<b>IV</b> Vitalise movements and NGOs more or less related to (II), to promote democratisation

In *Indonesia* – where there is little space for pro-democracy work within the established system, high risk of repression, no signs of real splits within the ruling coalition, and only a few possibilities for movements to occasionally link up with sections of the elite – we find the radicals to the left in the matrix and the moderates to the right. In box I are the explicitly politicising activists aiming at the state and the political system, including those who recently linked up with Megawati and now face repression. Below in box III are instead many other radical democrats who give priority to more indirect work in civil society by e.g. promoting civil and human rights and alternative development. In box II, on the contrary, are the more or less democratically oriented persons who try to work through the two recognised 'opposition' parties, as did Megawati before she was ousted, or within the pro-government Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI), like former NGO leader Adi Sasono. In box IV, finally, are many semi-autonomous NGO workers but also Muslim leaders like Abdurrachman Wahid (Gus Dur) who neither link up with the government nor participate in the established political system but try to affect it indirectly with the kind of self-restrictive actions in support of a more autonomous civil society that we know from the 80's in Eastern Europe.

In *the Philippines* the propensity for repression has come down and the political system is open. Yet there are few chances for renewal-oriented democrats to work within the framework of simple-majority elections in single-member constituencies characterised by machine politics, personalities (eg. within film, sport and media), and local bosses with access to business or shady government finance. Also, ex. general and now president Ramos has so far been fairly successful in building a new ruling coalition among leading politicians and businessmen, including in the provinces. Democratisers may well relate to sections of the elite on specific issues - but probably less easier than earlier on general issues. Since the early-90's, therefore, there are two main tendencies among the renewal-oriented groups. One is to move from box I to box II, that is to combine extra-parliamentary work with also entering into and trying to change the established polity, e.g. via electoral coalitions and a new party. Another

is trying to work 'part-time' in box III and IV respectively, for instance by harnessing autonomous community development while also at occasionally relating this to electoral mobilisation and NGO-representation in local government development councils.

*Kerala* is characterised by non-repressive and open system but with deep-rooted bipolar party-politicisation of various socio-economic as well as caste and religious pillars, within which movements and their leaders can relate to factions of the elite. Unrecognised avant-garde politics in box I is now (with very few Naxalites left) limited to some action groups, while various NGOs promoting e.g. community organisation continue work in box III. Most of the democratisers are rather within the established political forces of the Left front and/or associated with movements like the autonomous KSSP in box IV. In the latter case they try to complement and reform progressive party and party-politicised popular organisations, as well as government and *panchayat* policies, by way of their own relatively independent actions in civil society, constantly benefiting from close contacts with sections of the political and administrative elite.

### Political inclusion

Politics, essentially, is about people coming together on what should be held in common and how it should be governed in a politically created society such as a nation state or a municipality. Given the spheres in which actors have found that there is most space for their work – how, then, do people really come together to effect and be included in the discourse and actual struggles over what should be held in common and how? We may label this third dimension political inclusion. Ideally it should be considered it in each of the boxes in the previous matrix.

In general accordance with Nicos Mouzelis one may separate historically between integration of people into politics on the basis of relatively autonomous broad popular movements generated by comprehensive economic development (like in many parts of western Europe), and elitist incorporation of people with less solid organisations of their own into comparatively advanced polities in economically late developing societies (like in the Balkans and many third world countries).<sup>55</sup> These concepts, of course, call for further elaboration. Following Mouzelis one may talk of two methods of incorporating people into comparatively advanced polities – clientelism and populism. Clientelism, primarily, is associated with bosses on different levels with their own capacity to deliver patronage in return for services and votes. At present, I would add, clientelism is sometimes 'modernised' in the form of state-corporatism. Populism, on the other hand, generally goes with charismatic leaders who are able to express popular feelings and ideas, but not necessarily interests, and whose positions

are essential to the stability of adjoining leaders and their ability to support followers. In addition to this, I would argue, political leaders aiming at integrating people into politics have sometimes tried shortcuts by adding elements of clientelism (and occasionally populism as well), for instance the communists in West Bengal with access to state resources and a strong party-machinery. Let us label this alternative patronage.

