

CPOGG Workshop at Amerang 1-3 November 2002

Global Governance and Domestic Politics: Fragmented Visions

Ayca Ergun ayer@metu.edu.tr
Department of Sociology
Middle East Technical University, Ankara

Basak Cali b.cali@ucl.ac.uk
School of Public Policy
University College London, London

'We were invited to Paris by the International Federation of Human Rights to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Palais de Justice was full of human rights defenders from around the world. At that point, I realised that all the speakers at the platform were from the US, or Western Europe. I was sitting at the middle row next to my Kurdish, and Iranian friends. We looked and smiled at each other. They understood my thoughts. We were *sitting* and *listening* to our Western NGO colleagues on how the universal human rights movement has been advancing all over the world and what we needed to do next. I wished that the next time, there would be a more diverse group of people and diverse voices at the platform and at the sitting area.'¹

'At the Soviet time there was a slogan and they said that it was the communist society and the same chief was Heydar Aliyev. We had many seminars and workshops on how to build a communist society. Trainers, bureaucrats, members of government came from Moscow. And the trainers tried to explain - and I am sure that trainers believed that it was possible-how to build communist society in Azerbaijan. In Azerbaijan nobody believed that it would be communist society. During the workshops they said 'Don't worry, we will do this and soon we will build a communist society in Azerbaijan'. These workshops ended with a wonderful reception and then they said 'Good luck'. Now we have changed the slogan to 'Civic and democratic society'. Now we have new guests and trainers from Washington, London and Paris. We have the same workshops and the same people. The people from these countries honestly try to explain how to build a 'democratic and civil society', how to hold a democratic election, how to protect human rights and the rule of law. People who participate from the government and from Heydar Aliyev's party do not believe that it is possible to create a civic society in Azerbaijan. But they say 'No problem we could try to do our best and we will do it. There will be a civic society here'. Again receptions and they -people coming from the West- say 'good luck'.²

Introduction

Global governance is mostly studied as a top-down project. Its ideas, institutions practices and focus reaches far beyond the boundaries of nation-state and governmental agencies and it treats the domestic sphere as the field of implementation of already established concepts and objectives. In this framework, domestic actors who have not actively taken part in shaping the concepts of global governance are conceived as implementers at best and deviants or potential obstacles at worst. This paper argues that the uncritical acceptance of the concepts of global governance poses serious problems for understanding global governance in relation to domestic politics. By highlighting the domestic experience these effects, it is possible to acquire a more balanced view of the practices of global governance enabling us to understand, assess, and criticize its concepts and prospects.

We argue that there is a tension between the 'global/international and the 'domestic' spheres. This lies not only in the shortcomings of the *domestic* in dealing with the questions of global governance, but also in the exclusion of the study of how global governance concepts are reflected and transformed by domestic politics. Every time an issue of global governance enters into any domestic sphere, agents of global governance (i.e. international governmental and non-governmental organizations) become active actors in shaping the *domestic*. An inclusive understanding of

¹ Yilmaz Ensaroglu, President of the Human Rights Organisation for the Oppressed, 6.6.2002.

² Leyla Yunusova, Head of the Peace and Democracy Institute, 6.12.1999.

contemporary concepts of global governance, thus, lies in the engagement with the ways in which global governance is conceived at the domestic sphere. It can then be possible to determine whether *truly global* perspectives on governance can be constructed from a dialogue among domestic experiences.

The scarcity of scholarly work problematising the relationship between global governance and domestic politics is mostly due to a traditional division of labor between disciplines of social sciences. The study of domestic and international phenomena is often clearly demarcated. Students of international relations, international law or ethics often do not concern themselves with understanding the effects and reception of international phenomena in domestic contexts.³ Similarly, students of politics and sociology have been less interested in studying the interaction between international agents and domestic actors.⁴ These preconceptions have led to a separation of research agendas and have deprived these disciplines of important critical tools. The merging of the two research agendas are mostly observed with regards to post-conflict countries where ‘internationals’ have a mandate to govern domestic politics, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, East Timor, or Kosovo, or where international aid and development programs are heavily engaged in domestic reconstruction and political transformation.⁵

In this paper, we draw comparative lessons from Azerbaijan and Turkey, by focusing on the perception and reception of the two prominent concepts of global governance: human rights and democracy. In so doing, we aim to explore how the international promotion of human rights and democracy shape and transform domestic struggles at the discursive and practical levels. We question the binary divide between global governance and domestic politics with particular reference to the relationship between agents of global governance, i.e. international governmental and non-governmental organizations (IGOs and INGOs) and domestic actors i.e. non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Methodology

The interaction between international and local organisations is one aspect of two wider research projects on Azerbaijan and Turkey. The main research projects of the authors are: state and society relations in the process of post-soviet democratization of Azerbaijan and discourses of human rights in Turkey. In carrying out this research, our attention was especially drawn to the interaction between the domestic and international actors and we extended our analyses to the impact of global governance practices in these two cases.

