

## **The Development of Political Party Organizations in Post-Conflict Societies**

### **1. Introduction: the context and the research question**

Some countries democratize after a civil war or their transition to democracy is abrupt by civil war. In that respect they go "through rocky transition, where mass politics mixes with authoritarian elite politics in a volatile way" (Mansfield and Snyder, 1995: 79). In such events political violence and political party development are intertwined. States that democratize after a civil war have been "largely ignored category...whose pattern of development has been shaped by civil war" as a subset of democratizing countries in the democratization theory (Kissane and Sitter, 2005: 183), even though some scholars have pointed the relationship between democratization and increasing nationalist conflicts (Snyder, 2000). But the conflict leaves imprints even in its aftermath on various elements in the emerging state: the constitution, the public administration, the valence political issues and the *political parties and party systems* [emphasis added - DT] (Coakley, 2000).

However the current political party literature is mostly silent about the possible inferences between political violence and political parties. It acknowledges that the cases where the political party development follows from armed political violence can not be fully explain within the standard research framework. In example Ireland, as a case where the development of political parties happened after political violence, has largely been ignored or treated as an outlier. As Peter Mair (2000: 128) puts it: "comparative political research has also tended to overlook the Irish case because it seems that the Irish party system 'does not fit' into the more widely applicable models of party systems; it has long been believed that the patterns and structures of mass politics which are evident elsewhere in Europe have little relevance to the Irish case". While Mair's reference applies

to the party system, the influences of the conflict can also be traced in regards to the political party organization and identity. In that respect an exit poll done in 1997 in Ireland still describes the main parties as 'civil war' parties some 75 years after the war ended, and shows that they have an overwhelming high support among the voters (Laver and Marsh, 2000). The past violent conflict imposes influence on the development of political parties and at present this extends far beyond the case of Ireland. In the case of some modern democratizing polities the transition period, the path toward democracy, is abruptly disturbed by violent political conflict. Think of the cases in former Yugoslavia, Africa (i.e. Sierra Leone, Mozambique), Central and South America (i.e. El Salvador, Uruguay, Columbia). Most cases in Latin America and in East-Central Europe have not had this experience but Southern Europe (i.e. Spain and Greece) had internal civil war that interrupted their democratic development, which later ended in military regimes. Studies of parties in post-conflict societies show that some political parties have different organizational features. Some have greater internal party democracy and are less centralized while others have opposite characteristics, they have less intra party democracy and a more centralized (Manning, 2008; Kovacs, 2006).

Why is it so? Why do parties have different organizational characteristics and what shapes their organizational development? What influence does the violent political conflict have on the political party development? Is it possible that it does not have any influence on political parties? We know that there are cases where armed groups that were participating in the conflict later transformed to a political party or that there are political parties which had their own armed military groups that took part in the armed political violence (i.e. Tupamaros in Uruguay, Renamo in Mozambique, HDZ and SDS in Bosnia, PDK in Kosovo, DUI in Macedonia, SRS in Serbia, Sinn Fein in Ireland, etc). These are cases where there is a direct link between the political parties and the armed political violence. However there are cases where the parties participated in the armed political violence indirectly, i.e. they were heading the Government during the time of violence, participated in conflict resolution, or in a broader sense were exposed to the violence and the

aftermath. The influence of armed political violence is clearly established in the former, and not so clearly in the latter case. However is the direct participation in the armed political violence the only factor that can be expected to influence the political party organization? Could this party legacy be both a necessary and a sufficient condition? Will the interactions between the parties be influenced by the armed political violence even after it is finished? It is quite simplistic to say that the armed political violence does not have any effect on political party development just because the current literature on political party is silent on this issue. The current literature looks at different factors and conditions that were built up while studying the political party development in times of peace in Western Europe. Even in cases of democratization the dominant studies of political party development and transformation are looking at cases from East-Central Europe, where the transition was reasonably peaceful.

There is a gap in the political party literature in relations to armed political violence. The research project that I am building is addressing this shortcoming. In particular the question that guides my research is: **What influences the development of a political party organization in post-conflict societies?** Arguably political parties are an important element of democracy, and in democratizing societies they are important for the consolidation of democracy. It is acknowledged that abrupt changes have an impact on the political system and on the institutions (i.e political parties). I consider armed political violence as an abrupt change that will influence the development of political parties. With my project I want to cover part of the gap between violent political conflicts and development of political parties. Hopefully I will show a way forward into an under-explored territory in the theory of political parties, particularly connected to political party organization.

I here need to acknowledge that it has been suggested that violence may influence the mode of competition between the political parties (i.e. the style of inter-party competition). In that respect where the opposing sides during the conflict meet as opposing sides in times of peace, the

interaction between them is expected to be hostile and adversary (Enyedi, 2008). This point is well taken and implies that the interactions between the parties will be influenced by the armed political violence long after the violence is over. This may be a more promising strand of research than exploring the influence of violence on political party organization. However my current research proposal is centered on the influence of violence on political party organization, therefore I will not explore the influence of violence on the patterns of inter-party competition because it falls out of the scope of my research project.

## **2. Project justification: why study political parties?**

One can argue that political parties are not a necessary condition for the introduction of democracy. However they are a necessary condition for the consolidation of democracy. As Samuel Huntington (1968: 461) puts it: "The vacuum of power and authority which exists in so many modernizing countries... can only be filled permanently by political organization".<sup>i</sup> Parties perform functions that are necessary for the viability of democracy. They include, among others, the articulation and aggregation of interests, structuring political competition, formulating policy proposals and formation of government. Thus studying political parties is one of the essential areas for the studies of democracy. Notwithstanding that Phillippe Schmitter's argument is that parties are less important today than in the past, he also points that:

"For there is hardly a serious student of democracy who does not seem to believe that political parties provide by far the most important linkage between citizens and the political process *and* that party platforms provide the best possible means for aggregating diverse interests and passions into a coherent, system wide mix of public policies *and* that competition between these parties provides the most reliable mechanism for ensuring the accountability of rulers *and* that cooperation within and between these parties provides the only feasible way of forming viable governments" (Schmitter, 2001: 67).

