The German Political Foundations as Actors in Democracy Assistance

Alexander Mohr

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Dissertation.com
Boca Raton, Florida
USA • 2010

ISBN-10: 1-59942-331-6
ISBN-13: 978-1-59942-331-9

For my parents

Dr. Wolfgang Mohr and Raginhild Mohr-Bütow

"Democracy does not belong to any country or region, but is a universal right."

Kofi Annan, 2005

Acknowledgements

From the first idea of my research until the completion of this thesis, I have had academic guidance and moral support from various individuals to whom I would like to express my appreciation.

Most notably on the academic side was my thesis director, H.E. Ambassador Eugène Berg, whose support for this project and whose knowledge and sense contributed greatly to the form this thesis has taken. I also would like to thank the faculty and staff at the Centre d'Études Diplomatiques et Stratégiques in Paris for their support.

Personnel at some of the ten libraries and the archives of the German foundations where I consulted texts and documents in France and Germany were particularly helpful in facilitating my access to relevant information. In this context I want to thank the staff at the archives of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, the Heinrich Böll Foundation, the Hanns Seidel Foundation and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation in Germany. Without these sources and their help, this thesis would have been much more difficult to conduct the research.

I also want to thank the individuals at the single foundations I had the possibility to interview for this thesis. These are especially the heads of the international departments of the foundations' headquarters in Germany. I also want to thank the OECD for granting me access to their library and interviews with the heads of the OECD Development Assistance Committee.

Among the individuals who provided advice, help and feedback, I would like to recognize Mr. Boonyarit Vichienpuntu, First Secretary of the Royal Thai Embassy in Paris, a friend whose shared interests in international relations led to many long discussions about themes directly or indirectly treated in this thesis, as well as Dr. Eckhard Deutscher, former Executive Director of the World Bank and OECD DAC Chair, whose strong commitment to the quality and integrity of research into issues of international relations is a model that any field of endeavour would benefit from having.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents and friends for their great support and their encouragement they lent in connection with the preparation of this thesis. Their impact on the thesis was indirect but very real. I am very grateful for their presence and their understanding.

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Abbreviations

AA	Auswaertiges Amt/ German Foreign Office
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific (partner) states (of the EU)
ADS	Archive of Democratic Socialism
AJC	American Jewish Committee
ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in Europe
ANC	African National Congress
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BMI	Bundesinnenministerium/ Federal Ministry of the Interior
BMZ	Budesministerium fuer Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit/ Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BVE	Bundesverfassungsgerichtsentscheidung/ Decisions of the German Federal Constitutional Court (FCC)
BVerfG	Bundesverfassungsgericht / Federal Constitutional Court (see also FCC)
CANGO	China Association for NGO Cooperation
CC	Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
CDI	Centrist Democrat International
CDP-PI	Christian Democrat and People's Parties International
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union/ Christian Democratic Union
CDUCE	Christian Democrat Union of Central Europe
CDWU	Christian Democrat World Union
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CP	Communist Party
COE	Council of Europe
CSU	Christlich Soziale Union/ Christian Social Union
DED	Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst- German Development Service
DEG	Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH
DGB	Deutscher Gewerkschaft Bund/ German Labor Union
DM	Deutsche Mark

DPB	Dialogue Programme Brussels
DSE	German Foundation for International Development
EC	European Commission
EDF	European Development Fund
EDFI	European Development Finance Institutions
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
EIB	European Investment bank
EIUC	European Center for Human Rights and Democratisation
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
EUNIDA	European Network of Implementing Development Agencies
FCC	Federal Constitutional Court/ BVerfG
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung / Foundation
FNS	Friedrich Naumann Stiftung/ Foundation
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDP	Global Dialogue Program
GG	Grundgesetz (German Basic Law/ Constitution)
GGN	Global Greens Network
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit German / Agency for Technical Co-operation
GTZ IS	GTZ International Services
HBS	Heinrich Böll Stiftung/ Foundation
HSS	Hanns Seidel Stiftung/ Foundation
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IDU	International Democrat Union
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IFSDP	International Federation of the Socialist and Democratic Press
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organisation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund

InWEnt	Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung GmbH – Capacity Building International
IPD	International Political Dialogue
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
KAS	Konrad Adenauer Stiftung/ Foundation
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau/ German Bank for Reconstruction
LI	Liberal International
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Mittel-Ost-Europa / Middle East Europe
MP	Member of Parliament
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
NIS	New Independent States
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODCA	Christian Democrat Organisation of America
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (of OSCE)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ORIT	Organización Regional Interamericana de Trabajadores
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus/ Party of Democratic Socialism
PES	Party of European Socialists
PI	Party Internationals
QUANGO	Quasi Non Governmental Organisations
RLS	Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung/ Foundation
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community

SED	Socialist Unity Party of Germany/ Sozialistische Einheitspartei
SI	Socialist International
SMEs	Small and Medium size Enterprises
SPD	Soziale Partei Deutschlands
SVR	Stiftungsverband Regenbogen
TAD	Transatlantic Dialogue (Program)
UN	United Nations
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UPLA	Union of Latin American Parties
U.S.	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VENRO	Association of German Development NGOs
WFD	Westminster Foundation for Democracy
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

INTRODUCTION

Democracy assistance is a relatively recent international development activity of governments and donor organisations. In recent years the international community has come to realise the importance of political parties, a well-functioning political party system and a vivid civil society for the process of democratisation. There is a growing recognition that support given to elections, civil society or public administration reform as the only form of institutional and therefore democratic assistance, is not sufficient for helping to consolidate the long and difficult process of democratisation in transitional and war-torn societies or young democracies.