We are aware of the fact that these two countries have not followed similar paths of political development. Azerbaijan is a newly independent post-Soviet country experiencing triple transformation of the state, market and society. The process of political transformation is also troubled by the transition to democracy, establishment

³ There are, of course, exceptions. See, for example, S. Strange, *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); D. Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); Risse, Ropp and Sikkink, *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change*, (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁴ For studies integrating the international dimension, see, Thomas Risse Kappen, *Bringing Transnational Relations back in: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); L. Whitehaed, *The International Dimensions of Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

⁵ P. Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda* (West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1998); Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999)

of a new nationhood and statehood. The emergence of civil society is a very recent phenomenon dating back only to the early years of independence. Turkey, however, is a country which has consolidated its nationhood and statehood since 1923. Even though its democratic experience has been interrupted by three military coups, Turkey has a democratic system of government and has been formally integrated into the global and European human rights regimes for a long period of time.⁶ In this respect, Azerbaijan is a newcomer to the integration process into international institutions, whilst Turkey is an old hand.

Both in Azerbaijan and Turkey reference to 'international standards', 'universal values' are used to advance political struggles by local human rights organisations. The discourse of integration with the 'civilised world/the West/international standards' has been a part of Turkish politics since the Ottoman times. In its contemporary manifestation, Turkish politics is centred around discourses of meeting human rights and democracy requirements of the European Union membership (i.e. the Copenhagen criteria) and upholding the European Convention of Human Rights and international human rights standards.⁷

In Azerbaijan, the 'international' element entered the domestic sphere after the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, the collapse was not a result or even the starting point of a relationship with *the international*. Struggles for independence, attempts to democratise began as domestic movements without any input from the outside, certainly not particularly from the Western world. Although the initial attempt at independence and democracy was purely domestic, the process of creating an independent and democratic nation-state then began to be shaped by interaction with international actors.

There are major differences in the two cases with respect to political history and the backgrounds of the NGO elites. However, in both cases, the study of the interaction between the domestic contexts and the international element revealed similarities in terms of a) the penetration of the international element into domestic contexts; b) the attitude of the international actors to the domestic ones; c) the language and vocabulary introduced by the international element into the domestic contexts.

The primary source of the research is fieldworks carried out in Azerbaijan and in Turkey. The fieldwork was conducted between April-May 1999, October-December 1999 and May-August 2000 in Azerbaijan and July-August 2002 in Turkey.

During the fieldwork, the main sources of data were the qualitative interviews, field notes, printed materials related to organisational, legislative and political spheres, and archive research of newspapers. The interviews were conducted with heads and members of human rights organisations (HROs), academics, experts and journalists and representatives of international governmental and non-governmental organisations.

The questions for the interviewees were unstructured and open-ended in order to have a detailed description as well as in-depth understanding of the meanings, processes and contexts and to promote the emergence of new concepts and themes that could not have been considered before the fieldwork. All the interviews were tape-recorded and lasted between one and a half-hour to three hours. All the interviews were transcribed in the analysis of the data and the conceptualisation followed the transcription.

⁶ E. Ozbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics* (Boulder, London:Lynne Rienner, 2000).

Secondly, our substantive and analytic field notes were also supportive and complementary in the data analysis. The field notes included background information about the interviewee, about his/her organisation, and impressions and comments after each interview and any off-the-record statements made by the interviewees. During our research in Azerbaijan, we also had the opportunity to make a few participant observations as most of the meetings were closed to non-members. We participated in meetings, conferences and the training of social organisations and umbrella groups. We also spent short periods of time at the premises of some organisations in order to see their work load and office work, trying to understand what it meant to be a part of a particular organisation. This gave us the opportunity to observe their daily work, how they interact with each other and with international donor organisations.

The third major source of data was all the available printed materials related to the legislative, organisational and political spheres. These could also be considered as primary sources. They include publications, declarations, regulations, up-dated programmes of the HROs. Publications in Azerbaijani and Turkish similarly constituted an integral part of the primary sources for this study.