Studies of political parties usually look at the roles and functions of political parties. Some studies are interested in the party system, namely the number and interactions between the parties in a given country.<sup>ii</sup> But the studies of political parties and party systems are not necessarily

convergent. The party system has outcomes influenced by a "range of developments, only some of which have to do directly with the constituent parties themselves" (Randal and Svåsand, 2002: 8). Studies of political parties and in particular of political party organizations are important for the quality of democracy. Therefore "it makes sense to explore the structure and performance of political parties as a key facet of the functioning of a democratic polity", because "...the health of political parties is a useful metric for the health of a democracy" (Hofferber, 1998: 2). It is very likely that the quality of democracy will largely be influenced by the type and organizational features of the political parties that are present in the system. Democracy cannot be sustained without democratic parties and without democratic practices within the political parties. In developing democracies it is not sufficient just to see the electoral process as the constitutive part of democracy. Electoral participation does not always lead to democratization or even peaceful conflict resolution. On the contrary, sometimes it might lead to escalation of violence (Kovacs, 2006; Snyder, 2000; Mansfield and Snyder, 1995). Political party research should also look at the organizational development and characteristics of the political parties in emerging democracies. The type of political party has a strong influence on the internal party processes, in particular the selection of the candidates and the political socialization of the party members, but also influences some of the other functions that a party has. For example, intra party democracy is important in terms of setting the priorities that the parties pursue and the policies that they develop. One would not expect democrats and sustainable development of democracy from organization in which democracy has little prospects.

## **2. Literature review: determinants of the political party organization**

Studies of political parties usually build on the models of party development from the Western established democracies. This is a sensible way forward since the development of the political parties research agenda derives from this context. In that respect there are three approaches to studying the organizational development of political parties: a) focusing on the legacies of the party or the regime; b) looking into the relations within the party; and c) focusing on other institutions that influence the parties. In this part I will offer some literature review of these approaches and also present an approach for studying the influence of violence on party organization.

### *2.1 The historical approach: studying the legacies of the parties and regimes*

The political party literature that takes a historical approach points to the legacies of the party or the country, as explanations for the party organization. Some studies show that the legacies of the communist regime and the transition period matter for the political party identity and model of organization (Lewis, 1996; Bozoki and Ishiyama, 2002). In example, this would imply that parties sharing similar legacies or undergoing similar transition would have similar centralized organization. On the other hand, to draw stronger conclusions concerning the development of political party organization, authors propose to juxtapose the power of communist legacy with the conditions upon which political pluralism is formed and with the changes in the political environment, as shocks or learning processes (Kitschelt, 2002). In that respect a democratization process brings new possibilities for party formation, but it produces weak party organizations (Lewis, 2000:31-49, 103-107). Angelo Panebianco (1988) considers that the party history is of utmost importance for the party development, but the development of the organization also depends on the party's institutionalization. Panebianco's reasoning is that the more the party is institutionalized the political party organization will be more coherent and autonomous. Studies

undertaking historical approach do not look at cases where there was armed political violence, or do not point to the importance of this condition. Also in some emerging democracies political parties are usually centralized even before they are institutionalized. In some cases parties with similar levels of institutionalization and with similar legacies (i.e in post-communist regimes, communist successor parties, emerging from armed violent conflict) differ in respect of intra-party democracy (Karasimeonov, 2007).

## *2.2 The rationalist approach: studying the intra-party relations*

The studies of organizational evolution, taking a rationalist approach, look at the internal party processes to explain features of party organization. Michels' law of oligarchy, also called 'iron law' states that every organization has oligarchical tendencies (Cassinelli, 1953). In that respect some studies of parties make an analogy between the functioning of the economic market and the so-called political market, reducing parties to "group of politicians competing for public office" (Montero and Gunther, 2002:11). Some of this studies see the parties "similar to business firms" providing outputs and compensating its members (Schlesinger, 1984). Some authors consider the within party struggles among different type of members as the main causal factor that determines the party organization (Kitschelt, 1989), while others note that after electoral failures internal power struggles that change the party organization are likely to happen (Harmel and Janda, 1994). Authors looking at the intra-party structure and party behavior have come out with new concepts for types of political parties, like 'catch all' (Kirchheimer, 1966) and 'cartel party' (Katz and Mair, 1995).

In this type of studies armed political violence is absent as a condition. Also this approach cannot explain the diversity of centralization between political parties because in essence it assumes that the internal party struggles will result in a strict hierarchical framework. But the inter and intra party competition limit the powers of the party oligarchy, and the organizational changes due to variation in the party's electoral success are an open-ended process. Sometimes after an electoral

defeat the party may diminish the intra-party democracy (i.e to increase the party's coherence), but in others it may increase the intra-party democracy (i.e to attract new members the leaders may give more power to the membership).

### *2.3 The institutionalist approach: studying the impact of the institutions on political parties*

The approach that looks at the political environment in which the party operates has also been explored in the studies of political parties organizational development. Notwithstanding that the primary political environment for the parties applies to the party and electoral system, the "overall political context and the role of the state" have an important role in the development of the political party organization (Lewis, 1996: 12). From the theory of political parties we know that the political environment in which the party operates influences how the political party is organized (Panbianco, 1988:3-20,204-217; Olson, 1998; Kitschelt, 2002; Van Biezen, 2003). Some authors argue that the structure of the electoral system is arguably a weak factor (Janda et al, 1995), while others point that political parties adapt their organization according to the electoral system (Katz, 1980). But we need to be aware that parties are directly involved in the creation of the electoral system, they create the immediate environment that influences them. Party fragmentation and volatility are products of the electoral design which affect the voter mobilization and party membership. There are examples from Lithuania (Krupavicius, 1998: 43-70) and Turkey (Çarkoçlu, 1998: 122-150) where parties suffered significant changes from the environment that they were shaping.

Studies show that the institutional context in which the party emerges and operates is crucial for understanding the development of the party organization (Van Biezen, 2003). In emerging democracies the party system changes more rapidly than the political party organization, thus the party system features are expected to have an impact on the party organization (Olson, 1998). From Panbianco's work we know that parties face the organizational dilemma of providing incentives for

both individual interests of its members and group loyalties (Panebianco, 1988:9-11). However we also know that "party's organizational development is constantly affected by the incessant environmental changes" (Panebianco, 1988: 20). Because parties are unable to control the environmental uncertainties they can not meet interests or secure loyalties (Panebianco, 1988:33-45). Parties will not make any organizational changes when their environment is stable, when they have high support and are in power, like in the case of Norway from 1945 to 1983 (Strøm, 1994: 103-133). But if their environment changes, they loose power and their public support decreases, parties might undertake organizational changes despite the fact that previously they had long period of stability, like in the case of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (Morris, 1994: 133-151) or the Indian Congress Party (Mitra, 1994). Also it has been proposed that the party ideology should account for some variances between the organizations of the parties (Enyedi and Linek, 2008). In that respect right oriented parties that value higher individualism tend to be less centralized across East Central Europe.

Again as in the previous approaches no attention has been paid to how does armed political violence shape the environment and the political parties. But undertaking an institutionalist approach one can draw a set of testable hypotheses for explaining the difference of political party centralization. I have tested the influence of some environmental factors (i.e party fractionalization, volatility, party system institutionalization, ideology) on an organizational characteristic (i.e. intra-party democracy) for parties that function in a similar context. Most of the factors do not show strong explanatory power, while some show some dubious results. This will be explained in more detail in the annex where I test some of the rival explanations.

