

# CANADIAN-NIGERIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF DEMOCRATIZATION (1999-2011)

By

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## **Abstract**

This article, seeks to investigate Canadian-Nigerian cooperation in the area of democratization from 1999 to 2011. It forms part of a larger study involving a three-year ‘collaborative research and joint knowledge mobilization/dissemination, analyzing and theorizing the nature, attainments, problems and prospects of Canadian-Nigerian cooperation in the protection of human rights (between 1999, when Nigeria’s current democratic regime was established and 2011, a convenient cut-off date).’ The focus on the experience with democratization in Canadian-Nigerian cooperation during this era, apart from being one of the areas mapped out for the study, is also justified by the global pre-eminence of the democratic system of government.

The objective of this investigation is ultimately to determine, on the basis of the evidence derived from the field work, what has been the nature/character of Canadian - Nigerian cooperation in the specific area of democratization. How has this relationship proceeded? How have the parties behaved and what are the implications of this behaviour on the policy, practice and theory of democratization? Have there been any attainments arising from this cooperation? What have been the challenges faced by this cooperation and what are the prospects for future collaboration going forward?

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Applying Finnemore and Sikkink's strategic social constructivist theory as well as Upendra Baxi's TREMF theory, the article will analyze data and other evidence gathered from the field work with the aim of finding any interconnection among them and the scholarly discussion in the literature. I will also highlight any gaps that could be filled by the evidence gathered and also examine how the evidence gathered confirms (or does not) the existing understanding/knowledge in the literature. The paper will also discuss the implications of the findings of the research to the validity of the theoretical positions advanced by Finnemore and Sikkink and Upendra Baxi, respectively.

## **1. Introduction**

This paper examines the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in the area of democratization from 1999 to 2011. It contributes an important aspect to a broader study on Canadian-Nigerian cooperation in the protection of human rights in that period. There are important reasons why the focus on democratization is necessary to the study; not the least because human rights and democracy are complementary and mutually reinforcing principles. As such the objective of the paper is, broadly speaking, to examine the nature, attainments, problems and prospects of Canadian-Nigerian cooperation in the area of democratization in the indicated period of 1999 to 2011.

As the broader study is situated in the socio-legal and multi-disciplinary realm, the material examined include sources derived from the literature on democracy and democratization; interview carried out in Canada and Nigeria; and relevant documents of government, international organizations, and civil society in both countries. This examination is

situated in the context of two important theories framing the research: the first, as advanced by Finnemore and Sikkink, applies “strategic social constructivism” to the human rights area in conceptualizing a theory of “norm life cycle” and centrality of the agency of the “norm entrepreneur” in catalyzing human rights change;<sup>1</sup> and the second, is Upendra Baxi’s germinal theory of the emergence globally of a “trade-related market friendly human rights” (TREM) paradigm/discourse which is steadily supplanting the paradigm of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDH).<sup>2</sup>

Overall, the paper analyzes whether any linkages can be found in the literature, the interview data, and the theories framing the research. And to that extent, seeks answers to the following questions: What has been the nature/character of Canadian-Nigerian cooperation in the specific human rights sub-area of democratization? What have been the attainments of such cooperation? What have been the problems of such cooperation? What are the prospects for such cooperation?

The paper deals with these questions in the following manner: section 2 reviews the literature on democracy and democratization. Here the objective is to establish the various ways in which these concepts are understood; section 3 discusses the main theories framing the research project as identified above; section 4 reviews relevant data from the field research work undertaken in Canada and Nigeria; section 5 provides an analyzes of the linkages among the literature, interview data, and the framing theories; section 6 examines the attainments, problems and prospects of that cooperation; while section 7 concludes the paper offering a summary of the key arguments.

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<sup>1</sup> See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics and Political Change’ (1998) 52(4) *International Organization* at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics 887-917.

<sup>2</sup> See Upendra Baxi, *The Future of Human Rights* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002) 131-166.

## 2. Literature Review

To understand “democratization”, it is imperative to first understand “democracy” - to proceed without this understanding opens one up to the risk of setting up an edifice without foundation (more so as the former derives from the latter). It is for this reason that the review of the literature in this section contemplates how democracy and democratization have conceptually evolved in scholarly texts and praxis.

### [A] On Democracy

Jean Grugel rightly observes that “democratization studies examine and explain processes whereby governments, states and societies attempt to move away from some form of authoritarianism towards some form of democracy.”<sup>3</sup> However, there is much debate about the meaning of democracy, the type of democracy and the level of democracy that should be expected within the public space.<sup>4</sup> David Beetham, for instance, offers as the meaning of democracy the following:

a mode of decision-making about collectively binding rules and policies over which the people exercise control, and the most democratic arrangement [is] that where all members of the collectivity enjoy effective equal rights to take part in such decision-making directly – one, that is to

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<sup>3</sup> Jean Grugel, *Democratization: A Critical Introduction* (Palgrave, 2002) 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

say, which realizes to the greatest conceivable degree the principles of popular control and equality in its exercise.<sup>5</sup>

Democratic theory much engages with philosophical and political disputes about how best to situate democratic praxis. Some key questions which have arisen in theory include: who, precisely, make up the people; what is the best process through which the wants and preferences of the 'people' can be made known; how can the democratic rights of the 'people' best be understood and safeguarded; who sets the agenda to which the 'people' respond; and can the 'people' be expected to come to a shared preference, given competing material interests and normative preferences, and what are the most democratic mechanisms for taking decisions which protect the rights of everyone?<sup>6</sup>

Twentieth-century democratic theory also sought to address the following fundamental questions: how much democracy is appropriate – in particular, is there a trade-off between democracy and other rights; should democracy be confined to the political sphere or should it include the system of economic production; how can the tension between the rights of the individual and the rights of the community be resolved; and what are the arenas of human interaction for which democracy is appropriate - should democracy refer strictly to procedures for government, should it apply to the interactions between society and the state, or should it also extend to arenas traditionally regarded as the sphere of private relations, such as the family, and the international order, traditionally seen as 'beyond' the reach of democracy?<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> David Beetham, 'Liberal Democracy and the Limits of Democratization' 40 *Political Studies*, Special Issue, 40.