The time frame of the analysis of Azerbaijani HROs is the period between 1988-2002. Independence is the marker of the beginning of the interaction between the Azerbaijani domestic actors and international agents. The time frame of the analysis of Turkish human rights organisations is the period between 1986-2002. The year 1986 marks the establishment of the first popular domestic human rights organisation in Turkey, *Turkish Human Rights Association*.⁸

Human Rights and Democracy as Concepts of Contemporary Global Governance

We take human rights and democracy to be two of the core concepts of the contemporary global governance project. We do not treat these concepts in terms of their philosophical or historical origins, but in terms of the normative and policy value that are allocated to them by the agents of global governance. International institutions, governmental or non-governmental, invariably declare the importance of democracy and protection of human rights to be at the heart of finding solutions to global problems at the local level.⁹ These two concepts are often regarded as inseparable parts of aid and funding packages offered to states and non-state domestic actors alike. The agenda for the promotion of democracy and human rights are all well supported by international non-governmental organisations and donor institutions. This framework amounts to a consensus among the agents of global governance and purports to offer guidelines for their operations in different domestic contexts and the ways in which they construct their relationship with local partners.

The international human rights movement originates from the advent of the United Nations in 1945 and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). However, its increasing spread, is a more contemporary phenomenon as the discourse and practice of assessing the legitimacy of policies (primarily of states, but also international organisations, and private bodies) affecting individuals and groups.¹⁰

⁸ Prior to 1986, there were two unsuccessful and short-lived attempts of establishing human rights organisations in 1948 and 1960.

⁹ See generally, Charter of the Paris for a New Europe (OSCE, 1990); Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993) B. Bouthros Gali, Agenda for Democratization (United Nations, 1994); Development and Human Rights: The Role of World Bank (1998); United Nations Development Report (2002)

¹⁰ Forsythe, Human Rights and International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Upendra Baxi, The Future of Human Rights (Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2002); M.

Nowadays human rights clauses are mainstreamed into the policies of all international organisations promoting global governance ranging from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, or the European Union. All forms of contemporary social, political and cultural issues, such as freedom from poverty, the right to health, education and housing, the right to democracy, are formulated in the language of human rights by non-governmental organisations at the grass-roots and at the international level.

Similarly, promotion of democratization and consolidation of democracy became an integral part of the international agenda especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The post-soviet political transformation offered new areas to 'promote democracy' for international governmental and non-governmental organisations.¹¹

For the purposes of this paper, promotion of human rights and democracy as a part of the global governance project is significant in terms of the relationship between agents of global governance and domestic politics. The agents of global governance penetrate into domestic structures in order to promote human rights and democracy. In the domestic structures, local social organisations are considered as the main players for realisation and implementation of global ideals. In this respect, civil society is considered as a potential contributor for the promotion of human rights and consolidation of democracy.¹²

In the promotion of human rights and democracy, the international organisations establish links with domestic human rights organisations through various ways. They offer funding to and form partnerships with the local organisations. They also provide expertise and guidance. All these activities are realised by the organisation of conferences, workshops, trainings and dissemination of published materials. As a result, they, in a way, 'internationalise' local NGOs. While inter-governmental organisations provide consultative status to local organisations, international non-governmental organisations offer membership and partnership in networks, umbrella groups and federations.

In looking at this interaction between the international and local organisations, our arguments will unfold on two different levels: We argue that the global matrix of human rights and democracy interact with the domestic both *at the level of praxis* and *at the discursive level*.

Mutua, Human Rights: A Political and Cultural Critique (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

¹¹ See P. Kopecky and E. Barnfield (1999) 'Charting the Decline of Civil Society: Explaining the Changing Roles and Conceptions of Civil Society in East and Central Europe', in J. Grugel (ed.); *Democracy Without Borders; Transnationalization and Conditionality in New Democracies*; G. Pridham (ed.) (1991) *Encouraging Democracy: The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe*, London: University of Leicester Press; G. Pridham and T. Vanhanen (eds.) (1994) *Democratisation in Eastern Europe, Domestic and International Perspectives*, London: Routledge; L. Whitehead (1986) 'International Aspects of Democratization' in G. O'Donnell, P. Schmitter and L. Whitehead (eds), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; (1996) 'Three International Dimensions of Democratization' in L. Whitehead (ed.), *The International Dimension of Democratization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press;

¹² For the role of civil society in consolidating democracy, see, for example Diamond (1999) *Developing Democracy: Towards Consolidation*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press; G. Gill (2000) *The Dynamics of Democratization: Elites, Civil Society and Transition Process*, Basingstoke: Macmillan; J.J. Linz and A. Stepan (1996) *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press; J. Keane (1988) *Civil Society and The State: European Perspectives*, London: Verso; R. Fine and S. Rai (1997) *Civil Society: Democratic Perspectives*, London: Frank Cass; J. Keane (1998) *Civil Society: Old Images New Versions*.