#### *2.4 Violence and political parties*

There are specific contextual conditions that account for the development of political parties in the case of East-Central and Southern Europe (Van Biezen 2003). Also there are specific

contextual conditions that account for the political party institutionalization in Third World countries (Randal and Svåsand 2002). However armed political violence as a condition that affects the development of political party organization appears only in a few studies. These studies deal with the relations between violence and parties in two ways. On one hand, some studies make a superficial observation that the successor parties of the military regimes have tendencies to be more centralized and less democratic even long after adhering to the democratic principles in hand, like the case in Spain (Van Bizen 2003: 77-102). On the other hand some authors explore the transformation of armed groups in political parties as essential step in the cessation of violence and building of democracy (Manning 2008, Kovacs 2006). Similarly Leonard Weinber and Ami Pedahzur (2003) consider the usage of violence or party politics as strategic choices for groups that have distinct political aims to influence the government. The organizational features that transformed armed groups display as political parties are seen as an adjustment to the structural factors in the party's environment. However what determines the organizational features is how are the legacies necessitated in the internal party interactions. In that respect if the leader and main party candidates took active part in the violence the party will be more centralized. The features of the party and electoral system may bring pressures for the party to become less centralized, however the change will depend on the intra-party struggles between the new members and former belligerents. Thus studies that look at the transformation of armed groups in political parties undertake a historical approach with a rationalist explanation. However I am not only interested in the transformation of armed groups in political parties, but more widely about the influence of violence on all party organizations. While I recognize the need to take in consideration the legacies of the party, I believe that the explanation should be more of a 'cultural' type (i.e. where the causal mechanism are of ideational nature), than rationalist. Both type of approaches, starting from the power of the legacies with a rationalist or a cultural explanation, can be find in the theoretical framework of historical institutionalism (Hall and Taylor 1996, Pierson 2000).

### 3. Theoretical framework of the research project

From the political party theory we know that there are three types of factors that influence the development of political party organization: the legacies, the strategic interaction between the members and the institutional arrangements in which the party operates. However it is obvious that in post-conflict societies, the ones where democratization was interrupted by or follows an armed political conflict or civil war, the violence also plays a role. Here I need to clarify the concept of armed political violence which is one of the independent variables in my research project. War is on the highest level of the armed political violence's "ladder of abstraction".<sup>iii</sup> All armed political violence fits in this category. However I am not interested in all instances of war. I understand armed political violence to be first and foremost an internal violent conflict very similar to civil war. Therefore my mid-level concept and definition of armed political violence is: *any armed conflict where at least one of the combatants is not a state government*. This is a broad definition of civil war and in that sense my concept of armed political violence is similar to civil war, but I would like to leave the motives for the violence to vary (i.e. they can be political, ethnic, cultural, religious etc).

In order to control for wider array of variables I will fit my research in a most similar cases design. Essentially my scope conditions apply to parties in emerging democracies where there is a plural party democracy and regular free electoral competition. There was a situation of armed political violence which is relevant for the political actors in the country. Some political parties formed armed groups and directly participated in the conflict. Others did not participate in the armed political violence directly. Some parties were formed from the former belligerents, while other parties that were formed after the conflict had nothing to do with it. Therefore my universe of cases are political parties in democratizing countries where a situation of armed political violence (similar to civil war) erupted before or during the democratization. In table 1 below I present the

conceptual framework for the links between the political parties and the violent conflict.

Table 1. Conceptual definition of political parties and armed political violence

The party existed before the armed political violence	The party directly participated in the armed political violence		
		Yes	No
Yes		Parties with paramilitary groups	Old parties
No		Former belligerents	New parties

The political parties within my universe of cases would fall in one of the cells of table 1.

From my universe of cases I will draw a sample on basis of a most similar research design. I will limit my possible case selection to the relevant political parties in:<sup>iv</sup>

1. Serbia (Democratic Party, Serbian Democratic Party, Socialist Party, Serbian Radical Party, G17);
2. Macedonia (Social-democratic Union, VMRO-DPMNE, Democratic Party of Albanians, Democratic Union for Integration) and
3. Croatia (Social-democratic Party, Croatian Democratic Union, Croatian Peasants Party, Croatian Peoples Party - Liberal Democrats, Croatian Social Liberal Party).
4. Bosnia (Party for Democratic Action, Serb Democratic Party, Croat Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Social-Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alliance of Independent Social Democrats).

The justification for my selection is that by choosing parties from these countries I will be able to hold constant some explanatory variables (i.e. all are post-communist countries deriving from the previous regime in former Yugoslavia, comparable features of the party and electoral system, all had armed political violence on its territoryv). Also the motives and the type of the conflict that these countries experienced was similar, it was an ethnic conflict in all cases, but the intensity of the conflict was different. In that respect in the cases where the armed political violence was more intense one would expect greater influence of it on the development of the political party

organization.

Having that in mind my intention is to take pairs of parties that have similar origins and relations with the armed political violence (as described in table 1) from two similar countries that experienced similar type of armed political violence on its territory but with different intensity. In that respect I would have pairs in four types of parties: 1) old parties that existed before the conflict and did not participate in it; 2) new parties that did not exist before the conflict and did not participate in the conflict; 3) old parties that existed before the conflict and which participated in the conflict through own paramilitary groups and 4) new parties which did not exist before the conflict and were formed from former belligerents that took part in the conflict. This paired parties would be used to test the influence of the three independent variables that are found in the political party literature (legacies, strategic interaction between the members and the institutional arrangements) and the influence of the political violence as fourth independent variable on the political party organization, which is the dependent variable. This strategy is presented in table 2.

Table 2. The strategy of the research project

<b>IV 1 - Historical approach: The formative moment</b>			
Type 1: Old Parties (i.e Communist successor parties)	Type 2: New parties (i.e. Movement parties)	Type 3: Parties with paramilitary groups	Type 4: Former belligerents
Pair of similar parties (A,B) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (C,D) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (E,F) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (G,H) from two similar countries (X,Y)
<b>IV 2 - Rationalist approach: Strategic interaction between members</b>			
Pair of similar parties (A,B) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (C,D) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (E,F) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (G,H) from two similar countries (X,Y)
<b>IV 3 - Institutional approach: The party and electoral system</b>			
Pair of similar parties (A,B) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (C,D) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (E,F) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (G,H) from two similar countries (X,Y)
<b>IV 4 - Influence of the armed political violence</b>			
Pair of similar parties (A,B) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (C,D) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (E,F) from two similar countries (X,Y)	Pair of similar parties (G,H) from two similar countries (X,Y)
DV - Political party	DV - Political party	DV - Political party	DV - Political party

organizational characteristics of A,B	organizational characteristics of C,D	organizational characteristics of E,F	organizational characteristics of G,H
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The influence of the first three independent variables on the political party organization is sufficiently well elaborated in the political party literature. Here I will provide my account how would the armed political violence influence the political party organization. I will also explain what I consider that the dependent variable, political party organization, is consisted of.