<sup>6</sup> See Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 13.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

Two key strands of democratic theorizing are evident: direct and representative democracy.<sup>8</sup> The tradition of direct democracy traces its provenance to the Athenian legacy of popular government in a small city state and the Renaissance republican tradition. Rousseau is noted to have argued, in the eighteenth century, for unmediated popular government, by which he meant that citizens should decide laws and make public policy without mediation of political representatives.<sup>9</sup> Direct democracy in the Athenian tradition however had its shortcomings. First, the ‘people’ was understood to comprise of relatively few men capable of forming an Assembly (the deliberative body of government). This was a highly exclusive body that did not have a place for women, slaves and foreigners as these categories of ‘people’ “were excluded from citizenship and thereby rendered powerless.”<sup>10</sup> Second, as Arblaster points out, the Athenian democracy was a paradox where freedom for Athenians came at the expense of subjugation of the rights of others. Slavery “was not only ignored by Athenian democrats: it was the other side of the coin.”<sup>11</sup>

These shortcomings of Athenian democracy, according to Grugel, inspired Western conceptions of the ‘good society’.<sup>12</sup> Democracy was rediscovered in the republican and communitarian traditions of the European Middle Ages, and later reformulated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in England and North America.<sup>13</sup> With the shift from city state to nation state in the eighteenth century, direct democracy was no longer feasible because of the size of the polity. As such, liberal notions of representation, equality and accountability were

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Albert Weale, *Democracy* (Macmillan – now Palgrave, 1999) 24-5; see also Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 13.

<sup>10</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 14; see also David Held, *Models of Democracy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Polity Press, 1996) 23.

<sup>11</sup> Anthony Arblaster, *Democracy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Open University Press, 1994) 22-3.

<sup>12</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 14.

<sup>13</sup> John Dunn, *Democracy: The Unfinished Journey: From 508 BC to AD 1993* (Cambridge University Press, 1992); David Held (fn 10 above); Anthony Black, ‘Communal Democracy and its History’ 45 *Political Studies* 5.

grafted onto democracy, even though they were at odds with the more radical democratic traditions of republicanism and communitarianism.<sup>14</sup>

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, democratic theory was influenced by a number of trends in Europe and North America, namely: the development of liberalism, the emergence of socialism, the spread of revolutionary ideals and the expansion of capitalism. Grugel notes that “new social actors...forced theorists to rethink the nature of government, institutions, rights and citizenship.”<sup>15</sup> Divisions emerged between advocates of ‘protective democracy’ and advocates of ‘developmental democracy’ about the most suitable way of organizing the state, the boundaries of the political and the role of ‘the people’ in decision-making.<sup>16</sup> Madison, Bentham and James Mill argued for democracy to be tempered with respect for authority and understood that one purpose of political institutions was to safeguard the state and community from the ‘excesses’ of democracy. In contrast, John Stuart Mill foresaw that the limited suffrage they accepted would not survive the challenges of an increasingly organized working-class movement. He challenged the classic liberal idea that an inclusive citizenship would undermine the stability of the capitalist order and suggested that democracy offered ‘a moral vision of the possibility of the improvement of mankind.’<sup>17</sup>

As such, throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, the major problem of liberal democracy was specifying who should be included in the polity; identifying the rights and duties that citizenship entailed; and establishing the form that democracy should take.<sup>18</sup> And this persisted well into the twentieth century.<sup>19</sup> This liberal vision of democracy

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<sup>14</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 14.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid at 15.

<sup>16</sup> See C.B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy* (Oxford University Press, 1977).

<sup>17</sup> John Stuart Mill, quoted in C.B. Macpherson *Supra* at 47.

<sup>18</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 16.

came under challenge by alternative ideologies/visions by the early twentieth century. “Marxists developed the concept of socialist democracy. Bourgeois democracy, they argued, was a cover for the economic and cultural exploitation of the majority in order to increase the profits of the few.”<sup>20</sup>

The Second World War is noted to have been a watershed for democratic theory: in Europe and the US the war led to “mass mobilization of ‘ordinary’ people... and weakened the bonds of social deference.”<sup>21</sup> As such, Grugel notes, after 1945 it was difficult to legitimize political exclusion on grounds of “birth, occupation or sex, although racial exclusion persisted in the US until the 1960s.”<sup>22</sup> Democracy was thus re-legitimized in a “less exclusive mould” and the space “for dissent from liberal democracy gradually narrowed.”<sup>23</sup> Although socialism and communism survived this period, they lost their position as alternative visions of democracy as “democracy was successfully married to liberalism. Liberal democracy was no longer seen as one strand of democracy: it was presented as the only vision there was.”<sup>24</sup>

The Cold War caused a shift in the meaning and usages of democracy. It became a way of distinguishing between ‘the free world’ and Communism. It thus came to represent political arrangements in Western Europe and the US – that is “liberal or representative democracy and to imply a particular set of arrangements for government and, more generally, the empirical ‘reality’ of the West.”<sup>25</sup> From this context emerged empirical democratic theory which found its most important inspiration in the work of Joseph Schumpeter. For Schumpeter, democracy was a

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<sup>19</sup> In some countries, race or colour were determinants of citizenship until after the Second World War, and in some cases such as the US and South Africa, well beyond 1945.

<sup>20</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 16.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid at 17; Liberal democracy was presented in opposition to both Communism (seen as an ideology and a geopolitical force) and Facism over which democracy was thought to have triumphed.

<sup>25</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 17.



form of government/mechanism for the election of leaders. An important underlying assumption here was that the population could not be entrusted with the important task of decision-making.<sup>26</sup> Democracy was thus a way of institutionalizing competition for power.<sup>27</sup> A different vision of democracy was however offered by Robert Dahl who suggested the use of the term “polyarchy” to describe consensual government by competing elites with no single centre of power. “Polyarchy works through the pluralist representation of different and conflicting social interests.”<sup>28</sup> Here although institutions matter, their operation depends on an almost unspoken “consensus on the rules of procedure; consensus on the range of policy options; [and] consensus on the legitimate scope of political activity.”<sup>29</sup>

Empirical democratic theory, although said to have been quite useful to academics working within the behaviouralist tradition and to Western policy-makers, was in fact inadequate as a description of the operation of political systems for number of reasons: first, it wrongly assumed that Western societies were pluralist – that is to say, it was possible for all groups in society to be heard equally. “It ignored the structured privilege that was generated and sustained by capitalism”;<sup>30</sup> second, it had an evident Western bias as it “deduces its core understanding of democracy from an ideal model of the operation of Western politics.”<sup>31</sup> This becomes problematic where its paradigm is applied to the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America etc;<sup>32</sup> third, it promotes an electoralist or procedural understanding of democracy which

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<sup>26</sup> Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (George Allen & Unwin, 1976) 268-70.