How, then, do movements try to integrate rather than incorporate people into politics? In general accordance with Sidney Tarrow one may distinguish between two basic methods, one emphasising autonomous collective action and another focusing upon internalisation of actions and movements in organisations with some leadership. Tarrow argues, and my studies do confirm, that the most important but often neglected element of movement organising is what he calls the "mobilising structures". These link the 'centre' (in terms of formally organised leadership identifying aims and means) and 'periphery' (in terms of the actual collective action in the field). The "mobilising structures" are thus "permitting movement co-ordination and allowing movements to persist over time".<sup>56</sup> Historically, he continues, there are two solutions to the problem, one with roots in anarchist and one in democratic socialist thinking.<sup>57</sup> The anarchist approach emphasises people's natural and spontaneous willingness and ability to resist repression and exploitation through linked networks and federations of autonomous associations with, however, in reality, instigating organic leaders as spearheads. The social democratic concept stresses the need for political ideology, organisation, and intervention through an integrated structure of parties, unions, and self-help organisations.<sup>58</sup> As these labels often carry different and biased connotations, however, I shall talk instead of federative and unitary forms of integration.<sup>59</sup>

All together we thus arrive at two ways of incorporating people into politics, i.e. (I) populism and (II) clientelism/state-corporatism; one way of combining integration and incorporation but basically tending towards the latter, i.e. (III) alternative patronage; and two ways of integrating people, i.e. (IV) federative and (V) unitary. If we add then the positions related to space for political work within the political system and civil society respectively, we end up with the following summarising matrix:

Figure 2: Basic strategic concepts among pro-democratising movements on space for work and ways of including people into politics.

	--- Incorporation ---		---- Integration ----		
	I Populism	II Clientelism (state-corporatism)	III Alternative patronage	IV Federative	V Unitary
	<i>In/out system</i>	<i>In/out system</i>	<i>In/out system</i>	<i>In/out system</i>	<i>In/out system</i>
Little space for work in	1. E.g.	2. E.g. Sasono	3. Leading	4. Networking	5. General

civil society - hence it has to be politically facilitated	Megawati in Indonesia	within ICMI in Indonesia	radical patrons in e.g. party and NGO-alliance	avant-garde catalysts	organisers
Space for work in civil society- hence this may be strengthened directly	6. E.g. Gus Dur in Indonesia	7. E.g. NGOs related to ICMI in Indonesia	8. Local radical patrons in e.g. a party or NGO	9. 'Independent' NGOs with grassroots activities	10. Movement organisers-cum-co-ordinators

In *Indonesia*, the so important populism during Sukarno has now returned to the explicitly political level with his daughter, and to civil society with, leader of the world's largest and comparatively pluralist Muslim organisation Nahdlatul Ulama (Gus Dur). Reformists like Adi Sasono, on the other hand, try to turn pro-government ICMI into a forum to modernise clientelism into Malaysian-like state-corporatism. The most genuine and outspoken democrats, however, are outside the system and among the myriad of radical groupings at the other end of the figure. While recalling the important difference between the explicitly political activists focusing on state and government, and those working more indirectly in civil society, we now also pay attention to their ways of mobilising and organising. Ever since the liberation struggle much of the activism in Indonesia, especially among students and now also in several NGOs, is based on radical, courageous, often personalised and sometimes moral leadership that is supposed to ignite people's spontaneous ability to resist. Since the late-80's, a new generation of activists have staged daring demonstration and tried to give voice to subordinated people. 'Action maniacs' constantly hunted for new issues attracting media but did demonstrate that there were more space for radical action than most 'established' dissidents thought. The general organisers, on the other hand, agree on the need to change state and government but draw instead on two other different political traditions. Firstly, the middle-class intellectuals who tried to build 'modern' parties but ended up in the 50's and 60's with elitist formations like the socialists', or elite-based parties based on conventional loyalties, such as the Muslims' and populist nationalists'. Secondly, the reformist-communists who also made use of some conventional loyalties but still managed to build in the 50's and 60's a comparatively 'modern' party with some 20 million people in attached popular organisations. What now remains are basically leaders from the elitist tradition who first supported Suharto but then turned critics and were deprived of their organisational base. Their main remaining asset is some integrity and legitimacy in the eyes of many people, and among Western governments and agencies. The reformist-communist, on the other hand, are no more - but instead a new generation of primarily young former 'action maniacs' who since 1994 bet on ideology and organisation to build a new socialist party by mobilising from above workers, urban