### 3.1 *The argument: how would armed political violence influence the political party organization?*

I am building the argument based on the internal dimensions of the party institutionalization as set in the framework of Randal and Svåsand (2002: 13). In that respect the organizational features of the political party are shaped by the dimension of the process of institutionalization.

Table 3. Dimensions of party institutionalization, according to Randal and Svåsand

	<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>
<b>Structural</b>	Systemness	Decisional autonomy
<b>Attitudinal</b>	Value infusion	Reification

Randal and Svåsand understand political party institutionalization as "process by which the party becomes established in terms of integrated patterns of behavior and of attitudes, or culture" (Ibid: 12). In a way, they are adding an attitudinal dimensions to Panebianco's notion of institutionalization. As Randal and Svåsand note "value infusion is likely to be strongest where the political party is identified with a broader social movement" (Ibid: 21). Armed political violence carries broader social mobilization than political parties, and my hunch is that strong value infusion of the armed violence is present in political parties in post-conflict societies. But what does it mean?

In my understanding value infusion is a causal mechanism based on ideational factors. It is a process in which the political party prescribes understanding and gives values to certain ideas, norms and past events. This process loads certain ideas in the value matrix of the political party that

not only provide for the identity of the party, but also shape the political party organization. In post-conflict polities some parties infuse the armed violence as a value, while others don't. The reminiscence of the armed political violence is an important value for some political parties, but not for others. The political parties that do infuse the armed political violence as a value are more centralized than the one's that have not taken the act of violence as a value. According to their value matrix such political parties are closer to armed groups, they have more authoritarian internal structures and less intra-party democracy. Even though I consider the link between parties and armed political violence to be very important I do not believe that participation in armed political violence is a sufficient condition that shapes the political party organization. But it well may be a necessary condition. In a post-conflict society I do not expect all parties that participated in the conflict to have the same organizational features, but the features of some parties that did participate could be on account of the participation in the violence (i.e. less intra-party democracy, greater centralization and authoritarian leadership). The measurement of this variable is presented below in the table 4.

Table 4. Measuring value infusion of armed political violence

Data for observation	Research methods	Operationalization
1. Party programmatic content - statutes, declarations, electoral manifestos [reminiscence of the violent conflict: self-victimization, celebration of some fighters]	Longitudinal analysis, Process tracing, Discourse and content analysis, Cross sectional analysis	Presence: high vs low
2. Party policy proposals [compensation for some victims, awards for some fighters, staging celebrations or building monuments for the conflict]		Presence: high vs low
3. Speeches and interviews of party leaders and high ranking party officials [reminiscence of the violent conflict: self-victimization, celebration of some fighters]		Presence: high vs low

### 3.2 *The dependent variable: what makes the political party organization?*

My dependent variable - political party organization is consisted of three features: (1) party centralization (the relations between the central office, local branches and the party in government); (2) intra-party democracy (the selection of candidates and policy making); (3) personalization

(leader's decision making autonomy).

Table 5. Measurement of the dependent variable

Political party organization	High	Low
1. Centralization	<i>The party has strict hierarchical structure and coherence, the central office dominates</i>	<i>There is a stratarchy in the party, each level has wide autonomy of action</i>
- local branches	Are weakly developed, have few members and are passive	Are strong, have many members and vibrant political life
- central office	Is strong, controls the whole party and political activities	Is weak, mainly coordinates the party bodies and activities
- party in government	Are subordinated to the central office, members in government are not part of the party leadership	Are independent from the central office, members in government head the political party
2. Intra-party democracy	<i>Different parts of the political party participate in the political life, the views of individual members can be freely voiced, there is intra-party deliberation</i>	<i>The party does not have internal deliberation processes or mechanisms, individual members are marginalized, small elite makes all decisions</i>
- selection of candidates	Local or regional levels can select own candidates, there is an internal voting procedure	The party leadership chooses the candidates for the election
- policy making	The party has bodies and forums for intra-party deliberation through which decisions are made	The party leadership creates the party policy proposals and decides on all issues
3. Personalization	<i>The party has a strong authoritarian leader who is a synonym for the party</i>	<i>The leader is weak and is not the most important feature of the party</i>
- autonomy of the leader	The leader has power to enact any decision, change any official and select candidates for election	The leader can't on herself make decision, change officials or select candidates for election

### 3.3 The expectations: the impact of different factors on the political party organization

Under my theoretical framework the political parties are developing under conditions of democratizations. Here the legacies of the past are incorporated and they shape the formation and development of the political parties. The strategic interactions between the members may play a role and some parties adapt to the environment deriving from the electoral and party system. However there is an armed political violence which disturbs the democratization. This sequence is presented in the graph 1 below.

Graph 1. A formal model for researching the development of political party organizations in post-

conflict societies

Democratization  $\Rightarrow$  Armed political violence  $\Rightarrow$  Democratization  $\Rightarrow$  party organization

Based on the model and in accordance with the research strategy I would have the following expectations:

H-1 Based on expectations deriving from a historical approach: If the legacies of the political parties are most important, than the political parties will have different organizations but the two parties in the pair would have similar organizations. The characteristics of the political party organization are determined at the moment when the party is formed. In that respect if the political party was formed as a centralized organization with low intra-party democracy and a strong leader, than it will preserve the beginning organizational features through out its development. In that respect parties that had paramilitary groups and former belligerents would be most centralized, have less intra party democracy and personalization with its leader. Old and new parties would display organizational features similar to their origin (i.e. former communist parties would be more centralized, with less intra-party democracy and authoritarian leadership, while new parties arising from mass movements would be decentralized, with higher intra-party democracy and not so personalized).

H-2 Based on expectations deriving from a rationalist approach: If the the strategic interaction between the members are most important, than the political parties will have different organizations and also the two parties in the pair may have different organization. The party serves as a platform for meeting the individual interests of the members. In that respect the organizational features are fluid and bound to change according to the needs of its members. If the interests of the members are to have a decentralized organization with high intra-party democracy and a weak leader, than the political party will assume such organizational features. The organizational features of each of the four types of parties will be different, coming as an outcome of the strategic interaction of the

membership in the party. The features of the political party organization may vary over time.

H-3 Based on expectations deriving from an institutionalist approach: If the institutional arrangement that condition the political party are most important, then all political parties will have similar organizations including the political parties that are paired. The political parties adapt their organization to the institutional environment in which they operate. If the institutional environment where the parties operate is unstable (i.e. the party system is fragmented and the electoral system is volatile), then the political party will be more centralized, have low intra-party democracy and a strong leader. Each of the four types of parties would display organizational features based on their position in the party and electoral system. If the political party can effectively control its environment (i.e. has dominant position in the party and electoral system) then the party will be less centralized and personalized and have more intra-party democracy, regardless whether it is old party, new, coming from former belligerents or having paramilitary groups. However if the party becomes a hegemonic party (i.e. there is no effective pluralism) then it will be more centralized, personalized and have less intra-party democracy, regardless of its previous links with the armed political violence.