At the level of practice, the relationship between the agents of global governance and domestic actors is an unequal and asymmetric relationship where the guidance, expertise and leading role of the international actors can easily be observed. In this respect, the input and/or contribution by domestic actors in defining terms and conditions of global governance remain very limited. In this interaction, international agents encourage and contribute to the creation of a domestic elite compatible with them both ideologically and professionally. The issues and priorities of global governance become domesticated even if these are not the main concerns of domestic actors.

Penetration of international actors into particular domestic contexts paves the way to the establishment of a new vocabulary and language in domestic spheres. This new vocabulary is internalised by the domestic actors and used extensively in their struggle for domestic change and further democratization at the local level and in their interaction with their international counterparts. Domestic cites of struggle are transformed by the language of the international element. Now, we will focus in Azerbaijan and Turkey as illustrative cases of these arguments.

Praxis of Global Governance at the Domestic Sphere

On the practical consequences of the interaction between the agents of global governance and local HROs, we will particularly focus on funding, teaching, advice and collaboration.

The international governmental and non-governmental organisations interact both with states and civil society organisations in order to promote democracy and human rights. While the collapse of the Soviet Union provided the West with new areas 'to democratize' or 'to promote democracy and human rights' especially via IGOs and INGOs, in other parts of the world they have already had continuous interaction. The international governmental and non-governmental organisations conduct their activities both at the state level and society level. In this sense, the international organisations establish a mutual relationship both with the state and civil societal actors. In post-Soviet Azerbaijan, the efforts of the *international element* have been particularly focused on democratisation and protection of civil and political rights. In Turkey, on the other hand, the main concern of the international element is the promotion of human rights, with a greater emphasis on civil, political rights and minority rights.¹³ These efforts also coincide with the immediate priorities of domestic human rights organisations.

The activities conducted by international IGOs and INGOs highlight the fact that the promotion of human rights and consolidation of democracy is not only a question of internal politics. It is also affected by re-definition of the relationships with the outside world.

International organisations affect Azerbaijani HROs in terms of democratization by introducing new concepts through advice, training, guidance and monitoring. They are regarded a source for improving the democratization of the country providing international standards for democratization. In Turkey, local human rights organisations see their international counterparts as equals who should support them in their domestic struggle. They use international and European human rights instruments as well as the EU's demands on improving Turkish human rights records to legitimise their demands. As new-comers to interaction with internationals, Azerbaijani HROs are not critical of how their international counterparts conduct

¹³ Amnesty International Turkey Human Rights Report (1996); Human Rights Watch Turkey Human Rights Report (1999); Freedom House Report on Turkey (2001).

operations and devise policies for Azerbaijan whereas their Turkish colleagues at times openly confront the policies of international organisations in Turkey.

In the organisational sphere, the IGOs, INGOs and foreign states play a vital role in the NGOs' existence in Azerbaijan. They constitute the main source of funding. Many IGOs and INGOs allocate numerous grants in implementation of research and training projects in the newly independent states. The international element then becomes the main financial provider also due to the fact that membership fees do not provide substantial financial contribution since they are very small and not usually paid. Voluntary work is rather limited. Activities and project are often realised by a core staff comprised of three to five people. Moreover, the financial support not only aids the realisation of projects but also is the source of income that facilitates most of the HR organisations functioning as 'job creation schemes for the professional classes'.¹⁴ Under the circumstances of high unemployment rates and low salaries, it is widely argued that for most of the local NGO people, these social organisations are not only a source of income but also a place of 'self-realisation of their vast potential'.¹⁵ One politician even argued that if it were a fair regime there would not be that many NGOs as the main reason why they established these NGOs was to provide incomes.¹⁶

This relationship between donors and grant receivers has two consequences. On the one hand, local NGOs work more like research centers or institutes that conduct research and produce reports primarily for their international donors. They are less like NGOs mediating between state and society, and acting independently, they have a limited impact on political transformation. On the other hand, internationally funded projects make the local NGOs dependent on foreign assistance. This dependency disrupts the continuity of their activities. The end of a project can leave an NGO without resources and their activities may cease. Moreover, there is a monopoly of grant taking and international recognition. NGOs' previous experiences in getting financial assistance increase their chances of receiving subsequent projects and collaboration with other international organisations. This 'grant-making'/development approach can result in organisations in constant competition with each other for a limited amount of funds, ...and means that fewer organisations ultimately have the experience of running projects'.¹⁷