poor, displaced peasants and frustrated students. Here are, thus, the roots of the People's Democratic Party (PRD) that was made a scapegoat after the riots in Jakarta in mid-1996. Hence, most grassroots groups and supportive NGOs are 'empowering' civil society in the federative column, harnessing people's own protests but staying out of explicit politics and leaving it to 'people themselves' to organise. Finally the new and few movement organisers-cum-co-ordinators who instead help e.g. labourers to organise, and try to co-ordinate various genuine actions – but from below, in contrast to the PRD's way of working more from above. Given this fragmentation and these weaknesses, what happened towards mid-96 was, thus, that many political activists set aside much of the time-consuming efforts at integrating people, left hesitating grass-roots organisations behind, and tried instead alternative patronage (column III) as a kind of shortcut at the central political level, by linking up with Megawati (and indirectly Gus Dur).

The *Philippine* story, by now, is less complicated though the pattern is the same and even older. Megawati's political sister Mrs. Aquino, for instance, plays no more any role. The exiting democratisers are instead among 'our' groups at the other end of the figure aiming at integration of people into politics. As in Indonesia, certain leading personalities do play an important role in the Philippines, but many of them are less avant-garde catalysts than related to general organising. To put it crudely, their problem reminds of their fellow Indonesians' – they are lacking an organised popular base. It is true that some of them stayed out of the rigid 'national democrats'. But this did not automatically render the independents a mass following. It is true that many more later on left the same disciplined but increasingly irrelevant organisations. But they did not bring along much of the rank and file. Furthermore, as we know, there were exciting attempts among the democratisers to prevent isolation and fragmentation of progressive work at the grassroots level in civil society, for instance in co-operatives. But the fact that some few NGOs really tried co-ordination from below, and indirectly supported electoral efforts as well, was far from enough. And the electoral movement of 1992 was not much in terms of general organisation on an unitary basis. On the contrary, by 1995 there was another attempt to move towards alternative patronage shortcut in column III. This is much more rooted at the local level than in Indonesia. Renewal-oriented action groups and NGOs hold on to their own efforts in civil society, while rallying behind reasonable politicians in elections. But it remains to be seen if the new Citizens Action Party is part of this tendency or an attempt to really go for integration of people into politics. Finally it is interesting to note that by 1995 the last faction leaving the 'national democrats' (Lagman's 'urban insurrectionists' in Manila-Rizal) also adopted the alternative patronage track, but that its Leninist cadreism and instrumentalism in picking out just about any suitable boss-cum-politician with attached client organisation was as decisive as its understanding



of independent popular efforts at the grass roots level and co-operation within the democratic Left were negligible.

In *Kerala* the pattern is even more clear-cut. Populism and clientelism, of course, are also within the Left and some of the radical grass root organisations. But generally speaking this is confined to the Congress-led front and the many civic associations related to caste and religion. And as compared to the alternative patronage in West Bengal, the Kerala communists, as already indicated, are subject to many more checks and balances – as their party grew out of popular organisations and because of their more consistent land reform, turning so many downtrodden people into comparatively independent citizens. 'Leftist-clientelism' of today, therefore, is less a question of mobilisational pattern than of commerce and semi-privatisation having crept into political and interest organisations as well as co-operatives. Anyway, the Left front, and especially the leading Communist Party (Marxist), dominate politics and general organising and has mainly preferred state-modernist development policies. Avant-garde catalysts remain few, aside from some intellectual personalities. The only but decisive change during recent years is the gradual shift of many KSSP members and actions from developmental, 'independent' grassroots work (box 9) to more promotion of local organising and co-ordination among people (box 10) to thus promote both universalistic popular politics (rather than particularistic politics related to different pillars) and change from below of the established parties and their priorities. This change in mobilisational pattern, I would say, is a major factor behind the forceful introduction of the new campaign for popular planning from below; and it is much of what *could* also carry it further in terms of real democratic decentralisation, reformed popular and political organisations, and efficient participatory local government.