H-4 Based on expectations deriving from the impact of the armed political violence: If the value infusion of the armed political violence is most important, then the parties would have different organizations and the parties in the pair may have different organizational features. The political party organization is shaped by ideational factors which give meaning to the past conflict. If the political party loads the memory of the conflict among its values, then that political party will be more centralized, have less intra-party democracy and personalization with its leader. In that respect the participation in the conflict does not determine the party organization, rather the interpretation of the conflict and the prescription of value to the conflict shapes the organizational features of the

party. Old or new parties can be more centralized, personalized with low intra-party democracy than parties arising from former belligerents or parties that had paramilitary groups if they infuse the memory of the conflict among its values.

### *3.4 Research methods and data for observation*

The data that I plan to use are mostly the programmatic content of the political parties, their statutes, speeches and statements of party officials. I also plan to conduct interviews with the members and the leadership of the political parties, journalist and other scholars. I also plan to use data aggregated through expert surveys and policy manifesto's as secondary data source. For analyzing the data I will use longitudinal analysis, comparing the periods before and after the armed political violence. I will also use qualitative research methods like case studies, cross sectional analysis, process tracing, discourse and content analysis. I consider these methods most appropriate as I am developing a small N study (N=8), with the likelihood of 8 parties coming from two countries.

Latter in the process of my research when I gather more data and get more familiar with my cases I would be willing to consider using qualitative configurational analysis (QCA) as an additional method, especially if I come across cases of equifinality where a conjunctural explanation seems very plausible. But at the current stage of my research proposal this is only one possible future scenario.

## **4. Contributions**

The project will contribute to the wider theoretical discussion on institutional change at times of exogenous shocks, in specific change of an autonomous political institution (political party), during the development of democracy. The project will also contribute to the discussion of institutional transformation of violent conflicts. Political parties are an important institution both in

terms of conflict management and democracy building.

The project will contribute to the theory of political party organizations in emerging democracies. There will be a specific contribution to the wide gap of comparative studies about political parties in the countries of former Yugoslavia. For how wide is this gap I submit some feedback from scholars that I have surveyed on information on comparative studies about political parties in the countries of former Yugoslavia:

“I am not aware of any general literature on party systems in Southeastern Europe,, - Daniel Bochsler, PhD (Uni|ETH Zurich) (e-mail correspondence 10 November 2008)

“There is a lack of comparative studies about political parties in countries of former Yugoslavia,, - Florian Biber PhD (CEU) (personal interview 04 December 2008, Budapest)

“*Nema obuhvatne studije tog problema, ili ja bar ne znam za nju; radovi koji se bave ovim pitanjem rasuti su u časopisima i zbornicima* [There is no comprehensive study on this issue (political parties in countries of former Yugoslavia - D.T) or I am not aware of such; works that deal with this issue are scattered in journals and edited volumes],, - Zdravko Zlokapa PhD (University of Sarajevo) ( e-mail correspondence 12 November 2008)

## 5. Time-line for research and proposed dissertation outline

Table 6. Time-line for research

June - December 2009	Extending the literature review and further building of the research design; data gathering and initial analysis from secondary sources
January - December 2010	Field work and data gathering, 3-4 months field research visits; gathering party statutes and parties' programmatic content; elite interviews; writing of first draft chapters
January - June 2011	Revising chapters, writing conclusions Submission of the dissertation

### 5.1 Draft Dissertation Outline

I. Introduction

II. Theoretical framework

III, IV, V and VI - chapters on the different types of parties in regards to their relationship with the armed political violence and their organizational characteristics

VII. Summary of the findings and comparative analysis

VIII. Conclusion

## **Annex: Testing some rival explanations that shape the political party organization**

In the following part I will test some of the rival explanations deriving mainly from a historical theoretical approach and institutionalist theoretical approach in explaining features of the party organization. To operationalize parts of the political party organization I will use, as a proxy, the experts measures of internal party democracy in some Western Balkan countries found in the study edited by Georgi Karasimeonov (2007).<sup>vi</sup> The measures for intra-party democracy in Karasimeonov's study cover most of my dimensions for political party organization (i.e. centralization and intra-party democracy). Even though the measurement is not a perfect fit it is the best proxy from the current data that is available to me. I have prepared a data set containing the Karasimeonov information about intra-party democracy in four countries, the three from which are in my possible pool of cases: Serbia, Croatia and Macedonia, and added Albania as a control case. I also inputted some data from the Comparative Manifesto's Project for the respective parties from the mentioned countries.

Political party organizations in Western Balkan countries have been described as ones where "hierarchy prevails", "the party leadership, often represented in Parliament, dominates", they are "organizationally uniform...with strong power centralization", having "oligarchic tendencies" (Goati 2005; Siljanovska-Davkova 2005; Cular 2005; Karasimeonov 2005). Such descriptive accounts would lead the reader to believe that there is little organizational difference between political parties in Western Balkan countries. However the study of internal party democracy, based on expert surveys and parties statutory rules, shows that there are differences not only across the region but also within the countries as well (Karasimeonov 2007). The study output is a scale of internal party democracy from 6 to 18, the higher the score the higher the internal democracy, and parties across the region are set on that scale. Table 7 holds the information for internal party democracy for the parties in the countries that I have chosen.

Table 7. Internal party democracy in Western Balkan countries

	<b>INTERNAL PARTY DEMOCRACY</b>
<b>Albania</b>	Democratic Party (DP) (8); Socialist Party (SP) (10)
<b>Croatia</b>	Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) (6); Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSL) (10); Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) (10); Socialdemocratic Party of Croatia (SDP) (12)
<b>Macedonia</b>	Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization - Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) (8); Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) (10); Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) (10); Socialdemocratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM) (13)
<b>Serbia</b>	Serbian Radical Party (SRS) (6); Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) (8); Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) (9); Democratic Party (DS) (9); G17 (9)