<sup>27</sup> Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-Cordon, ‘Promises and Disappointments: Reconsidering Democracy’s Value’ in I. Shapiro and C. Hacker-Cordon (eds) *Democracy’s Value* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>28</sup> Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?* (Yale University Press, 1961).

<sup>29</sup> David Held (fn 10 above) 207.

<sup>30</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 20; see also Steven Luke, *Power: A Radical View* (Macmillan – now Palgrave, 1974).

<sup>31</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 21.

<sup>32</sup> By this empirical vision, “democratization becomes highly prescriptive process in which the south is supposed to learn from the developed countries – it becomes the reproduction of the procedures for government which have been

concentrates on the observable behaviour of political actors. As such, it is unsuitable for analyzing politics in the South as it “ignores the gulf between the formal structures of the political system and the cultures and practices which shape political activity on the ground;”<sup>33</sup> and fourth, it fails to address how economic resources (or a lack of them) impinge upon the operation of the political system, especially in the developing world.<sup>34</sup>

The intellectual problems with empirical democracy theory as well as the shortcomings of liberal democratic theorizing provoked renewed interest in exploring alternative approaches to democracy. The result, Grugel states, “was a renewed interest in democracy as a vehicle for human emancipation and as a means for promoting the good of the community as a whole, rather than the individual.”<sup>35</sup> New theories of democracies that have emerged since the 1960s include participatory democracy, feminism, associationalism, citizenship theories and cosmopolitanism.

According to Carole Pateman, participatory theories of democracy challenge the myth that there is one “classical” theory of democracy – liberal democracy. Instead, she points to a long lineage of theorists for whom participation, not representation, was the core of democracy.<sup>36</sup> Macpherson, on his part, sees participatory democracy as a categorical rejection of the Schumpeterian model of democracy and its negative view of humanity.<sup>37</sup>

The focus of Feminism is the systematic uncovering of the relationship between social, economic and political gender inequalities and the ways in which Western democracies are, in

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developed in Western Europe and the US. Democratization thus runs into the danger of becoming an exercise in colonization.” See Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid; See also Geoffrey Hawthorn, “‘Waiting for a Text?’: Comparing Third World Politics”, in James Manor, *Rethinking Third World Politics* (Longman, 1991) 27.

<sup>34</sup> As Grugel argues, “liberal democratic theory has little to say about socio-economic or other forms of structural inequalities either within states or globally because it presumes that they are unimportant for the exercise of citizenship. But the experiences of the Third World suggest that equal citizenship cannot take root alongside extreme income inequalities.” See Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 22.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid at 23.

<sup>36</sup> Carole Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory* (Cambridge University Press, 1970).

<sup>37</sup> C.B. Macpherson (fn 16 above).

fact inherently undemocratic since they treat women as inferior to men, thereby violating the first principle of democracy, that all citizens have equal rights.<sup>38</sup> Through the revelation of structural bias within liberal democracy, feminism pioneered a review of democratic theory itself and suggested that addressing structural inequality is an essential part of building a genuine democracy.<sup>39</sup>

Associationalism, as theorized by Paul Hirst, claims that human welfare and liberty are both best served when as many of the affairs of society as possible are managed by voluntary and democratically self-governing associations. It gives priority to freedom in its scale of values, but suggests that freedom can only be pursued effectively if individuals participate in the community. Hirst's key argument is that associational democracy is a remedy for the malaise of post-industrial societies and the deep dissatisfaction with their economic performance. It offers a renewal of Western democracy, burdened by "big governmental machine that is out of control."<sup>40</sup>

Citizenship theories of democracy draw upon the renewed interest in civil society in politics. This theory stresses the importance of civil society for democracy as it draws attention to the role of political culture; civic virtues; the network of associations within and across societies; and the importance of contestation in the practice of democracy.<sup>41</sup> Within citizenship and civil society approaches there is however a divide between theorists who see citizenship as

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<sup>38</sup> Carole Pateman, *The Disorder of Women* (Polity Press, 1989).

<sup>39</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 24-5.

<sup>40</sup> Paul Hirst, *From Statism to Pluralism* (UCL Press, 1997) 42.

<sup>41</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 27.

an eminently political affair, and those who argue that citizenship must be understood to encompass social and economic components as well.<sup>42</sup>

The belief that democracy emanates from civil society rather than the state, has been reinforced by trends towards globalization and the transnationalization of politics.<sup>43</sup> Strange argues that the state has become defective or simply ‘evaporated’ under pressure from globalization.<sup>44</sup> As a result, non-state actors now play increasingly central roles in national and international politics while state actors experience increasing levels of reduced capacities. It is from these assumptions that the theory of cosmopolitan democracy has emerged. Its core idea is that the way we conceive of democracy must change so as to fit a globalizing world. As such, the backdrop to cosmopolitan democracy is the process of globalization, or increased interconnectedness between states and citizens and the stretching and deepening of links between institutions, social organizations and citizens.<sup>45</sup>

The foregoing paints a broad stroke of how democracy has evolved conceptually in scholarly discourse beginning from its early manifestations in the Athenian era of the city state. What is evident from the above is that democratic theory and praxis remain highly contested fields, although there appears to be unanimity in the preference of democracy over other forms of social organization and systems of government. In the next subsection, democratization theories will be examined.

## [B] **On Democratization**

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<sup>42</sup> See George Philip, ‘Institutions and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America’, in Julia Buxton and Nicola Phillips (eds) *Developments in Latin American Political Economy* (Manchester University Press, 1999); Thomas Marshall, *Class, Citizenship and Social Development* (Greenwood Press, 1973); and John Hall, ‘In Search of Civil Society’, in John Hall (ed) *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison* (Polity Press, 1995) 26.

<sup>43</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 28.

<sup>44</sup> Susan Strange, ‘The Defective State’ (1995) 124(2) *Daedalus* 55 at 56.

<sup>45</sup> See Anthony Giddens, *The Consequence of Modernity* (Polity Press, 1990).