#### Politicisation of interests and issues

Having considered how people are mobilised and included into politics we must also analyse the content of politics of democratisation in terms of how interests and issues are politicised. There is lack of sharp analytical tools. On the basis of a Marxist oriented understanding of civil society and democracy, Peter Gibbon, among others, has succinctly suggested some exciting propositions. These were hinted at already in the beginning of the essay and may now serve a point of departure. Modern civil society primarily reflects the 'bourgeois' social division of labour with its individualised and privatised entities. The thus generated plurality of groupings is not likely to in itself promote general interests and democratic forms of government – rather the associations may turn prisoners of the process by "deepening civil society" and be unable of combining single issues and specific interests by way of politicisation.

This way of conceptualising politicisation, however, is both too general, as it tends to include all aspects of politics, and too narrow (and partly normative), as it is not problematised. We should not rule out politicisation through e.g. development oriented civil society organisations. And just like pluralism, of course, politicisation is no sufficient recipe for democratisation, as recently demonstrated in former Yugoslavia, and earlier when carried out with even the best of intentions within the framework of various socialist projects. Hence, there is a need for qualifications. Moreover, we have already discussed how people are involved in politics. So let us now reserve the concept of politicisation for the ways in which interests, ideas, and issues are also included – i.e. when they are considered in a societal perspective by people who have come together with regard to what should be held in common and how this should be done in a politically created society (such as a nation state or a municipality). Three aspects are most important: the basis, the forms, and the content.

The *basis of politicisation* may be derived from the kind of ideas and interests that people come together and consider in a societal perspective. Let us distinguish between, firstly, single issues and/or specific interests and, secondly, ideologies and/or collective interests. The *forms of politicisation* are by definition related to societal organs like the state or local government (otherwise we may talk of e.g. privatisation) but vary with whether one 'only' demands that certain policies should be carried out by these organs or also really engages in promoting similar ends through self-management, for instance by way of co-operatives. The *content of politicisation*, of course, is about different ideas, ideologies, and concrete policies, plus the way in which various movements articulate norms and ideas such as democratic rights and equality, in different contexts. On the one hand, even authoritarian rulers talk of democracy and even chauvinist religious movements may legitimate their aims and means in terms of the rights and freedom of their members. On the other hand demands for democratisation may well be expressed by use of 'traditional' values and vocabulary.<sup>60</sup> The basis and forms of politicisation may be illustrated in a simple table, whereafter one has to add the content to each box.

Fig. 3. Types of politicisation.

		Forms of politicisation	
		Via state/local govt. only	Also via self-management
Basis of politicisation	Single issues or specific interests	1. Single plural	2. Dual plural
	Ideology or collective interests	3. Single social	4. Dual social

This way we may distinguish four types of politicisation. In box one the kind of single pluralism when pressure groups, single issue movements, and special interest organisations try to affect state or local government policies. In box two dual pluralism with various groups and organisations putting forward their demands while also self-managing their issues and interests. In box three the single social type of politicisation with organisations or corporations demanding state or local government policies on the basis of ideologies and/or collective interests. In box four dual social politicisation through similar organisations which also, to a considerable extent, manages their common interests. Ideally we should now consider these options in terms of the content in each of our ten previously identified strategic positions in figure 2, but a few illustrations of the fruitfulness in his venture will have to do.

In *Indonesia* none of the major actors trying to integrate people into politics (aside, thus, from the few and new movement co-ordinators) have been markedly successful. Hence their democratising potential does not vary *directly* with *their* strategic positions. The important common denominator is instead their pattern of politicisation. There is a basic orientation towards single issues and specific interests, especially among the comparatively firmly based grassroots workers and the many rather free floating avant-garde catalysts. Moreover, when (as since about 1994) almost all the actors anyway make efforts to address general problems of democratisation they do so, firstly, within the framework of 'their' old strategic positions and, secondly, by relating 'their' issues or 'their' ideologies to general problems. The end result is both conflicts between various factions and a tendency to unintentionally causing trouble for each other. This I have labelled *divisive politicisation*. And the outcome in 1996, as we know by now, was that the political activist who sensed a political opening and shortcut in the conflict over Megawati bet on alternative patronage and run offside while the potential of the grassroots work was left behind. The only optimistic prospect is that the strategic perspective of the still weak and untested movement organisers-cum-co-ordinators – who try to bring initiatives at the grassroots level together from below but within a unitary mobilisational framework – will gain strength and prove more fruitful. There are hopeful experiences from co-ordinating labour activists as well as supportive organisations. And at least in principle the independent electoral watch dog KIPP could be reconstructed into a *democratic* watch movement on the basis of not only daring top-down activists (as till July 27, 1996) but also those working at the grassroots level.