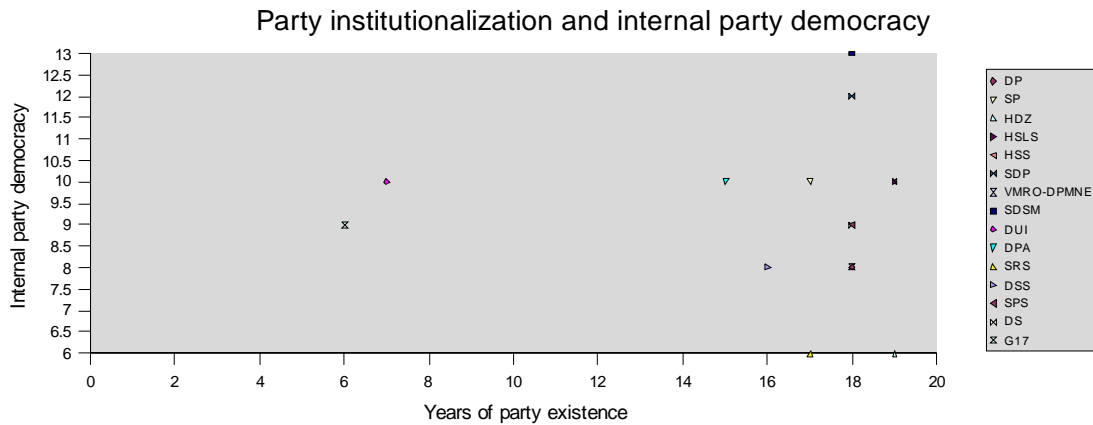
The data shows that there is some variation across the region and within the countries, with the exception of Serbia where all parties have received similar scores. If we take this statement as a starting point, then the question is what explain these differences?

From a historical approach the legacies of the party will determine its present organizational characteristic. In that respect Van Biezen (2003) points that the Spanish parties which legacies are in the military regime of Franco are more centralized than the others in modern Spain. Therefore one would expect that parties that have legacies with armed groups or military regimes to be more centralized than the others. However in the case of the Western Balkan countries this is not a strong explanation because parties with similar legacies have different levels of intra-party democracy. In example HDZ in Croatia has legacies with a WWII armed Croatian movement (Cular 2007) and VMRO-DPMNE in Macedonia has legacies with a clandestine organization from the late 19th and early 20th century (Siljanovska-Davkova 2005; Georgiev 2007). These parties have legacies with armed groups and are more centralized. However SDP in Croatia and SDSM in Macedonia similarly have legacies with the armed partisan movement from WWII (Cular 2007; Siljanovska-Davkova 2005; Georgiev 2007), as both are communist successor parties, and they are among the least centralized political parties. Therefore legacies with armed groups is not a strong explanation.

From the work of Panebianco (1988) we know that that party institutionalization leads to party centralization. The expectation is that the more a party is institutionalized the more it will be centralized. Samuel Huntington (1968) has proposed age as a straightforward operationalization of organizational institutionalization. In that respect the expectation would be that older parties are

more institutionalized and therefore more centralized. However this does not hold true for the cases that I observe. The data from graph 2 is sufficiently self-explanatory.

Graph 2. Party age and internal party democracy



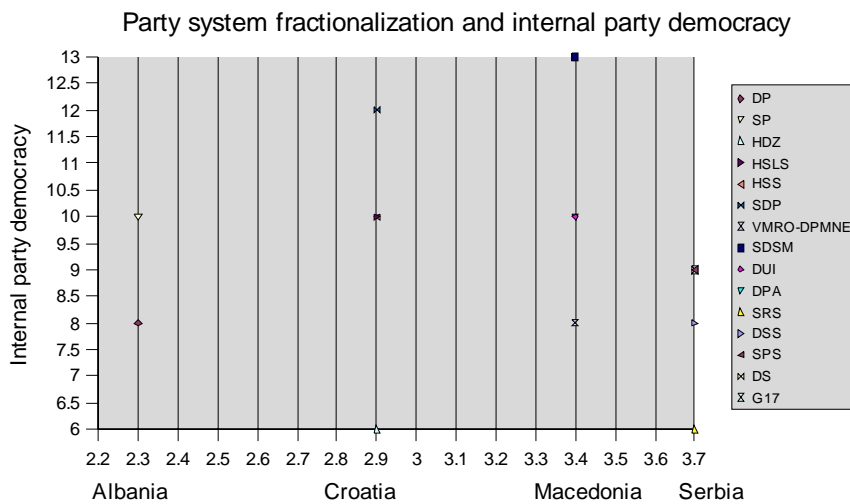
Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Casal Bértoa (2008) for party age

The data shows that most of the parties are between 14 and 20 years old, clustered between 17 and 19 years, but the degree of intra party democracy aka centralization is different.

Turning to the explanations that derive from the institutionalist approach I will test some of the factors from the parties' environment in relation to party centralization. I will take factors from the party and electoral system characteristics as the most imminent environment for the political parties. I will operationalize the party system effect through fractionalization, nationalization and party system institutionalization.<sup>vii</sup> I will test the effects of the electoral system through measures of electoral volatility and disproportionality. For measuring the party system characteristics, except for party system nationalization, I am relying on the data prepared by Fernando Casal Bértoa for Albania, Macedonia, Croatia and Serbia (Casal Bértoa 2008). For data on the party system nationalization I am using data from Daniel Bochsler (Bochsler 2005). The main expectation of the institutional approach is that institutional stability would lead to higher levels in intra-party democracy, while instability would lead to higher centralization. In that respect (1) higher fractionalization would lead to more centralization; (2) higher nationalization which means wide territorial coverage and country penetration would lead to less centralization; (3) higher party

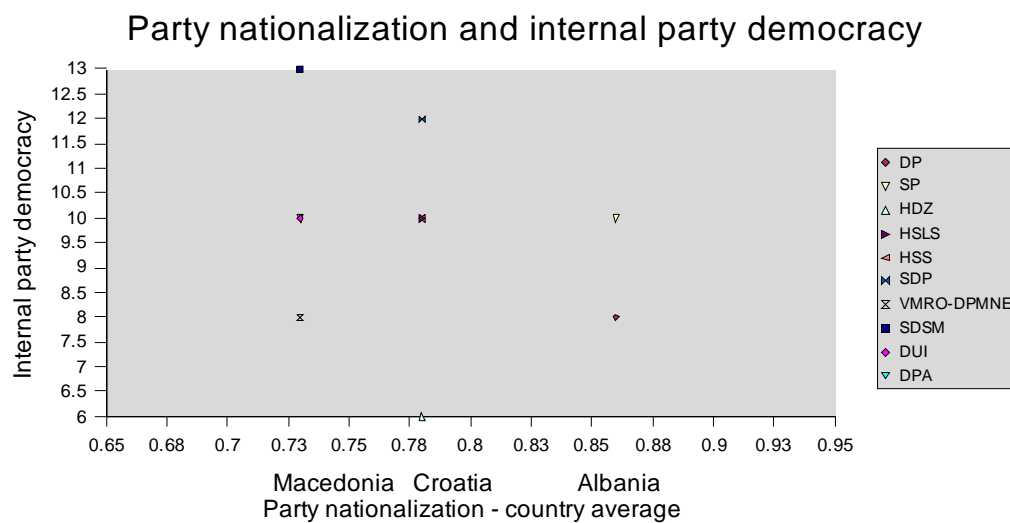
system institutionalization, a clear indicator of party system stability, would lead to less centralization; (4) higher electoral volatility would lead to more centralization; and (5) higher disproportionality would lead to more centralization. However the data from graphs 3-7 does not support most of these expectation.<sup>viii</sup> Most of the party and electoral system features do not affect the party centralization. Only the party system institutionalization yield some minor results.