Thus, the internationally oriented project-based approach to the formation of civil society makes local NGOs compete on how to write a good proposal rather than result in improving their activities, gaining members, opening up channels of participation in state-building or democratization. The bulletins published by both local and international organisations include guidelines on 'how to write a project proposal' and 'whom to apply to, to get funding'.¹⁸

In this respect, Herzig points out that '...[Western financial support] can tend to integrate them (local NGOs) more closely with Western and international agencies than with their own societies and government'.¹⁹ In Azerbaijan, the integration of

¹⁴ E. Herzig (1999) *The New Caucasus*, London: RII, p. 38.

¹⁵ Interview with E. Amashov, head of the *Ruh-Spirit*- Organisation, 11.7.1999

¹⁶ Interview with Ibrahimli, the deputy chair of the Musavat Party.

¹⁷ T. Nelson (1999) *Building Civil Society in Azerbaijan: Overview and Needs Assessment Survey*, ISAR-Baku, p. 12.

¹⁸ See ISAR Third Sector, February-March 2001, No: 34; *Gayri Hukumet Teshkilatlari Informasya Buletteni*, September 1999, no: 3. The head of the NGO Forum said that one of their aims was to provide information to their member organisations as to how to write a good proposal for submission to the international NGOs. or the donor organisations.

¹⁹ Herzig, *The New Caucasus*, p. 39.

local HROs with their international partners, supply them with legitimacy, efficient working and productivity. However, their relations with the state remain rather limited and hostile since most are considered to be in opposition. Although the international element expresses its will to provide financial support and donor assistance²⁰ and international NGOs have numerous project and research grants for the former Soviet Union, the representatives of the INGOs complain that they are seen only as 'money givers'.²¹ They have stated that training without financial benefit was not well-attended.

In Turkey, all human rights organisations have a policy of not accepting financial aid from any state. Their main source of funding is membership fees, donations and project partnerships with international counterparts. The Turkish legal system requires approval from the Ministry of Interior for any foreign funds to be cleared through the bank accounts of local organisations. In the 1990s, due to the governments' excessive usage of this clause, Turkish human rights organisations were frequently barred from receiving funding from IGOs and INGOs. They have mostly relied on their local sources to carry out campaigns, projects and produce publications. Turkish human rights organisations rely on a limited number of professional staff and a broad network of volunteers to carry out their projects. As a president of one organisation states 'international funding means that we are enabled to do what we are doing now one hundred times more, it does not otherwise change how we conduct our work'. The president of another organisation focusing more on economic and social rights, however, complained that 'when we apply for funding to EU funds, we are almost certain of not getting it because we are not one of the *favorites* of the EU. International donors seem to prioritise issues such as torture or cultural rights and do not show interest in our projects on social injustice'.²² Consequently, the flow of international funds to Turkish HROs are limited both due to government's policy of controlling these funds and also the types of human rights issues for which international organisations are willing to offer funding.

Recently, some Turkish human rights organisations have also started questioning the implications of receiving funding from non-state international actors arguing that even this may jeopardize their independence.²³ Turkish human rights organisations seem to be stuck in a vicious circle. Their limited sources of international funding prevent them implementing projects on a greater scale. They even from time to time face severe financial crises in meeting their basic needs. They at the same time have the advantage of remaining amateur, self-sufficient and independent human rights defenders, who are able to take a critical stand in relation to international funding networks.

The IGOS and INGOs are the main players in 'construction from above' and 'from abroad' within civil society in Azerbaijan. This is not to imply that democratization or the formation of civil society is heavily defined, directed or guided from outside. However, it forms a milieu of interaction that influences the relationship between local organisations and the state in many respects.

In the interaction between the international element and domestic actors in Azerbaijan there are two dimensions affecting political transformation. The relationship with the international element forms a milieu of interaction and becomes a support mechanism for HROs, a place from which they can expect support against

²⁰ Boutros-Ghali, *Agenda For Democratization*, p. 35.

²¹ Interviews with the INGOs, operating in Azerbaijan.

²² Interview with the Board Member of Turkish Human Rights Institution, 02.01.2002.