In *the Philippines* the general problem of politicisation is rather similar. Having distanced themselves from rigid and increasingly irrelevant general organisers like the 'national democrats', the very basis of the new democratisers is cause oriented groups

and NGOs, related community organisations (including co-operatives), and some but not broad based interest organisations among e.g. labourers – and they all, quite naturally, have a tendency to focus on specific interests and issues. Many have now ample of experiences of the need to link their special tasks to general problems, but again the pattern has mainly been to hold on to special strategic positions and different issues. Hence it has proved difficult to co-ordinate groups and efforts, and to address broad societal problems of democratisation and governance. At the same time the renewal-oriented forces that I follow have refuted conventional recipes in terms of a grand theory, tight ideology and cadre-based organisation. One vision is instead a common framework of politics and society, as well as democratically run fora for various organisations and groups, within which activists can situate themselves, analyse the various movements, and consider different problems and issues. But as these things do not emerge spontaneously from below, the question of how to initiate them remains to be answered. Coalitions and co-ordinating bodies are among the initiatives, but there are also concrete problems of time, space, money, and limited number of activists; the necessity to sustain basic groups and movements; the need to influence at least local policies by participating in councils and making some difference in elections by relating to reasonable politicians with a chance to win. Hence it is tempting to go for Americanised community action, pressure politics and lobbying behind 'reasonable' politicians with access to media and moneied bosses. In face of the 1998 elections it remains to be seen if it will be possible instead to make use of the many experiences, co-ordinate the efforts from below, at best link up also with broad based electoral-cum-democratic watch movements (and related personalities like Haydee Yorak), and use the new Citizens Action Party to provide an overall unitary framework.

In *Kerala*, finally, there have also been similar problems of politicisation on the basis of single issues and specific interests. On the one hand it is important to realise that this is not confined to new groupings. The wider process of commercialisation has very much crept into the established leftist parties and associated movements, including unions and co-operatives – though the official picture remains a clear-cut one of historical traditions of focusing upon collective interests and ideology, and though their strategic position remains that of the general organisers. Party-politicisation, therefore, have frequently been associated with the favouring of special interests, vested interests, particular political-cum-socio-economic and at times even caste or religious pillars – and the setting aside of broad societal interests of promoting both human and economic development. When therefore, on the other hand, civil society based movements like the KSSP oppose this and proclaim the need for 'de-politicisation' it is in fact misleading since they favour local organisation for common societal (instead of private or group specific) aims and thus are rather trying

a dual social type of politicisation. Having said this, however, it is also vital to remember that in carrying out the re-politicisation, the reformists themselves have also stumbled over how to relate special tasks like the promotion of vegetable production to societal government. But less so than in Indonesia and in the Philippines. Over the years their programmes have become more comprehensive and linked to broad perspectives. And resource mapping, for instance, is now firmly situated within the general framework of decentralised democratic governance - in co-operation with state as well as local governments. The reformists' major problem is rather the politicisation of demands for institutional reform, a less centralised administrative structure etc. – without which their alternative development politics has only proved possible in isolated showcase villages. This way the reformists became very much dependent upon the decisions taken by the authorised parties and the special interests that they harbour. Actually, it is 'only' in the recent process of decentralisation and popular planning – and especially the synchronisation of forceful work from above, pressure from below and movements' capacity to really get campaigns off ground and work done – that one can visualise ways of going about these dilemmas. But if the visions prove real it is nothing less than a break throw.