Governments, multilateral, international and non-governmental organisations and increasingly political foundations are now involved in funding democracy-related assistance and have subsequently started to design political party assistance programs, focusing on teaching political parties in new and emerging democracies specific skills (such as campaigning, membership development, developing party programs, etc.) and helping them to become stronger institutions through strengthening party organisation, fostering internal democracy and improve their financial administration.

The focus of this thesis will be the German political foundation as actors in democracy assistance. Two terms are related to this field: *democracy promotion* and *democracy assistance*.
The European Council of Ministers defines *democracy promotion* as "*to encompass the full range of external relations and development cooperation activities which contribute to the development and consolidation of democracy in third countries*". This wider term of '*democracy promotion'* consists of elections and electoral systems (voter education, technical assistance, support to electoral bodies), institution building (judicial reform, anti-corruption agencies, support to parliaments) and civil society like NGOs, the media and political parties.

The term used in this thesis is *democracy assistance*. This more specific term is so far not a mainstream term in the EU discourse and has only in recent years started

to emerge, and no Community definition or concept of a democratisation strategy is envisaged. However, the "promotion of human rights and democracy" has become a well established element of EU external policy, with multiple references to it at various institutional levels and financial instruments.

The term of '*democracy assistance*' deals partly with the same issues like democracy promotion, but focuses less on the aspects of technical assistance and much more on political parties and the promotion of civil society as the backbone of democracy. For the purpose of this thesis '*democracy assistance'* is defined as "*the policy aimed at helping third countries build institutions of democratic governance, foster public participation in democratic governance, support pluralism in the shape of multiparty politics, freedom of expression and independent media, promote and protect human rights, and work towards establishing the rule of law*". This term could be reduced to "*all measures designed to facilitate democratic development*". This definition shall serve as the base for the work of the foundations abroad.

This thesis is meant as an attempt to map and describe the activities of political foundations in this field, albeit of only one group of actors, the German political foundations.

In Germany, political foundations (Stiftungen) play an important role in shaping civil society. The foundations, however, have also committed themselves to strengthening democratic political and societal structures abroad. Their joint mission is the contribution to political education, information and debate in Germany and abroad in order to foster the progress of society and Germany's good relations with foreign countries. In their democracy assistance work they choose their own priorities and strategies.

There are currently six political foundations: the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), which is close to the Social Democratic Party (SPD); the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) which is related to the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS) which is linked to the party 'The Greens' (Bündnis 90/Grüne); the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNS) which is close to the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP); the Hans Seidel

Foundation (HSS) which is related to the Christian Social Union (CSU), the Bavarian sister party of the CDU; and finally the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS), which is close to the Party of Democratic Socialism (Die Linke.PDS), the successor to the former state party of the German Democratic Republic (SED).

The foundations remain independent in their organisation, management, funding and decisions. The political foundations are largely financed by the federal government. The function of the political foundations, as laid down in Art. 12 I of the German constitution[1] is to provide professional and sustainable education in the field of social policy and democracy.
However, the structures and financial backgrounds of the foundations are difficult to explore. In their international work the foundations orienting themselves in a 1971 in cooperation with the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation (BMZ) signed joint declaration that stated "the German political foundation support partners in development countries that are in the framework of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights agreed objectives to contribute to structural support, to support social justice, to deepen political participation and to strengthen the economical independence of countries."

The activities of the political foundations both inside and outside of Germany have a long history of political education and even political influence abroad. They also have been instrumental in the process of political transformation in several countries.
Even though the foundations provided access to the libraries and publications, the information provided by the foundations in their publications is often of general nature.

The methodology for this thesis was a combination of conducted interviews with representatives of the international departments of all the foundations in combination with case studies of the work of the foundations abroad. Information provided was cross checked and accompanied by interviews with the OECD

[1] Basic Law/ German Constitution (Grundgesetz der Bundesrepublik Deutschland).

Development Assistance Committee (DAC) representatives. These interviews and the information provided by the foundations (e.g. Annual Reports) were the main sources for this thesis. All information provided by the foundations was included until 31. December 2008.