Theories of democratization focus on “the identification of the main factors which lead to the emergence of democracies.”<sup>46</sup> There are three distinct approaches traditional to democratization theories: modernization theory; historical sociology (sometimes called structuralism); and transition theory (also known as agency theory). A distinction is argued to be sometimes made between structuralist theories (modernization and historical sociology) and agency approaches (transition theory) “because of their very different positions regarding structure and agency.”<sup>47</sup> Each of these theoretical approaches attempt to “impose order and find patterns in the messy and complex reality of human life.”<sup>48</sup> Individually, each is a partial view of the phenomenon of democratization. They are however useful because they ask important questions about democratization in general and contribute to the explanations of its particularity.<sup>49</sup> Since the 1990s, with the emergence of more democracies in the World, these theories have also focused on *consolidation* or the factors which make democracies endure. In addition, there is an emergent alternative theoretical approach to democratization which tries to overcome the partial view of traditional theory by analyzing democratization through three key prisms, namely the state, civil society and globalization. Each of these theoretical approaches will now be quickly examined.

(i) **Modernization Theory** – Modernization theory implicitly links democratization with globalization.<sup>50</sup> It links the spread of democracy to modernity and the Enlightenment idea of the universality of progress. Its foremost proponent is Seymour Martin Lipset who draws on a mix of Weberian notions of the ‘modern’ state and the preoccupation of classical sociology with

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<sup>46</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 46.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Polity Press, 1990).

describing transitions – from feudalism to capitalism, from traditional to modern, from ascription to achievement – which occurred in the nineteenth and twentieth century.<sup>51</sup>

Talcott Parsons's work is said to be a modern expression of classical sociology's tendency to classify societies in terms of simple oppositions. He identified modernity as a passage from diffuseness to specificity and from particularism to universalism. In modernization theory, the characteristics he identifies as those of modernity are generally laid down as benchmarks for all developing and non-democratic societies to achieve.<sup>52</sup>

The main critique against modernization theory is that it assumes an overly simple and lineal relationship between capitalism and democracy. As a result, it has been suggested that modernization theory is ahistorical; ethnocentric; overly structural; and methodologically faulty.<sup>53</sup>

It is ahistorical because it presumes all societies can replicate a transition which actually occurred at a particular moment in space and time. It fails to recognise the difficulties of one society copying what occurred in a different society at a different time, nor the changes in the global spread of capitalism.<sup>54</sup> Its ethnocentricity arises because it ignores the particular development processes of the third world and has extrapolated out of the experiences of the Western world a 'rule' for the entire planet.<sup>55</sup> The critique of modernization's structurality arises

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<sup>51</sup> Seymour Lipset, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy' 53 *American Political Science Review* 1.

<sup>52</sup> Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951); see also Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 47.

<sup>53</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 49.

<sup>54</sup> See Andre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil* (Penguin, 1971); Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (University of California Press, 1979); O'Donnell's influential theory of bureaucratic authoritarianism identifies the deepening of capitalism in developing countries with the emergence not of democracies but of dictatorships. He suggests that a numerically small but politically powerful bourgeoisie uses the state to maximize profit through repression. See Guillermo O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics* (University of California Press, 1973).

<sup>55</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 49.

from the argument that the role of structure (that is, capitalism) is exaggerated at the expense of human action.<sup>56</sup> Finally, the methodological critique arises from the sweeping claims made, by the likes of Lipset, that a country with more telephones, more cars, more consumption (in sum, more capitalism) is more democratic.<sup>57</sup>

Adrian Leftwich is said to offer the most forceful contemporary restatement of modernization. He applies it only to developing states and argues that economic development, whether in a democratic political setting or not, will inevitably produce democracy in the long term. As such he recommends that the West supports only those “dedicated and developmental elites which are seriously bent on promoting economic growth, *whether democratic or not.*” Because doing so “will help them to establish or consolidate the real internal conditions for lasting democracy”.<sup>58</sup>

(ii) **Historical Sociology** – In Historical sociology, history is “the instrument by which structures are discovered invisible to the unaided eyes”.<sup>59</sup> This emphasis on structures accounts for why historical sociology is sometimes termed “structuralism” – “historical sociology” and “structuralism” are often used interchangeably in democratization studies.<sup>60</sup> An important aspect of historical sociology is the search to identify different trajectories of state development or paths to modernity through war or revolution etc.<sup>61</sup> Two particular influences account for the emergence of historical/sociological approach to democratization. The first is the reaction to the

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<sup>56</sup> See Hans Peter Schmitz and Katrin Sell, ‘International Factors in Processes of Political Democratization: Towards a Theoretical Integration’ in Jean Grugel (ed.) *Democracy Without Borders: Transnationalization and Conditionality in New Democracies* (Routledge, 1999).

<sup>57</sup> Seymour Lipset, (fn 51 above); see also Larry Diamond, ‘Economic Development and Democracy Reconsidered’ 35 *American Behavioural Scientist* 4/5.

<sup>58</sup> Adrian Leftwich, ‘Two Cheers for Democracy?’ (1996) 67 *Political Quarterly* 334 at 339.

<sup>59</sup> Randall Collins, *Macrohistory: Essays in Sociology of the Long Run* (Stanford University Press, 1999) 1.

<sup>60</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 51.

<sup>61</sup> Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge University Press, 1979); Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States: AD 990 – 1990* (Blackwell, 1990).

excessively society-based accounts of political change implicit in behaviouralism in the 1960s; historical sociology offers instead a state-centered view.<sup>62</sup> The second is the critique of the short-termism and causal simplicity of modernization as an explanation of democratization;<sup>63</sup> historical sociology is a much more diffuse approach to democratization than modernization theory, with a primary interest in explaining, not predicting outcomes.<sup>64</sup>

Structuralists are interested in how the changing relationship between the state<sup>65</sup> and classes shapes the political system. They admit an important role for collective actors and agree that democracies do not come into being overnight; nor does it happen simply because some people (individuals, groups, or classes) will it into existence. Structuralists trace the transformation of the state through class conflict over time, in order to explain how democracy – which they see as state transformation – has sometimes emerged. Structuralism also contains elements of a political economy of democratization as it emphasizes how changes in the economy, such as the expansion of production for the market, lead to social or class conflict, although economic change on its own is not regarded as determining political outcomes. Unlike modernization theory, historical sociology identifies factors that are distinctive to particular cases.<sup>66</sup>

The strength of historical sociology, Grugel argues, is that it is richly grounded and explanatory; and it provides the possibility of comparison across time as well as across countries

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<sup>62</sup> Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back in* (Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>63</sup> Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyn Stephens and John Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (University of Chicago Press, 1992).