## **Conclusion**

If there is something to the critique of the civil society/social capital paradigm we should focus instead on politics of democratisation. And if there is something to the alternative analytical framework, I will use it to put together the full results from the case studies of popular politics of democratisation in comparative and theoretical perspective before saying much more. However, if there is also something to the tentative conclusions summarised in this essay, we may already pay special attention to the rise, potential, and problems of the tenth strategic position in combination with the fourth type of politicisation – i.e. on movement co-ordinators-cum-organisers with a dual social way of politicising interests, issues, and ideas. And if there is something to this conclusion in turn, support to third world democratisation should be redirected from inconclusive promotion of civil society and social capital to specific support of genuine actors in real processes of democratisation – such as, to take but two extremes, the strengthening the independent position of the genuine pro-democracy forces in Indonesia by promoting their attempts at bridging the gap between top-down activists and those working at the grassroots level, or the backing up the Kerala reformists propelling decentralisation and popular planning from below.

*March 1997*

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<sup>1</sup>Or to put it in minimum-procedural terms: government according to rule on the basis of majority decisions among adult citizens or members with one vote each and freedom of expression and organisation.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. e.g. Göran Therborn, "The Right to Vote and the Four World Routes to/through Modernity, in Rolf Torstendahl (ed), *State Theory and State History*, Sage, London, 1992.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. e.g. Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London 1986.

<sup>4</sup>C.f. e.g. D. Rueschemeyer, E. Huber Stephens, and J. Stephens, *Capitalist Development & Democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1992 and Göran Therborn, "The Rule of Capital and the Rise of democracy", in *New Left Review*, No. 103, 1977.

<sup>5</sup>On civil society I have mainly relied on Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, The MIT-Press, London, 1994; John Keane (ed), *Civil Society and the State*, Verso, London, 1988; Mats Dahlkvist, "'Det civila samhället' i samhällsteori och samhällsdebatt. En kritisk analys", i Lars Trägårdh (red), *Civilt samhälle kontra offentlig sektor*, SNS Förlag, Stockholm, 1995, Nicke Karlsson, *The State of State. An Inquiry Concerning the Role of Invisible Hands in Politics and Civil Society*, Uppsala, Almqvist&Wiksell International, 1993; Axel Hadenius and Fredrik Uggla, *Making Civil Society Work. Promoting Democratic Development: What Can States and Donors Do?* Uppsala Studies in Democracy, No 9, Uppsala, 1995.

<sup>6</sup>Carl-Johan Westholm, "Vägen till totalitär demokrati", *Dagens Nyheter*, 29/12/90.

<sup>7</sup>Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press, 1993.

<sup>8</sup>I am thankful for having been able in this part of the essay to benefit from discussions with the participants in a series of master/doctoral courses in Uppsala since 1994 on State, Development and Democratisation in the Third world (co-chaired by Lars Rudebeck) and our guest lecturers, including Nicos Mouzelis, Göran Therborn and Peter Gibbon.

<sup>9</sup>For the concept of associative democracy, see the special issue of *Politics and Society*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1992 and Paul Hirst, *Associative Democracy. New Forms of Economic and Social Governance*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1994.

<sup>10</sup>See e.g. O'Donnell and Schmitter, op.cit. and Alfred Stepan (ed.) *Democratising Brazil*, Princeton University Press, 1989.

<sup>11</sup>Sidney Tarrow, "Making Social Science Work Across Space and Time: A Critical reflection on Robert Putnam's 'Making Democracy Work'", in *American Political Science Review*, Vol 90, No. 2, June 1996 (referring in fn. 23 to David Laitin).

<sup>12</sup>Filippo Sabetti, "Path Dependence and Civic Culture: Some Lessons From Italy About Interpreting Social Experiments", in *Politics and Society*, Vol 24, No. 1, March 1996, p. 27.

<sup>13</sup>Tarrow op.cit. p. 394

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. pp. 395f

<sup>15</sup>Sabetti op. cit. pp. 32f.

<sup>16</sup>Tarrow op.cit. p. 392 referring also in fn 15 to the results of Carlo Trigilia and his collaborators.

<sup>17</sup>Göran Therborn, *Beyond Civil Society*, Paper to conference on Civil Society at the Swedish Institute in Istanbul, 28-30 October, 1996.