²³ Interviews with the Presidents of HROs, June 2002.

government and a tool that puts pressure on the government and an opportunity to legitimise their demands.

Local HROs while trying to protect and defend 'ordinary people's rights', need to be supported and protected by international organisations. As most of them are funded by international NGOs, via projects, they have regular contacts with these organisations by e-mails, mail, reports and newsletters. These contacts make local NGOs consider them as a source of support and protection against government. If they are unable to apply any pressure directly on government, they ask their 'international' partners to take the necessary steps.²⁴ Increased interaction with the international element makes them recognized and in some sense respected. The representatives of HROs admitted that their influence on government was limited without the support of international organisations. Additionally, they argued that they were realising their aims more easily and becoming more effective.²⁵

Conversely in Turkey, human rights organisations do not think that their interaction with their international counterparts are making their work more effective vis-a-vis the government authorities. Human rights organisations make the ironic remark that it is easier for them to get appointments from ministers of foreign countries, or high-ranking international bureaucrats than civil servants in Turkey.²⁶ Human rights organisations enjoy a considerable degree of prestige in international circles. However, their activities are portrayed as guided by political and partisan agendas in the domestic sphere by the government as well as the domestic media. This duality leads to a careful assessment by the human rights organisations on how far the *international element* can make an impact and further their cause for human rights and democracy at the domestic sphere.

In Azerbaijan, international organisations carry out this supervisory role via local organisations who provide them with reports on the country's conditions on the issues that they deal with. This relationship paves the way for international bodies to fulfill the role of monitoring government. The international organisations become aware of the local conditions from a perspective within by getting first-hand information. This mutual relationship paves the way for government to make new arrangements -even limited- in order to 'protect its democratic and civic image'.²⁷

The international element promotes the sphere of civil society via teaching, guidance, training and funding in Azerbaijan. This creates a much higher degree of sensitivity in civil society regarding the undemocratic practices of their government. This leads to the creation of a paradoxical situation where the agents of global governance interact with countries where anti-democratic practices are persistent and where civil society has increasingly acquired the tools to promote democratization and human rights.

Similarly, human rights organisations in Turkey publish monthly and annual human rights reports, which are widely quoted by international organizations and are put on the agenda when the international organisations meet with government

²⁴ These steps can include making government accept their proposals concerning the laws and regulations related to the organisational sphere, to support and ask for help for registration, to release political prisoners, to ask for a more fair trial for prisoners.

²⁵ Interviews with RUH, New Generation Journalists Union, Azerbaijan Committees for Democracy and Human Rights, Institute of Peace and Democracy, Azerbaijan Modernization Center, INAM Center for Pluralism.

²⁶ Interview with the Human Rights Association for the Oppressed, 07.06.2002.

²⁷ Within the parliament and presidential apparatus, units and departments which are dealing with human rights and development of civil society. The Azerbaijani government collaborated with the UN Resource and Training Center for the establishment of an umbrella group unifying 120 NGOs.

authorities. International organisations, especially the EU, make use of the work of human rights organisations to criticise and demand further improvement in Turkey's human rights record.²⁸ Some human rights organisations point to the fact that their reports are selectively by used international bodies and that some cases receive more international attention (e.g. the torture of a Kurdish political prisoner makes it to a EU meeting whereas the torture of ordinary criminals does not). However, for these organisations, their reporting and disseminating duty of human rights violations have to continue despite selective attention they receive from international agents.

Discursive dimension of human rights and democratisation at the domestic sphere

In Azerbaijan, the penetration of the agents of global governance initiated the interaction and learning process by which local human rights organisations began to use the vocabulary introduced by their international partners. In this respect, in a transitional state like Azerbaijan, the language of the *international element* to understand democracy and human rights has become part of the domestic language. The penetration of the internationally used concepts leads to domestication of their usage. The internationals introduce new concepts like 'civil society' or 'human rights' to the domestic vocabulary of post-Soviet states. Not only do the terms like 'NGOs', 'citizen's initiative' and 'citizenship community' become integral parts of daily language. Original English words, such as 'gender', 'conflict management', 'monitoring', 'manager' and 'training', are used without translation in the Azerbaijani language. This creates an internationalised political vocabulary. NGOs, government and opposition adjust their discourses accordingly, and internalise this new vocabulary.