<sup>64</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 51.

<sup>65</sup> The state is understood here in the Weberian sense of “a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory.” See Theda Skocpol, ‘Bringing the State Back in: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research’, in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back in* (Cambridge University Press, 1985) 7.

<sup>66</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 52.



or regions.<sup>67</sup> However, there are criticisms of historical and structural approaches. First, it has fallen foul of the rediscovery of individual agency and volition in politics; of the questioning of Marxian class analysis; and of the post-modern suggestion that power is too diffuse a concept to be understood in any static way – and that it is instead located in changing and fluid relationships.<sup>68</sup> Second, structuralism’s emphasis on long-term historical change makes it unable to account for the sudden onset of democratization in societies such as East and Central Europe and the countries of the ex-Soviet Union, where little evidence of class agitation or struggle for democracy existed, except shortly before the collapse of authoritarianism.<sup>69</sup>

Despite these criticisms, structuralism remains relevant in the debate surrounding the consolidation of democracy. For instance, the idea that struggle and confrontation after transition can be symptoms of democratization comes from structuralism. As such, it is an appropriate tool for analyzing post-transition systems. By linking democracy with conflict, structuralism sees confrontation as a normal part of the pattern of emerging democratic order. It also makes an important contribution to explanations of partial or incomplete democratizations.<sup>70</sup> Structuralism is also important to contextualizing and situating the debate about democratization; as it allows for the identification of global structures that condition and shape the environment in which

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid at 55.

<sup>68</sup> This critique of structuralism is therefore both ontological and epistemological: its view of the world is too simple or simply wrong. As Adam Przeworski argues, “in this formulation, the outcome is uniquely determined by conditions, and history goes on without anyone ever doing anything.” See Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 1991) 96.

<sup>69</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 55.

<sup>70</sup> Mark Gasiorowski and Timothy Power, ‘The Structural Determinants of Democratic Consolidation: Evidence from the Third World’ (1998) 31 *Comparative Political Studies* 6.

democratization takes place, pointing to the importance of “underlying economic conditions and social forces” in democratization.<sup>71</sup>

(iii) **Transition Approach** – The transition approach (or “agency approach”, as it is sometimes called) conceives democracy as the creation of conscious, committed actors. On this approach, democracy is not the outcome of waiting for economic conditions to mature or the result of political struggles arising from economic change. The divide between agency-centered scholars, on the one hand and structuralists and modernization theorists, on the other, turns on the roles of actors, structure, culture and class relations in democratization and regime change. The transition school argues that both modernizationists and structuralists see the economy, history and development as over-determining political outcomes.<sup>72</sup>

Structuralists and modernization theorists believe that democracy is an exceptional outcome that cannot be reproduced in countries lacking the required levels of development or where class or social structure is unfavourable to it. By contrast, the attraction of the transition approach is that it questions these pessimistic assumptions. Transitionists argue that democracy can be created independent of the structural context. The optimism of transitology accounts largely for its success, politically and academically. By necessary implication therefore, the transition approach presumes the chances for spreading democracy in the contemporary world order are good. It also hypothesizes successful outcomes for democracy if elites can learn the *right* way to proceed.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Stephen Haggard and Robert Kaufman, ‘The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions’ (1997) 29(3) Comparative Politics 263.

<sup>72</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 56-7.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid; see also Dankwart Rustow, ‘Transition to Democracy: Towards a Dynamic Model’ (1970) 2(3) Comparative Politics 337.

While the transition approach has shed light on the micro-processes of regime breakdown, the opening of transitions and the mechanisms of democratic construction; it has also been criticised for being overly elitists, excessively empirical and voluntaristic. It is said to apply theories constructed out of the experiences of Southern Europe and Latin America to regions which are culturally, politically and economically different, such as East and Central Europe, the territories of the ex-Soviet Union, Africa and China.<sup>74</sup> Karen Remmer, for instance, articulates most clearly the view that transition theory is a “retreat into voluntarism” or “barefoot empiricism”.<sup>75</sup> This view stems from an excessively narrow understanding of democracy, visualized as a set of procedures for government negotiated between political leaders. As such, the transition approach separates democracy from its essential meaning as rule by the people and conceptualizes it principally as the establishment of a set of governing institutions. The elitism of transitionology consigns the people to the role of bystanders in the creation of new regimes; ignoring empirical evidence pointing to the role of popular struggle in some transitions as the determining elements in democratization. It also ignores the importance of civil society in democratization or at best confines it to a purely instrumental role.<sup>76</sup>

Transition studies today is largely responsible for the view that democratization constitutes the most appropriate paradigm through which to analyze the complex process of regime decay and political change in apparently dissimilar countries such as Spain, Portugal, South African, Mozambique, Nigeria, El Salvador, Mexico, Turkey etc since the 1970s. This is because, by divesting democracy of its structural context, the transition perspective suggests that democracy can take root outside Western Europe and the US and that the global upheavals of the

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<sup>74</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 58.

<sup>75</sup> Karen Remmer, ‘New Wine or Old Bottlenecks? The Study of Latin American Democracy’ (1991) 23 *Comparative Politics* 4.

<sup>76</sup> See Gideon Baker, ‘The Taming of the Idea of Civil Society’ (1999) 6(3) *Democratization* 1-29.