<sup>18</sup>C.f. Tarrow op.cit. pp.393f.

<sup>19</sup>I shall also return to this on the basis of my own empirical results in third world contexts.

<sup>20</sup>Margaret Levi, "Social and Unsocial Capital: A Review Essay of Robert Putnam's 'Making democracy Work'", in *Politics and Society*, Vol 24, No. 1, March 1996, p. 49.

<sup>21</sup>C.f. Tarrow op.cit. pp.395f

<sup>22</sup>Therborn, "The Right to Vote..."op.cit. (Cf. also his basic *European Modernity and Beyond*, Sage, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, 1995.)

<sup>23</sup>Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject, Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton University Press, 1996. Cf. also a similar general analysis in my textbook, *Politik och utveckling i tredje världen. En kritisk introduktion*. Studentlitteratur, Lund, 1996. (Forthcoming in English: *Politics and Development. A Critical Introduction*.)

<sup>24</sup>See footnote 27 and 33 below

<sup>25</sup>Hans Blomkvist, "Social Structure and Political Action: Does Social Capital Matter?" in *Democracy and Social Capital in Segmented Societies*, Working Papers to Conference in Orissa, March 1966, with the "Agora Project", Dept. of Government, Uppsala University, 1996. March 1996. On theories on economic development and democracy, see A. Przeworski and F. Limongi, "Modernization: Theories and Facts", in *World Politics* 49, January 1997.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. e.g. Peter Gibbon's contribution to this anthology; Björn Beckman "The Liberation of Civil Society," in M. Mohanty and P. Mukherji with O. Törnquist (eds), *Social Movements, State and Democracy*, forthcoming on Sage, New Delhi; Gordon White, "Civil Society, Democratisation and Development (I): Clearing the Analytical Ground", in *Democratisation*, Vol 1, No. 3, Autumn, 1994.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. O. Törnquist, *Dilemmas of Third World Communism. The Destruction of the PKI in Indonesia*, Zed Books, London, 1984; *What's Wrong with Marxism? Vol I-II, (I: On Capitalists and State in India*

and Indonesia; II: on Peasants and Workers) Manohar, New Delhi, 1989; "Communists and Democracy in the Philippines", in *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 6-13 and July 20, 1991. (Also in *Kasarinlan*, University of the Philippines, Vol 6, No. 1-2, 1990.)

<sup>28</sup>Cf. O'Donnell and Scmitter, op.cit., Stepan, op.cit. Törnquist "Communists...Philippines, op.cit.

<sup>29</sup>Adam Przeworski et. al., *Sustainable Democracy*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 57

<sup>30</sup>Cf. eg. the writings of Törnquist (op.cit and below), **Hewis/Rodan**, Mamdani op. cit. and Gibbon op.cit.

<sup>31</sup>See fn. 27!

<sup>32</sup>The project is financed by the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries. This method of comparing similar movements and ideas in different settings (and over time in the same settings) may in turn be compared with the methods discussed in D. McAdam, J.D. McCarthy, and M.N. Zald (eds) *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements. Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, Cambridge University Press, 1996 – though I am not primarily looking at structural factors as such but at the way in which movement's read them and try to alter them; Cf. also Tarrow's "States and opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements" (pp.48f) in *ibid.*, who explains the similarities in different setting with reference to state-building. In my cases I would rather refer to the dual effects of the expansion of politically injected capitalism.

<sup>33</sup>For full analyses see fn. 27 and *Democratisation in Indonesia?* Manuscript 1996, revised version forthcoming 1997, Uppsala University and Nordic Institute for Asian Studies.

<sup>34</sup>For full analyses see fn. 27, "Democratic 'Empowerment' and Democratisation of Politics: Radical Popular Movements and the May 1992 Elections in the Philippines" in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol 14, No. 3, 1993 (or *Kasarinlan* Vol. 8:3 and 9:3, 1993) and "Popular Politics of Democratisation: Philippine Cases in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective", in M. Mohanty and P. Mukherji with O. Törnquist (eds), op. cit.

<sup>35</sup>O. Törnquist, "Democracy and the Philippine Left" op.cit.

<sup>36</sup>The so-called *Bisig*-movement, The Popular Democrats, and Dante Buscayno's efforts.