Graph 3. Party system fractionalization and intra-party democracy



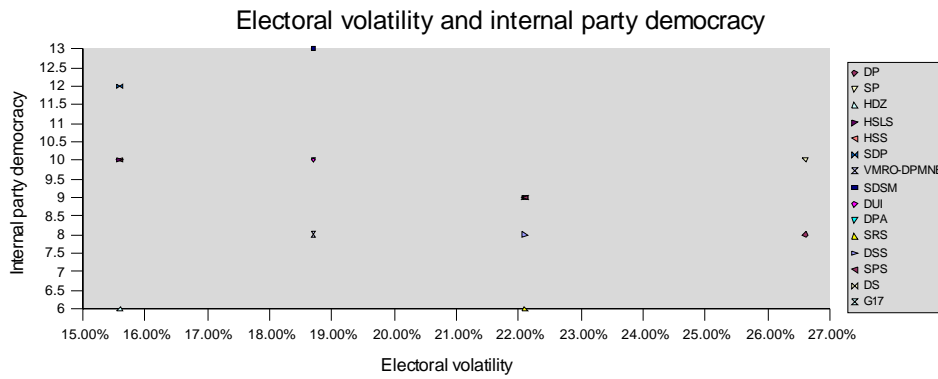
Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Casal Bértoa (2008) for fractionalization

Graph 4. Party nationalization and intra-party democracy



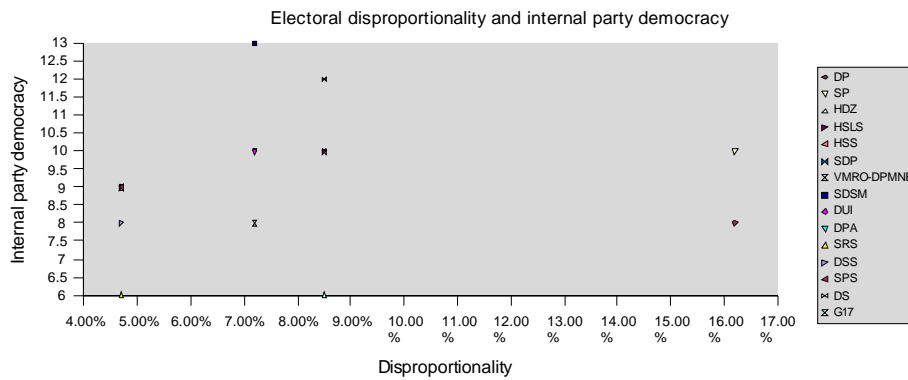
Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Bochsler (2005) for party nationalization

Graph 5. Electoral volatility and intra-party democracy



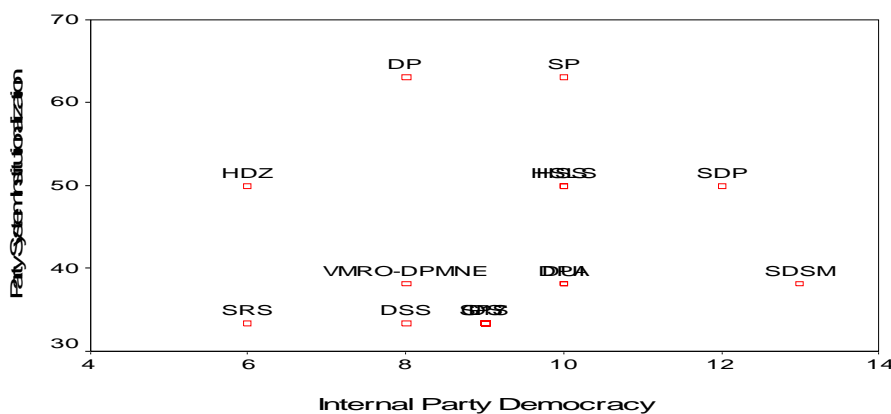
Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Casal Bértoa (2008) for electoral volatility

Graph 6. Electoral disproportionality and intra-party democracy



Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Casal Bértoa (2008) for disproportionality

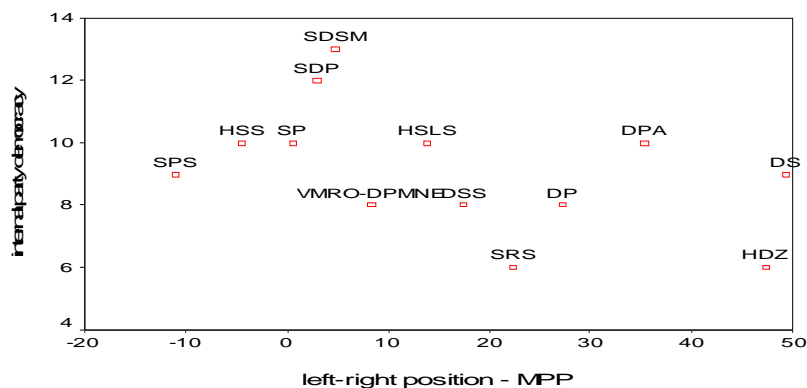
Graph 7. Party system institutionalization and intra-party democracy



Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Casal Bértoa (2008) for institutionalization

There is a pattern developing as we move from the lowest party system institutionalization, to the highest. As the party system institutionalization increases the score of internal party democracy improves for some, but not for all individual parties. The party system institutionalization, as a clear pattern between the parties and government formation, seems to have an impact on party centralization. An institutionalized party system brings "stability and predictability for the inter-party competition and alliances" (Casal Bértoa 2008:7). It also shapes the party members' individual interests and group loyalties, that are central features of the party's organizational dilemma toward more or less centralization (Panebianco 1988: 6-20). However it seems that the conditions when party system institutionalization is relevant need to be better specified.

Last in my testing I turn to the party ideology and its effect on party centralization. Here I have taken the data from the Comparative Manifestos Project on two accounts. Firstly, the left-right position of the political party and secondly, the origin of the party family to which it belonged. The first dimension shows the ideological practice of an individual party, it shows where is the party in the left-right spectrum which influences the party policy formation. The second dimension shows to which ideological camps does the party belong, in other words it shows to which values and world views will the party aspire. The expectations are that right oriented party will be less centralized as they value more individualism. However the results in the Western Balkan cases show the opposite. It is the leftist party that are less centralized. However these results need to be taken with a grain of salt. Firstly in table 8 we see that the leftist party are not very left. Mostly they are around the center (i.e the Social-democrats from Croatia and Macedonia - SP and SDSM), or slightly left (i.e the Socialist Party from Serbia - SPS). On the other hand right parties with similar intra-party democracy have different right inclination (i.e Serbian Radical - SRS and Croatian Democrats - HDZ). This goes to show that the practice, and probably understanding of ideology, is rather underdeveloped across the Western Balkan countries.