1980s and 1990s were, in fact, struggles for democracy. As Przeworski argues, the emergence of democracy does not necessarily signify that all key political actors have become democrats; rather it means that the opposition and the soft-liners in government have persuaded the hard-liners that there is more to gain from cooperating with change than from opposing it. As such, a democratic transition is only a “contingent institutional compromise”.<sup>77</sup> Transitology is therefore responsible for the emphasis, in contemporary studies, on the creation of institutions, the writing of constitutions and the choice of electoral systems.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, transition studies have shaped academic perceptions that the micro-politics of democratization are significant. Studies of transition have emphasized agency, negotiation, compromise and the politics of change. They have also emphasized the importance of distinguishing different stages of democratization – liberalization, transition and consolidation.<sup>79</sup>

(iv) **An Alternative Approach: The State, Civil Society and Globalization** – Grugel argues quite rightly that theory is yet to provide an explanation for why democracy succeeds in some cases and not in others. As such new approaches which “explain what happens after initial transitions as well as during it,”<sup>80</sup> are necessary - this is in keeping with the need for a holistic explanation of democratization. The alternative approach to democratization, proposed by Grugel, makes use of three key concepts: the state; civil society; and globalization or the global order. He argues that this framework can be used for the analysis of the *problématique* of consolidation as well as of transition and has the advantage that it incorporates within it a

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<sup>77</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 62; see also Adam Przeworski, ‘Some Problems in the Study of Transition to Democracy’ in Guillermo O’Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, Laurence Whitehead (eds), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (John Hopkins University Press, 1986) 59.

<sup>78</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 63.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid; see also Guillermo O’Donnell, ‘Transition, Continuities and Paradoxes’, in Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O’Donnell and Julio Valenzuela (eds), *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Indiana University Press, 1992).

<sup>80</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 64.

substantive understanding of democracy. The aim is to shed light not only on the onset of democratization but also to explain the very different trajectories, processes and outcomes that are grouped together under the banner of *democratization*.<sup>81</sup>

The state is the embodiment and essence of political power.<sup>82</sup> The state is central to democratization in a number of crucial ways. First, and above all, democratization means building a democratic state. This requires *institutional change* (the form of the state); *representative change* (who has influence or control over state policies); and *functional transformation* (what the state does or the range of state responsibility). For democratization to occur, the state has to experience a substantive transformation in its operations and its representativeness. Secondly, states are actors and have interests. These interests may include that of impeding or subverting the democratic process (championed by some power hungry elements within the state). Within this context therefore, states can also act as impediments to democratization. Thirdly, state capacity is essential to the success or failure of the democratization process. This is because of the promise implicit in democratization that people will live more secure lives; the judicial system will work impartially; and people will have the opportunity for better standard of living etc. For this to happen, states need to be able to carry out complex functions. Finally, states need generally to enjoy uncontested sovereignty.<sup>83</sup>

With respect to civil society, democracy describes a particular set of relationships between the state and civil society. Rueschmeyer, Stephens and Stephens see democracy as the imposition of reform on a capitalist state. In other words, they argue that democracy occurs when

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid at 65.

<sup>82</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power Volume 2: A Rise of Classes and Nation States, 1760-1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>83</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 66; see also Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (John Hopkins University Press, 1996).

subordinated social groups achieve sufficient access to the state so as to transform it.<sup>84</sup> As a result, the state is no longer, in any straightforward sense, simply an instrument to protect the dominant class. Democracy represents, then, a shift in the power balance within civil society. As a result, any explanation of democratization must pay attention to the role of mass participation and the struggles for rights and citizenship.<sup>85</sup>

For Samuel Huntington, the distinctive feature of the third wave of democratization<sup>86</sup> is that it is global in scope.<sup>87</sup> Grugel argues that democratization emerged as a global trend largely because of international pressure. International factors are also shaping the outcomes of political struggles that taking place as democracy is – or fails to be – consolidated.<sup>88</sup> For Schmitter, “at this time in history, almost without exception, democracy of one type or another is the only legitimate form of political domination.”<sup>89</sup> Grugel argues further that contemporary models of democracy, as well as the fate of democratization experiments, are largely bound up with globalization: the rise in global communication networks, transnational advocacy coalitions and social movements has resulted in the creation of global pro-democracy networks. Because globalization is the expression of a power relationship, it affects states and actors differently. The impact of the global, therefore, varies considerably from democratization to democratization.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyn Stephens and John Stephens (fn 63 above).

<sup>85</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 66.

<sup>86</sup> There is a rich literature on democratization in historical perspective which analyses democratization in terms of particular epochs, beginning from when it first began with the French and American declaration of independence in the eighteenth century. These periods are accounted for in *waves*.

<sup>87</sup> See Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

<sup>88</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 66.

<sup>89</sup> Philippe Schmitter, ‘Transitology: The Science of the Art of Democratization?’ in Joseph Tulchin and Bernice Romero (eds), *The Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America* (Woodrow Wilson Center/Lynne Rienner, 1995) 19.

<sup>90</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 67.

### **3. The Theoretical Frameworks: Finnemore and Sikkink’s “Strategic Social Constructivism” and Upendra Baxi’s “TREMFI Paradigm/Discourse”**

This section of the paper discusses the two main theories framing this research project, namely: Finnemore and Sikkink’s theory of the *norm life cycle* and *strategic social constructivism* as applied to the human rights area in catalyzing human rights change; and Upendra Baxi’s germinal theory of the emergence globally of a *TREMFI paradigm/discourse* which is steadily supplanting the paradigm of the UDH.

#### **[A] Finnemore and Sikkink’s Theory of Norm Life Cycle and Strategic Social Constructivism**

In “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change”,<sup>91</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink offer an explanation of how norms influence behaviour of states and non-state actors in the international realm – not just in terms of how they explain the conformist behaviours of these entities, but more particularly, how they explain changes in behaviour involving the abandoning of previously held norms in favour of new norms. In offering their explanation, they adopt the general definition of a norm as “...standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity...”<sup>92</sup> and flowing from that understanding, they advance two key propositions. The first is hinged on their exposition of a theory of the norm life cycle which makes a number of related sub-claims. The first sub-claim states that norm influence can be understood as a three-stage process. The first stage is “norm emergence”; the second stage involves broad norm acceptance

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<sup>91</sup> See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (fn 1 above).

