Globalization of Resistance: Influences on Democracy Advocators in Civil Society in the South

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* The programme was awarded research grants in December 2010 by Vetenskapsrådet. At that time, the members of the research group were involved in other projects. In February 2012 two members of the research group had a baby and have been on parental leave until August 2013. One member of the research group has been on sick leave from October 2012 to March 2013. All in all, the project has had a slow start, but over time has been an acceleration and since 1 July 2013 all members of the research group devote a majority of their time to the project. This fact is reflected in the attached list of publications, which shows exponential development. The work has since the formal start of the project, 1 January 2011, been documented in an Implementation and monitoring plan that follows EU standards. The plan can be presented upon request.
Intro: The research programme “Globalization of Resistance: Influences on Democracy Advocators in Civil Society” (GR) analyses how various civil societies and their resistance transform under the impact of an increasing globalization in the Global South, represented mainly by Cambodia, India and Palestine (but also, in various degrees, Burma, Thailand and the MENA countries).

Research Environment: GR is the main programme of the research group Resist Successfully in Social Transformation (RESIST), located at the School of Global Studies (SGS), University of Gothenburg (UG). The core of RESIST consists of four associate professors: Baaz, Lilja, Schulz and Vinthagen, and two PhD-candidates (funded by VR), but attracts several other scholars. Besides hosting GR, RESIST is also responsible for a number of other activities reflecting the group’s broader interest in Resistance Studies (RS) and Civil Society Studies (CSS). These activities include: (i) the Resistance Studies Network, a platform for international and national collaboration (among some 400 scholars) on RS and CSS; (ii) the Resistance Studies Magazine (a bi-annual internationally peer-reviewed journal); (iii) the Resistance Studies Working Paper series (iv) the Resistance Studies Seminars, a public seminar series attracting 20-100 participants at each occasion; and, (v) Teaching in RS. All these activities, together with a highly prioritised and growing international publication, contribute to create a vibrant research environment. In addition, we have also organised RS and CSS panels at the International Studies Association (ISA) annually. Since the start, we have had regular visits by several key researches in the fields, including: J. A. Scholte, J. Scott, E. Chenoweth, B. Martin, P. Routledge and P. Waterman. One of many outcomes of this activity is that Scholte has accepted to become professor at SGS. We have also focused on developing collaboration with other researchers at UG through the annual Hagabadet seminar. We have, in addition, initiated a discussion of establishing a closer and more institutionalized collaboration with the research group on social movements (CSM) at the Dep. of Sociology. This collaboration has been so successful that we have made a report to the UG leadership in order to make it known that together with CSM we are already emerging as Europe’s second biggest research environment on resistance, activism and civil society.

Research activities: We have worked on theoretical and conceptual development through a series of articles and conducted five field studies until today: two in Cambodia (on gender based violence and the ECCC, focusing the role of civil society based resistance), one in India (on the role of Adivasi resistance to the Narmada dam project) and two in Palestine (focusing civil society organizations in the West Bank and Hamas). To summarise, we have been able to outline the theoretical framework and conceptual elaboration in connection to particular case studies in our countries. The systematic comparison between similar cases within our countries is the next step. We believe that it will be possible to present a tentative theory of how resistance by civil society actors in the Global South influence democracy and globalization and is influenced by its context and globalization. By this, we think we have a basis for a systematic testing and develop of our theory during the next programme period.

Preliminary findings: So far, we have been able to tentatively indicate the key importance of resistance practices emanating from the civil society in order to understand social change in general and democratization in particular. Hence, it seems to be the quality of the resistance practice that matters for the outcome of demo-advocating activities of civil society organizations. Our conceptual work has focused on the “(global) civil society” and “resistance” couplet. During the remainder of 2013, we will also immerse ourselves in the concept of “democratization”. We have found that not only power relations cause actors to resist, but also that resistance feeds resistance (thus, once rebellions have started, they might inspire/provoke new resistance), and that resistance seems often to be both rational and irrational, producing new forms of power in the process of resistance. We have also found that the social construction of memories matter for resistance, as well as actors’ creative utilization of universal and particular qualities of global and local processes. We have identified a key research problem to which so far no one has developed a satisfying theory, namely: How can we understand the relations between individual and non-organized everyday forms of resistance and mass-based resistance and organised campaigns? Consequently, we have initiated a separate but linked project development on “everyday resistance”, at the same time as we have included forms of everyday resistance in all our case studies. We have also found that actors might move from a position within civil society to one as government (e.g. Hamas) and combine strategies of civil work and armed resistance. It has also become clear how civil society resistance from actors such as Hamas and Hezbollah promotes non-Western forms of “democracy”. We have also found that civil society actors might combine a broad range of tactics on several intersecting societal levels. Finally, we have through an international review of existing databases on activism and resistance found that there is a need and scope for locating a longitudinal and quantitative database project within RS.
Appendix: List of Publications

All publications are listed (i) chronologically (year by year) and (ii) alphabetically;

Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals


**Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals (under review)**


Lilja, Mona and Evelina Johansson (2013): ”Understanding Power and doing Resistance within Feminism”, *Nora* (reviewed and under rework in line with the reviewers suggestions).


**Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals (work in progress)**


**Peer-Reviewed Conference Papers**


Vinthagen, Stellan and Mikael Baaz (2013): ”Legal Action Design: Social Movements’ Strategies to Shape Law”, Power and Justice in the Contemporary World-Economy, the American Sociological Association Annual Conference, August 9, 2013, New York.


**Peer-Reviewed Conference Papers (submitted)**


**Peer-Reviewed Monographs**


Lilja, Mona (2013, forthcoming) *Resisting Gendered Norms: Civil Society, the Juridical and Political Space in Cambodia*. Farnham: Ashgate.


**Peer-Reviewed Monographs (work in progress)**


**Peer-Reviewed book chapters**


Other articles


Baaz, Mikael och Niclas Lantz (2011) :”Internationell vålds användning och det internationella samhället”, Tvärsnitt, no. 1.


Research Applications (submitted 2013)