In Azerbaijan the nationalisation or domestication of the international vocabulary only occurred in recent years of political transformation. This does not, of course, imply that all these concepts are new in the post-Soviet political transformation. Concepts like the extension of liberties, autonomy, independence, or democracy were all incorporated in the agendas of pre-independence social organisations and were the main slogans of the independence movement. As for 2002, what is remarkable, is that all local NGOs (and political parties) use a new vocabulary in their domestic struggle for democratisation and promotion of human rights. Until 1998, opposition groups (both NGOs and political parties) referred to political prisoners as 'their friends who were unjustly imprisoned due to their activities against the current government'. Later on, 'injustices done to our friends in prison' have become 'torture, degrading and inhuman treatment of prisoners in contravention of United Nations human rights treaties'.²⁹ These new concepts and this new style in naming the previously addressed issues facilitate local HROs' interaction with international counterparts.

The internationalisation of the vocabulary paves the way for local HROs to formulate their domestic and even very political struggles using the international

²⁸ 2001 European Union Normal Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels: 13.11.2001.

²⁹ The same change of vocabulary and introduction of new concepts can also be seen in other spheres of civil society. Active participants of women's organisations were previously concerned with the anti-democratic practices rather than focusing on gender issues. For the last three years however, Azerbaijani language acquired a new term 'gender' which is used to capture 'women's problems'. Women's problems, which were not previously expressed publicly since they belonged to private sphere. These later became public issues and were integrated in the discourses of local NGOs under the heading of gender following the funding and training provided by international organisations.

language of global governance. The boundaries of the domestic struggle for democracy and human rights encompass national territory and gain an international character. Moreover, the use of new vocabulary also makes them more recognised and in some sense well-respected showing their competency and ability in dealing with the issues of global governance. Through the use of this new vocabulary (which is simultaneously promoted by the agents of global governance in their relations and communication with the state) their demands become legitimate and internationally recognised.

The use of international vocabulary also creates a new audience for the domestic actors. They not only seek to influence public opinion but also international organisations. In cases where anti-democratic practices are exercised by the government, the rule of law violated and human rights ill-respected, local HROs complain to international organisations. They try to attract their attention to domestic problems, ask for support, and pressure exerted against governments. These also turn domestic struggles into international issues.

Through the use of a new internationalised vocabulary, trainings, guidance and funding the agents of global governance create a new elite which gradually adjusts to the international environment. They also contribute to the creation of equal partners who speak from the framework of an international agenda, who know how to run projects and organise trainings for local people and who learn how to be good human rights and democracy promoters. This new elite in Azerbaijan has a background of political and organisational experience during the independence movement and the early years of independence. Due to the regime change in 1992, this formerly political and bureaucratic elite became a civil society elite and headed mainly human rights organisations.

The implementation of the principles of global governance has, however, some contradictory consequences. The sphere of civil society becomes monopolised by some organisations who already acquired international recognition in the sense that they predominantly have access to international funding, are frequently invited to conferences and trainings abroad and are considered as *the* representatives of the human right sphere. The heads are treated as equal players to state officials or chairs of the main political parties.

In the case of Turkey, human rights NGOs admit that they have consciously changed their language in the mid-eighties. In the 60s and 70s, a vibrant civil society, composed of trade unions and student unions, was fighting for 'equality and social justice and redistribution of wealth for all'. One member of a human rights NGO admits that in those days they regarded human rights as the discourse of the 'bourgeois' against whom they positioned themselves.³⁰ In 1980, when the brutal coup d'état banned all trade unions in Turkey, and left hundreds of thousands people disappeared and tortured, the same group of activists realised that human rights-based advocacy, was the only 'safe' platform to advance political struggle against the oppressive and violent political regime. Local human rights organisations also realised that it was much easier to mobilise international support if they used the international human rights language than by using left wing political slogans at the time. At this juncture, the international human rights vocabulary became a tool for advancing domestic political struggles and was rapidly domesticated.

The leaders of most human rights organisations admit that they were not familiar with the theory of human rights, nor had they knowledge of how to build

³⁰ Interview, 07.06.2002.

partnerships with international organisations at the time. As one interviewee stated 'human rights language has become our life-boat. There were thousands of people tortured and missing and human rights language brought the otherwise fragmented political groups together under the umbrella of human rights organisations'.³¹

In the beginning of the 1990s, Turkish government's oppression had a new target with the heightening of the Kurdish separatist movement. Human rights consequently were utilised to address killings of civilians in areas of conflict, forceful displacement of people from south-eastern villages of Turkey by human rights organisations. Later on, some HROs brought to the human rights agenda the issue of women with headscarves being banned from working in public institutions. Most of the sensitive and contested issues of Turkish politics have, therefore, become a human rights issue in the domestic sphere. This has led to the characterisation of HROs as pro-separatist or anti-secular groups who were supported by international organisations to weaken the country. However, despite the reaction and attempts at oppression of HROs, human rights language has become increasingly popular in Turkey through the work of these organisations. Human rights organisations have been successful in rising above the traditions groups (i.e. Kurds and Muslims) they have defended and extended their work to include other potential vulnerable groups such as gays and transsexuals, the street children and the poor. This also shows that the local HROs are keeping up to date with the changes in human rights discourse at the global level.

