

## **“Domestic Elites and Opinion – The Neglected Dimension of Externally Induced Democratization”**

International Academic Conference  
5-7 September 2012, University of Konstanz

After the end of the Cold War, the international community has become more and more active in building peace and supporting the development of democratic institutions in conflict-ridden societies. Such post-conflict reconstruction activities equally gained the attention of researchers in political science, international relations, history, and sociology. The overwhelming majority of these post-conflict studies focus on the contribution of external actors to peace- and democracy-building in the frame of peace-building and peace-keeping missions or international trusteeship administrations. Scholars assess the internal structure of such missions, their mandates, and the implemented programs and strategies as well as the legitimacy of externally led democratization and state-building. They make strong arguments about internal organizational shortcomings of national governments such as the U.S. and international organizations such as the United Nations or the European Union and cite cooperation problems among the multiple external actors working in a post-conflict society as critical factors for successful peace missions. Some seek to discover the impact of such missions on peace-building processes and thereby tentatively conclude about potential negative consequences of democracy promotion for peace-building.

It comes as a surprise that all these studies neglect what scholars of transition studies, drawing on a broad range of historical examples of regime change, have highlighted as most important factors for successful transitions to democracy: a domestic elite consensus and the support of the electorate for the emerging democracy. A consensus between outgoing and incoming elites on decision-making procedures, basic values and the required reform program is necessary for successful democratization. In the long run, such a consensus allows for the nonviolent management of conflicts and facilitates cooperation, trust-building and the capacity for compromise which in turn guarantees the survival of democracy, or in other words, the elites' durable compliance with new democratic rules of the game. It is claimed that, once the political elites follow the rules, the people will also accept democracy as a legitimate political system. Furthermore, the more inclusive the elite consensus, the more stable and the less vulnerable democracy becomes. Without such an internal elite consensus the country would risk falling back into authoritarianism or at best stabilize as a democracy with defects.

The literature on elites acknowledges that profound political crises, such as the attainment of national independence, defeat in warfare, a revolutionary outbreak or a civil war, are pivotal events that often produce changes in elites and regimes. Many crises, in turn, derive from elite confrontations between old regime elites and new oppositional. However, with their focus on domestic actors, elite-centred approaches stand in stark contrast to recent analyses in transition and post-conflict studies that advance the concept of successful democratization from the outside by external actors.

Apparently, there is a lack of dialogue between those different strands of research. Hardly any recent study in the field adopts the perspective of domestic elites or past developments in post-conflict countries whose transition process is externally monitored, supervised or even administered nor do they consider the relevance of public opinion in such a controlled democratization process.

This conference attempts to fill this research gap. Thus, our conference invitees will deal with the following research questions:

1. Who are the domestic elites and which impact do they have on their societies?
2. How do internal elites perceive the external interference in peace- und democracy-building and subsequently interact with external actors in externally induced democratization processes?
3. In how far do internal elites benefit from and/or exploit the long-term presence of external actors for their political purposes?
4. How does public opinion influence decision-making in external democratization?
5. Might the current responses of political elites and the public to the presence of external actors be explicable by historical experiences of dependence and foreign domination?
6. Are there lessons to be learned from historical examples of foreign occupation and external attempts to build peace or exert an impact on the shape of the political regime?

### **Conference Venue**

University of Konstanz, Universitätsstraße 10, D-78457 Konstanz, Germany

*Roundtable Discussion (open to the public)*

Wednesday, 5 September 2012, 6-8pm, Room A 703

*Panels (invited guests and registered participants only)*

Tuesday, 6 September 2012 and Friday, 7 September 2012, Room V1001 ("Senatssaal")