The question that is unanswered in the context of research on the political foundations is, how political influence in countries abroad is executed, who are the partners of the foundations in the countries and what the background and framework of the foundations is, when it comes to political consulting. To give a full spectrum of the foundations work abroad, country projects were identified that allowed a closer look to the foundations work in democracy assistance. To cover the full spectrum of the work abroad, several countries in the world were identified and in-depth analysed.

The preconditions and criteria for the selection of the countries were: a country that is in a transformation process; a country where most of the foundations are present with a project. Main emphasis was here put on the four major foundations (FES, KAS, FNS, HBS) as the HSS and RLS are due to their size and limited budgets not present in every country; if possible the countries should be strong regional player to allow the possibility to put the country project in a regional and regional political context.
Countries that fulfilled these criteria were South Africa, Poland, Thailand, Mexico, and as a special case China (PRC). As democracy projects are also conducted indirectly through the International Political Dialogue (IPD) programs (transatlantic programs) of the foundations, the foundations' Washington programs (IPD) were further described.

This Ph.D. thesis assesses whether this instrument of German foreign policy is a sufficient tool to close the gap between development assistance and international relations in the context of democracy assistance.

Chapter I

The German political foundations

Chapter I: The German political foundations

Introduction

The German political foundations[2] are an essential part of the pluralistic political culture of the Federal Republic of Germany.
After the Second World War, German political parties started to rebuild themselves. Beside the setup of political party structures, the parties also set up organisations, the so called 'political foundations', for national political education. With massive financial aid and public subsidies from the federal and state governments, they are a specific feature of the German political party system. Over the years the foundations didn't only politically educate on a national level, but also started to consult on international political projects.

As independent private, non-profit foundations under German law, they are non-governmental organisations (NGOs), though connected to the major parties of the German political spectrum and, as mentioned above, supported by the federal state budget.
Their joint mission is the contribution to political education, information and debate in Germany and abroad in order to foster the progress of society and Germany's relations with foreign countries.[3] They complement the official German foreign policy, but choose their own priorities and strategies.

There are currently six German political foundations: the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), founded in 1925, which is close to the Social Democratic Party (SPD); the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), founded in 1956, which is related to the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (HBS), founded in 1996/7, linked to the party 'The Greens' (Bündnis 90/Grüne); the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung for Freedom (FNS), founded 1958, which is close to the liberal

[2] In German they are called *Stiftungen*, following: the foundations.

[3] Joint Declaration of the German political foundations, signed November 1998 in the European Meeting Center of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Cadenabbia, Griante, Italy,1. Clause, 1.

Free Democratic Party (FDP); the Hans-Seidel-Stiftung (HSS), founded in 1966, which is related to the Christian Social Union (CSU), the Bavarian sister party of the CDU and the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung (RLS), which is close to the Party of Democratic Socialism (Die Linke.PDS)[4], the successor to the former state party of the German Democratic Republic SED.

The German Ministry for Development and Cooperation (BMZ) has supported the international work of the party-affiliated foundations financially since 1962.
The aid Germany received after the Second World War, which was an integral part of Germany's economical recovery and integration into the western world, committed the young Federal Republic towards the international community. Back then, West Germany looked back at the recent experiences of re-democratisation within an efficient economic system that aimed at social reconciliation.[5] Important characteristic elements of the new democratic German state included party-political pluralism and the representative parliamentary system. This experience shaped the work of the foundations and was the basis for their integration into development policy.

Chapter I will explore the organisational and structural set up of the German foundations and will examine the scope of work in the national and international context.

[4] Formaly PDS - 'Party for Democratic Socialism'.

[5] The economic model in Germany which tries to balance social rights and liberal market economy is referred to as 'social market economy'.

A. German political foundations (Stiftungen) in post war Germany

1. Overview over the German political foundations

The fundamental characteristics which differentiate the political foundations from other development organisations is their affiliation to their political parties, even though they are independent of them in financial and personnel terms.
The affiliation to the political parties is based on the common ideological backgrounds and the orientation towards the parties' world-views. The foundations nowadays have a global presence with the objective of creating networks between civil society organisations and a focus on political dialogue with the economic and political elites abroad.
Furthermore, although it is typical for political foundations that their national education work and their development cooperation work is supported by public funding, they act independently from the government because of their affiliation to the established parliamentary parties. This ensures they are heard by incumbent ministers and party officials.

Today, the political foundations have beside their national programs, international departments with country programs, regional programs and regional sector programs.[6] Also some worldwide programs have emerged, which address global challenges such as environmental issues, crisis prevention, international terrorism, gender issues, global governance, as well as values and dialogue programs with and between religions.

The presence of the foundations with offices worldwide as well as offices in the decision making centres in the world like in Brussels, Washington, New York[7] and other internationally significant metropolises, prove to be helpful in this

[6] The organisational structures of the foundations abroad are further described in Chapter I, B., p. 36ff,
[7] The offices in Washington, New York (only FES), Brussels and Geneva are part of the foundation's International Political Dialogue (IPD) programs; see also Chapter II, p.224ff.