<sup>92</sup> Ibid at 891.

which they term “norm cascade”<sup>93</sup>; and the third stage involves “internalization”. They argue that “the first two stages are divided by a threshold or ‘tipping point’ at which a critical mass of relevant state actors adopts the norm.”<sup>94</sup>

The second sub-claim is that ‘the characteristic mechanism of the first stage, norm emergence, is persuasion by “norm entrepreneurs”<sup>95</sup> who attempt to convince a critical mass of states (norm leaders) to embrace new norms. The second stage is characterised more by a dynamic imitation as the new norm leaders attempt to socialize other states to become norm followers.’<sup>96</sup> Socialization is the dominant mechanism of a norm cascade – the mechanism through which norm leaders persuade others to adhere.<sup>97</sup> As to the reason why socialization works or the motives that induce states opposed to the norm to adhere and adhere quickly, Finnemore and Sikkink argue that “...states comply with norms in stage 2 for reasons that relate to their identities as members of an international society”.<sup>98</sup> After norm entrepreneurs have persuaded a critical mass of states to become norm leaders and adopt new norms, Finnemore and Sikkink argue that the norm reaches a threshold or tipping point.<sup>99</sup> ‘Up to the tipping point, little normative change occurs without significant domestic movements supporting such change.’<sup>100</sup> After the tipping point has been reached however a different dynamic plays out. More countries

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<sup>93</sup> They are influenced by Cass Sunstein in their coinage of the term “norm cascade”. See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, (fn 1 above) 895.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> According to Finnemore and Sikkink, norm entrepreneurs are the agents whose activities are critical to the emergence of a norm and driving it until its tipping point where it cascades and eventually results in mass adoption by other states. At this point the norm becomes institutionalised without any further effort by norm entrepreneurs.

<sup>96</sup> See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, (fn 1 above) 895.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid at 902.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid at 901.

<sup>100</sup> Such domestic movements are signpost by the activities of NGOs and civil society advocating for the observance of the emerging norm.



begin to adopt the new norms more rapidly even without domestic pressure for such change.’<sup>101</sup> They argue that “...the primary mechanism for promoting norm cascades is an active process of international socialization intended to induce norm breakers to become norm followers.”<sup>102</sup> “At the far end of the norm cascade,” they argue, “norm internalization occurs; norms acquire a taken-for-granted quality and are no longer a matter of broad public debate.”<sup>103</sup>

The third sub-claim says ‘norm entrepreneurs are critical for norm emergence because they call attention to issues or even “create” issues by using language that names, interprets, and dramatizes them.’<sup>104</sup> In doing so, norm entrepreneurs must displace previously existing norms firmly embedded in the system because “new norms never enter a normative vacuum but instead emerge in a highly contested normative space where they must compete with other norms and perceptions of interest.”<sup>105</sup>

The fourth sub-claim says “all norm promoters at the international level need some kind of organizational platform from and through which they promote their norms”<sup>106</sup> and “whatever their platform, norm entrepreneurs and the organizations they inhabit usually need to secure the support of state actors to endorse their norms and make norm socialization a part of their agenda, and different organizational platforms provide different tools for norm entrepreneurs to do this.”<sup>107</sup>

The second proposition advanced by Finnemore and Sikkink is what they call “strategic social construction”. On this proposition, they argue that “transnational norm entrepreneurs...

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<sup>101</sup> See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, (fn 1 above) 902.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid at 895.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid at 897.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid at 899.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid at 900.

are making detailed means-ends calculations to maximize their utilities, but the utilities they want to maximize involve changing the other players' utility function in ways that reflect the normative commitments of the norm entrepreneurs."<sup>108</sup>

**[B] Upendra Baxi's TREMF Paradigm/Discourse**

In *The Future of Human Rights*, Baxi writes about the emergence globally of a TREMF paradigm/discourse. In expositing his TREMF thesis, Baxi develops a number of 'distinguishable but intimately related sub-claims'.<sup>109</sup> The first sub-claim is that the TREMF paradigm (unlike the UDH paradigm) insists on promoting and protecting the collective human rights of various formations of global capital mostly at direct expense of human beings and communities.<sup>110</sup> The distinction here, according to Okafor, "is Baxi's notion of the assignment of *human* (as opposed to ordinary legal) rights to various formations of global capital".<sup>111</sup>

The second sub-claim is that, much more than in the past, the progressive state – or at least the progressive 'Third World' state – is now conceived as one that is a good host state to global capital; as one that protects global capital against political instability and market failure, usually at a significant cost to the most vulnerable among its own citizens; and one that is in reality more accountable to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank than to its own citizens. According to this TREMF mindset, progressive states are those states that are more soft than hard towards global capital.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid at 910.

<sup>109</sup> The description is borrowed from Okafor. See Obiora Okafor, 'Assessing Baxi's Thesis on an Emergent Trade-Related Market-Friendly Human Rights Paradigm: Recent Evidence from Nigeria Labour-led Struggles' 2007 (1) *Law, Social Justice & Global Development Journal* 1-15, 3.

<sup>110</sup> See Upendra Baxi, *The Future of Human Rights* (fn 2 above).

<sup>111</sup> See Obiora Okafor, (fn 109) at 4.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., referring to Upendra Baxi, *The Future of Human Rights* (fn 2 above) 141.

The third Baxian sub-claim is that the new global order also requires the reproduction of a core of internal hardness within these same generally soft states. To paraphrase Baxi, a progressive state is also conceived under the TREMF paradigm as a state that is market efficient in suppressing and de-legitimising the human rights-based practices of resistance of its own citizens and that is also capable of unleashing (and, when necessary, does in fact unleash) a reign of terror on some of its citizens, especially those of them that actively oppose its excessive softness towards global capital.<sup>113</sup>

The fourth sub-claim says that unlike the UDH paradigm, the TREMF paradigm denies a significant redistributive role to the state.<sup>114</sup> Baxi argues in this regard that the UDH paradigm which “assigned human rights responsibilities to states...to construct, progressively and within the community of states, a just social order, national and global, that will at least meet the basic needs of human beings,” is being sidestepped by a TREMF paradigm that ‘denies any significant redistributive role to the state; calls upon the state [and world order] to free as many spaces for capital as possible, initially by pursuing the three-Ds of contemporary globalization: deregulation, denationalization, and disinvestment.’<sup>115</sup>

The above theoretical perspectives (by Finnemore and Sikkink and Baxi, respectively) will inform the analysis in section 5. In section 4 however, a review of the interview data and other evidence from the field research work undertaken in Canada and Nigeria will be carried out.

#### **4. A Review of the Interview Data and Other Evidence from the Field Research Work Undertaken in Canada and Nigeria**

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid

<sup>114</sup> See Upendra Baxi, *The Future of Human Rights* (fn 2 above) 139.

<sup>115</sup> See Obiora Okafor, (fn 109 above) at 4 referring to Upendra Baxi, *The Future of Human Rights* (fn 2 above) 139.