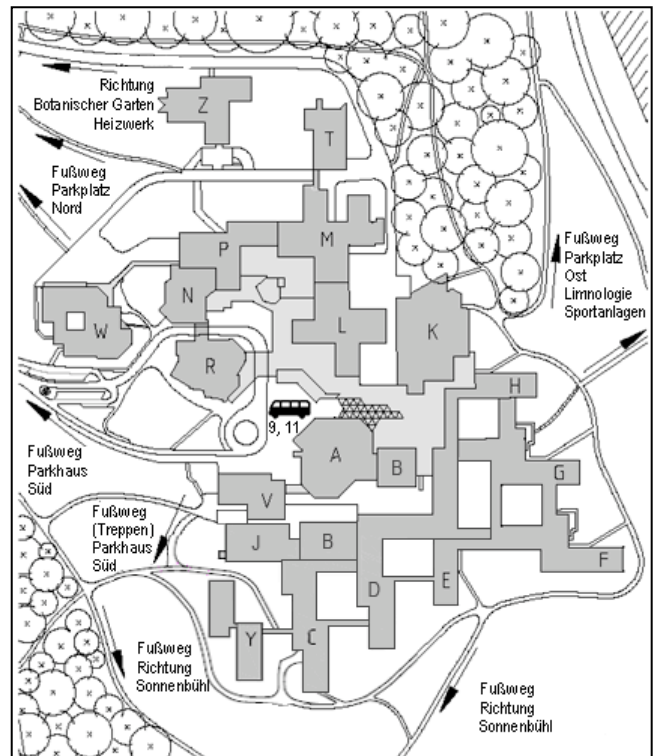
## Travelling

*By train:* German Bundesbahn (DB) via Offenburg or Baden-Baden („Schwarzwaldbahn“) to train station Konstanz; from there by public bus, line 9A or 9B to „Universität“.

*By plane:* *Airport Zürich*, from there with Swiss Federal Train (SBB) to train station Konstanz; from there by public bus, line 9A or 9B to „Universität“. *Airport Friedrichshafen*, with bus or train to port Friedrichshafen, with Katamaran (speedboat) to port Konstanz, 3 min on foot to train station Konstanz; from there by public bus, line 9A or 9B to „Universität“.

*By car:* via A 81 to crossing Singen, continuing on B 33 direction Konstanz/Radolfzell, from Reichenau/Waldsiedlung follow the signs „Universität Konstanz“; public parking near university main entrance.

At the university, signs will direct you to the meeting rooms.



## Accommodation

For our external guests, accommodation will be provided at the Hotel Graf Zeppelin, Stephansplatz 15, D-78462 Konstanz, Phone: +49-7531-691369-0, Website: <http://www.hotel-graf-zeppelin.de/>

## Corresponding address

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## Organisers

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## Program

### Wednesday

*Open to the public, Room A 703*

6-8 p.m.

#### **Welcome and Public Roundtable Discussion: Domestic Elites and Public Opinion – Neglected Dimensions in Post-conflict Democratization**

Prof. Dr. John Higley, Professor of Government and Sociology, Jack S. Blanton Chair in Australian Studies, Departments of Government and Sociology, University of Texas

Prof. Dr. Susan Woodward, Professor, Ph.D. Program in Political Science, City University of New York

Dr. Jörn Gravingholt, Researcher, German Development Institute, Bonn  
Manfred Öhm, Consultant, Department for Global Policy & Development, Friedrich Ebert Foundation

Chair: Dr. Sonja Grimm, Lecturer, University of Konstanz

8:30 p.m.

**Buffet dinner** (Restaurant Wessenberg, Wessenbergstr. 41, Konstanz)

### Thursday

*Invited guests only, Room V1001*

9-10:40 a.m.

#### **Panel 1: Assessing Elites and Domestic Opinion**

Prof. Dr. John Higley, Professor of Government and Sociology, Jack S. Blanton Chair in Australian Studies, Departments of Government and Sociology, University of Texas

*Stable democratization: An inescapably endogenous elite enterprise*

Prof. Dr. Heinrich Best, Professor of Sociology, Dean of the Department of Sociology, University of Jena

*The elite-population gap in the process of collective identity formation in Central and Eastern Europe*

Chair: Dr. Britta Weiffen, Lecturer, University of Konstanz

10:40-11 a.m.

**Coffee Break**

11-12:40 a.m.