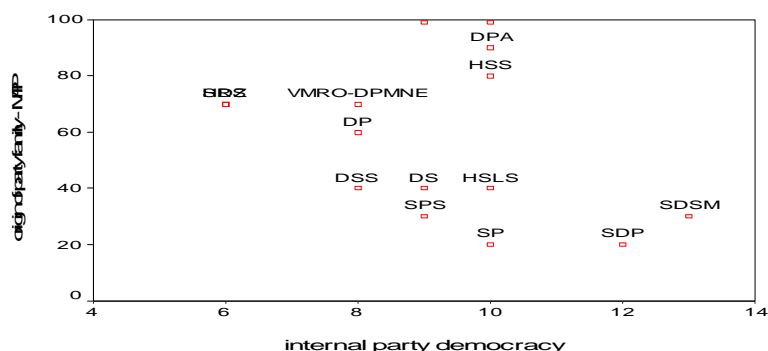


Graph 8. Left-right party positions and intra-party democracy

Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Klingemann et al (2006) for left-right position [Comparative Manifestos Project]

A more fruitful approach is to look at the origin of the party families. The data again suggest there is some grouping of internal-party democracy on basis of common party family, but the results seem a bit scattered as shown in graph 9.

Graph 9. Origin of party family and intra-party democracy

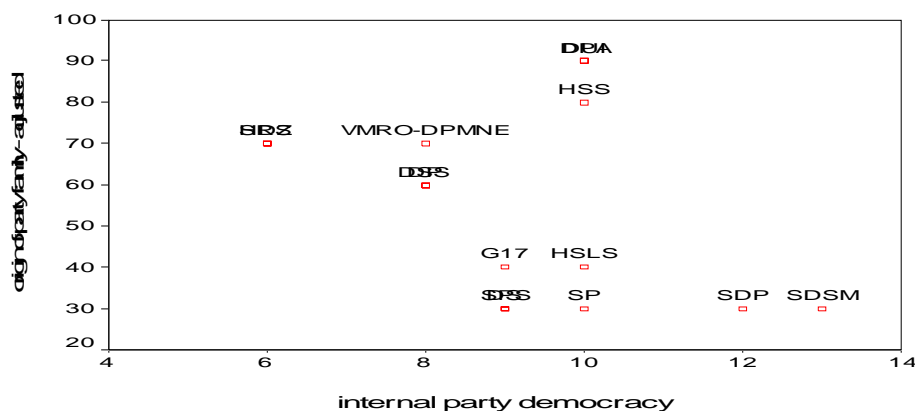


Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Klingemann et al (2006) for origin of party family [Comparative Manifestos Project]

I have looked at the coding for the political parties, in regards to which party families they belong to, and made some adjustments. I found that some of the coding for party families was missing for certain parties and for others the coding did not respond to the current literature depicting that specific parties. In that respect I have changed the coding for the Albanian Socialist Party (SP) and the Croatian Socialdemocratic party (SDP) from communist to social-democrat party families which is most common label found in the literature (Trimçev 2007; Kajsiu 2005, 2004; Cular 2007, 2005). Also I have entered a coding, which was missing, for the Macedonian

Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) which represent Albanians in Macedonia as an ethno-regional party (Georgiev 2007; Siljanovska-Davkova 2005). For Serbian parties I changed DSS from liberal to conservative and DS from liberal to social-democrat, to be more in accordance with the literature that gives current in depth elaboration of these parties (Pavlovic 2007; Goati 2005). Graph 10 shows the original and adjusted measures for origin of party families and the party centralization.

Graph 10. Adjusted origin of party family and intra-party democracy



Sources: Karasimeonov (2007) for internal party democracy; Klingemann et al (2006) for origin of party family [Comparative Manifestos Project]

The adjusted measures for the origin of the party family and the intra-party democracy show a much better fit. It is quite clear that parties that are in the same party family have similar organizational features. However as it is quite ambiguous how ideology is practiced in the Western Balkan countries, and even more how it is understood, it would be hasty to infer that a specific type of ideology has a specific influence on the organizational characteristics of political parties. Rather it is the process through which values are accepted and through which some acts are given value that shapes the party organization. As such I would consider the process of creation of values (i.e value infusion) that has strongest influence on the party organization. I take the fit between the origin of the party families and the intra-party democracy as an indicator that a certain process of value infusion will result in less intra-party democracy. So therefore the party organization will not be a product of the party ideology, but of the process of value infusion.



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<sup>i</sup> Phillippe Schmitter (2001: 86) has noted that Huntington refers to any organization of elites, not exclusively political parties. But he concurs that political parties are the most likely candidate.

<sup>ii</sup> Peter Mair (1997) offers a slight divergence from the other established views. His party system typology suggest that the formation of the government, as product of the party competition, should be the main criterion for the classification of the party systems.

<sup>iii</sup> I am using Giovanni Sartori's work (1970) as my guide in the exercise of concept formation.

<sup>iv</sup> I rely on the work of Giovanni Sartori to define the "relevant political parties" (Sartori 1976). I take the political parties represented in Parliament which have the highest coalition potential and that have the most influence on the party competition.

<sup>v</sup> I am referring to the armed political violence in Croatia from 1991-1995, Bosnia and Herzegovina 1991-1995, Serbia 1999-2000, Kosovo 1998-1999, Macedonia 2001.

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- <sup>vi</sup> The study is conducted in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia. Country experts were asked to assess internal party democracy, as prescribed in party's statutes and under their own assessment, in six areas: 1) rights of party members; 2) nominations of candidates for public offices; 3) way of electing the party leader; 4) autonomy of the local party bodies; 5) opportunity for the party members to take part in the formation of the party policy and 6) horizontal structures which assist the functioning of the party and its activists. Each area was scored as 1 (low), 2 (medium) or 3 (high), and then all scores are summed to give each party's score of internal party democracy. Parties with high scores have more internal party democracy. I regard parties with lower scores more centralized, and parties with higher scores less centralized.
- <sup>vii</sup> I am taking the data for measuring party system institutionalization from Casal-Bértoa, for the Western Balkan countries in my data set. Casal-Bértoa, using Peter Mair definition of party system institutionalization, has produced data on basis of the countries' alternation of government, governing formulae and access to government (Casal-Bértoa 2008). In this respect this data reflects different type of information than party systems fractionalization and electoral volatility, which can also be used for operationalization of party system institutionalization.
- <sup>viii</sup> The graphs are prepared only as a visual presentation of the associations between the party system characteristics and the internal party democracy. The relationship between the intra-party democracy and all of the tested explanatory factors is not statistically significant.