<sup>37</sup>For full analyses see fn. 27 and (in co-operation with P.K. Michael Tharakan) "Democratisation and Attempts to Renew the Radical Political Development Project: The Case of Kerala", in *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. XXXI, Nos. 28, 29, and 30, July 13, 20 and 27, 1996. (Also published by the Nordic Institute for Asian Studies )

<sup>38</sup>For the concept of the campaign, see Thomas Isaac et. al. in **EPW**. Cf. also the reporting by R. Krishnakumar in *Frontline*, June 28, 1996, August 23, 1996, and March 7, 1997.

<sup>39</sup>This is *not* the case with P.K. Michael Tharakan's contribution to this anthology.

<sup>40</sup>Amartya Sen and Jean Dréze, *Indian Development: Selected Regional Perspectives*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and Delhi, 1996.

<sup>41</sup>Margaret Levi, Review of Robert Putnam et al. "Making Democracy Work", in *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol 26, No. 3, October 1993, p.377.

<sup>42</sup>See e.g. Mathew Zachariah and R. Sooryamoorthy, *Science in Participatory development. The Achievements and Dilemmas of a Development Movement: The case of Kerala*, Zed Books, London and New Jersey, 1994.

<sup>43</sup>The loss was mainly due to special sympathies with just assassinated Rajiv Gandhi's Congress party.

<sup>44</sup>Local authorities, in addition to the municipalities, on district, block and village level.

<sup>45</sup>For the concept, see fn. 9.

<sup>46</sup>Cf. my *Marginal Notes on Impressive Attempts*, International Conference on Kerala, New Delhi, 9-11 December 1996; and the interview with me in *Indian Express* (Kerala edition), January 11, 1997.

<sup>47</sup>See fn. 27.

<sup>48</sup>For a normative-theoretical construct in the latter direction, see David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order. From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995.

<sup>49</sup>Including Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow and many others – for a recent synthesis, see *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements* op. cit. – plus my own studies of parties and movements (fn.27).

<sup>50</sup>I have mainly been inspired by the writings of Nicos Mouzelis and studies of comparative corporatism, including by Göran Therborn. Cf. also J.S. Migdal, J. S., A. Kohli, A., & V. Shue, (eds) *State Power and Social Forces. Domination and Transformation in the Third World*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994.

<sup>51</sup>Doug McAdam, "Political Opportunities: Conceptual origins, current problems, future directions", in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements* op. cit. p. 27

<sup>52</sup>William A. Gamson and David S. Meyer, "Framing political opportunity", in *ibid*, p. 277.

<sup>53</sup>Cf p. 3 above on the original idea of civil society as a politically created community of citizens.

<sup>54</sup>The same actor often arrive at different conclusions depending on the type of issue or the sector of state and society. For instance, there may be rather free space with regard to environmental questions but not labour rights; or there may be some room of manoeuvre at the centre but not on the local level. Here we only indicate the actors' general positions.

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<sup>55</sup>Nicos P. Mouzelis, *Politics in the Semi-Periphery. Early Parliamentarism and Late Industrialisation in the Balkans and Latin America*, Macmillan, London, 1986.

<sup>56</sup>Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement. Social Movements, Collective Action, and Politics*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1994, pp. 135 f.

<sup>57</sup>In the 'anarchist' solutions Tarrow also includes, for instance, syndicalism and guild socialism; in the second he adds, for instance, European Christian Democracy. Of course, one could also add reformist communist patterns (like in West Bengal and Kerala) to the second category.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., primarily pp. 138 ff.

<sup>59</sup>Much could be added to this. Tarrow discusses intermediate solutions or more or less attractive compromises having developed over time. For analytical purposes, and as a way of further distancing ourselves from Tarrow's European and North American context, I believe it is more fruitful to hold on to the basic ideal types and to begin by cross tabulating with our earlier distinction regarding space in civil society.

<sup>60</sup>Cf. the writings of Thomas Blom Hansen (e.g. "Becoming a Light onto Itself: Nationalist Fantasies in the Age of Globalisation", in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXI, No.10, March 1996) and James C. Scott (*Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1990) respectively.