#### **Panel 2: Learning from Historical Examples**

Prof. Dr. Ursula Hoffmann-Lange, Professor Emeritus of Political Science and Lecturer, University of Bamberg

*The Interaction between internal and external forces in the democratization of West Germany after 1945*

Prof. Dr. Marie-Janine Calic, Professor of East European and South East European History, University of Munich

*New elites – new nationalism?*

Chair: Dr. Sabina Ferhabbegović, Researcher, University of Jena

12:40 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Lunch** (buffet lunch will be provided)

- 2-3:40 p.m.                   **Panel 3: Elites and Public Opinion in South East European Transitions**
- Dr. Solveig Richter, Senior Researcher, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik  
*Corrupted Elites? State capture in the Western Balkans*
- Dr. Sonja Grimm, Lecturer, University of Konstanz/Lisa Groß, Researcher, University of Konstanz  
*From the inside out: The Interplay of Western Balkan governments and the European Union*
- Chair: Dr. Paulina Pospieszna, Researcher, School of Social Sciences, University of Mannheim
- 3:40-4 p.m.                   **Coffee Break**
- 4-5:40 p.m.                   **Panel 4: Elites and Public Opinion in South East European Transitions - Science and Politics in Dialogue**
- Prof. Dr. David Chandler, Professor of International Relations, University of Westminster  
*The return of politics: Elites, resistance and the limits of liberal peace*
- Jovana Fa Tomic, Member of Parliament, National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia  
*System change in Serbia – A mixture of spontaneity and plans*
- Venera Hajrullahu, Head of the Kosovo Civil Society Foundation  
*Building an EU member state – The Kosovo experience*
- Chair: Dr. Martin Welz, Researcher, University of Konstanz
- 7:30 p.m.                   **Dinner** (Restaurant Hafenhalle, Hafenstr. 10, Konstanz)
- Friday**                   *Invited guests only, Room V1001*
- 9-10:40 a.m.                   **Panel 5: Elites and Public Opinion in Latin American Transitions**
- Prof. Dr. Mitchell A. Seligson, Centennial Professor of Political Science and Professor of Sociology at Vanderbilt University  
*Is tolerance of dissent contingent? Elites vs. the mass public in Bolivia (co-authored with Margarita Corral and Daniel Moreno)*
- Lisbeth Zimmermann, Researcher, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt  
*Elite discourses about rule of law promotion and their influence on donor strategies in Guatemala*
- Chair: Dr. Tim Wegenast, Researcher, University of Konstanz
- 10:40-11 a.m.                   **Coffee Break**

- 11-12:40 a.m.      **Panel 6: Elites and Public Opinion in Sub-Sahara African Transitions**
- Dr. Anja Osei, Lecturer in International Relations and Conflict Management, University of Konstanz  
*Elite networks in Africa*
- Charlotte Heyl, Researcher, GIGA Hamburg  
*Informal decision-making and democratization: Empirical evidence from Mozambique (co-authored with Dr. Julia Leininger, Researcher, German Development Institute, Bonn)*
- Bettina Bunk, Researcher, Political Science, University of Potsdam  
*Formal goes informal: Local governance and political elites in Mozambique*
- Chair: Dr. Roos van der Haer, Researcher, University of Konstanz
- 12:40 a.m.-2 p.m.      **Lunch** (buffet lunch will be provided)
- 2-3:40 p.m.      **Panel 7: Assessing Public Opinion and the Media in Post-conflict Societies**
- Dr. Vedran Džihčić, Lecturer in International Politics, University of Vienna  
*Political elites vs. public opinion: Clashing perceptions and visions about externally induced democratization processes in Kosovo and BiH in comparison*
- Prof. Dr. Christoph Zürcher, Professor, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa  
*Costly democracy: Peacebuilding and democratic transition*
- Dr. Karin Dyrstad, Researcher, Centre for the Study of Civil War at PRIO  
*Institutional confidence in post-conflict societies*
- Chair: Inken Wiese, Researcher, Centre of Excellence “Cultural Foundations of Integration”, University of Konstanz
- 3:40-4 p.m.      **Coffee Break**
- 4-4:45 p.m.      **Conclusions and Perspectives**
- Dr. Sonja Grimm, Dr. Britta Weiffen, Dr. Sabina Ferhadbegović