After fifteen years of domestic struggle in the name of human rights, Turkish HROs admit to being more sceptical about their global counterparts. They, at times, find themselves in open confrontation with their international colleagues in approaching issues, such as human rights and globalisation or economic and social rights. As the president of one human rights NGO states: 'we are completely lonely. Nobody likes us in Turkey and we increasingly realise that our international friends have also started to despise us because we openly criticise their policies'.³²

In Turkey, the human rights language is the new language of politics which is both internal and external to human rights organisations. While in domestic struggles human rights organisations forcefully invoke human rights, in their interaction with international organisations they are sceptical about the commitment of global agents to extend the human rights language to combat all forms of political and social injustice. Contrary to their Azerbaijani colleagues, human rights defenders in Turkey, do regards the human rights discourse as a way of both affiliation and disaffiliation with their international counterparts.

Conclusions

The practices and the language of global governance do play a role in shaping political and civil societies in domestic contexts. They create professional agents of global governance at the domestic level who invoke a globally tuned language to transform domestic politics.

In Azerbaijan, international actors support local organisations and provide them with technical assistance, funding, training and guidance. They not only teach them 'how to be a democratic country' but also 'how to become civil society actors'. Global governance practices also introduce ways in which local NGOs can act within the international context of civil society by consultations, projects and conferences. The impact of Western democratic countries and organisations are highly valued and

³¹ *ibid.*

³² Interview, President of the Turkish Human Rights Association, 06.06.2002.

deemed to promote democratization. In this respect, the international agents are highly welcomed not only for assistance and collaboration but also for preserving the 'democratic (or democratizing) image of the country' and highlighting the 'willingness to be an integral part of the Western world'. In this sense, the interaction between the agents of global governance and domestic actors is based on consent.

In Turkey, local HROs see the international human rights discourse as an effective tool of domestic political struggle. The more they have fostered links with their (Western) international counter-parts, the more their human rights discourse has been refined to include struggles in the name of politically and socially excluded groups in the country. Turkish human rights organisations have developed a progressive and dynamic discourse of human rights, which empowers them to be critical of their own government as well as international organisations. The interaction with the practices and language of global governance have made these organisations skeptical about the very agents who promote them.

This paper has not argued that concepts promoted by global governance are not inherently good or should not be incorporated in different domestic contexts. However, global governance, as it stands today is a northern, top-down project, which has a claim of universal application. It is a project that is imposed upon the domestic civil spheres, where the domestic contexts of the south or the east are understood as areas of implementation, practice and 'training of trainers'. It is a project within which local NGOs are forced to talk in the language of their international counterparts. The dependency of local HROs on the *international element* in terms of financial assistance, the import of discourses, terminology and expertise reveals an uneasy relationship.

In this respect, we have argued that the relationship between the international and the domestic is defined in unequal and asymmetrical terms. Agents of global governance do not ask domestic actors what they need but instead tell them what they should need. They present guidelines for the promotion of human rights and democracy and show them the ways in which they should be achieved. This creates a dependency and a hierarchy between the agents of global governance and local human rights organisations where the latter become implementers rather than contributors. The lack of input from the domestic actors in defining terms and conditions of global governance leads to a monologue.

In cases where the agents of global governance are not fully aware of domestic circumstances and priorities, their contribution to promote human rights and democracy is far from achieved. This does not imply that the issues above should be underestimated. Agents of global governance present their priorities as the main priorities or at least the priorities which should be incorporated into domestic agendas. In this sense, the domestic actors have no opportunity to change or modify the order of priorities. The international factor does not seem to expect any input from the domestic contexts.

Listening the concerns of the domestic actors, is only possible when these actors formulate their concerns in terms of global governance. It is almost necessary to enter necessary keywords to be taken seriously at the global level. Local struggles are only cognisable at the global level when they are translated into the lexicon of human rights and democratisation. Global governance practices for human rights and democratisation in the domestic spheres prove to be fragmented.