For a period of about 24 months, a joint field research was undertaken in Canada and Nigeria covering five human rights sub-areas (namely: democratization, women's rights, children's rights, economic/social rights and human rights institution-building). In this section, the objective is to review the interview data (from informants) and other evidence (such as documents) derived from the field research work, as it relates to the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in the area of democratization from 1999 to 2011.

In the interview with *informant 1* who is familiar with the work of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) the following was noted about the work of CIDA in Nigeria during the 2011 elections:

We are proud to have been able to contribute to a relatively successful conduct of the election in 2011. We see the capacity of Nigeria to conduct complex elections, although there have been challenges with logistics. We have been through the UNDP multi donor programmes providing support to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). A lot of our support through UNDP also funded some NGOs during election, the demand and supply of the Freedom of Information Act, and Constitutional Review (both old and present). Through the UNDP project about 500 civil society organisations have been supported, some training to political parties has also been provided and support for the increase women participation in election and electoral process.<sup>116</sup>

*Informant 2*, who is conversant with the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in the area of foreign affairs and international trade, makes the following observation:

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<sup>116</sup> See Interview with Informant 1, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2013, Canada (Interview Transcripts on file with author).

...Last April we signed an agreement for a Bi-National Commission (at ministerial level) to enable consultation on political, economic development and security issues. The Canadian parliamentary centre signed an MOU with its counterpart in NASS... in February, to train parliamentarians on governance. All these involve human rights. Since September, we have had trade, foreign affairs and CIDA going to Nigeria, so by my estimation, things are moving very well.<sup>117</sup>

*Informant 3*, who is familiar with the work of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of Nigeria, states that cooperation with Canada has been carried out through the Canadian High Commission and CIDA. According to *informant 3*, INEC obtains foreign funding and help from its development partners... through indirect funding by its (i.e. Canada's) contribution to the United Nations Development Programme on two levels: pool funding (UNDP Joint Donor Basket Fund (JDBF)) and specific funding by the Canadian High Commission.<sup>118</sup> *Informant 3* also said that "the funds from UNDP/JDBF has been used by the Civil Society and Gender desk, which was established in 2006 on gender to promote and monitor gender participation in general elections prior to the 2011 election and again in the 2011 elections."<sup>119</sup> Contributions to this fund come from "international donors like DFID, CIDA and the European Commission."<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> See Interview with Informant 2, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2013, Canada (Interview Transcript on file with author).

<sup>118</sup> See Interview with Informant 3 by telephone interview conducted February 13, 2013, Nigeria (Interview Transcript on file with author).

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

*Informant 4* who is a senior official of a civil society organization involved in human rights work in Nigeria, speaks on the influence Canada has had on Nigeria, and *vice versa*, in the human rights area, noting that

Nigeria has not pushed any human right issue in Canada. Canada has pushed human rights issues regarding governance... [t]he reason is because of the wide score gap or scorecard on human rights compliance between both countries. While Nigeria has a long way to go, Canada has done so well in Human rights.<sup>121</sup>

*Informant 5* who is a retired senior official in the foreign service of Nigeria notes that Canada was part of the international community effort that made a call for democratization in Nigeria, “joining other Western states to put pressure on the military regime at that time.”<sup>122</sup> On the question of the nature of human rights cooperation between Canada and Nigeria, *Informant 5* said:

Canada sees human rights from their own angle alone. They do not see the Nigerian angle to human rights. It is conditioned by their...point of view. I don't see Nigeria and Canada ever agreeing on what human right encompass and what human right does not encompass. And this is because of the differences in the background of our experience against the background of their experience.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> See Interview with Informant 4, 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2014, Nigeria (Interview Transcript on file with author).

<sup>122</sup> See Interview with Informant 5, 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2014, Nigeria (Interview Transcript on file with author).

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

A number of official documents were also obtained during the course of the field research. Some of these documents also shed light on the nature/attainments of the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in the area of democratization.

The first of the documents to be examined here is a fact sheet on Canada-Nigeria relations published on the website of the Government of Canada (*Document 1*).<sup>124</sup> The fact sheet notes that “Canada enjoys strong and increasing bilateral relations with Nigeria, which is one of two strategic partners for Canada in sub-Saharan Africa.”<sup>125</sup> It also details recent high-level visits that have served to strengthen the bilateral partnership between both countries. It notes that bilateral support has been provided by Canada to Nigeria in the area of democratic governance: “Canada provided support to the 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections and also has an ongoing project running until 2015 to support the long-term electoral cycle.”<sup>126</sup> The Fact Sheet also notes that “[i]n September 2010, Canada sponsored technical assistance to Nigeria’s Independent National Electoral Commission. Canada continues to provide support to groups and institutions that work to strengthen democracy, accountability and good governance in Nigeria.”<sup>127</sup>

The second document is the product of a collaborative effort between the United Nations Development Programme and CIDA titled “Project profile: Deepening Democracy and Election Support” (*Document 2*).<sup>128</sup> Its stated aim is to “strengthen electoral reform processes, improve the functioning of key electoral and democratic institutions, and foster active citizenship and

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<sup>124</sup> Canada-Nigeria Relations, Fact Sheet, on file with author.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> See “Project Profile: Deepening Democracy and Election Support” published on the Government of Canada website and also on file with author.

stronger democratic accountability in order to support the long-term electoral cycle in Nigeria.”<sup>129</sup> It identifies its key objectives to be as follows:

(i) organize approximately 17 joint retreats for the 469 legislators and senior members of the executive in order to reduce inter-party and inter-chamber conflicts and to facilitate work on legislative and oversight issues; (ii) fund or give technical support to a minimum of 30 civil society organizations and networks to carry out activities that aim to engage and promote citizen participation in governance, including at local and community levels, covering all 36 states of Nigeria; and (iii) increase the level of women’s engagement in electoral processes through support to women’s groups and organizations focused on inclusion of women’s roles.<sup>130</sup>

Although the project on Deepening Democracy and Election Support has an operational life cycle going beyond the time frame mapped out for investigation in this paper,<sup>131</sup> some of its attainments have occurred in 2011, justifying its consideration. These include:

(i) providing support to train and deploy 10,500 election observers in hotspot areas throughout the country; and (ii) supporting the National Human Rights Commission to train 750 election security police officers,

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> The operational life cycle for the Deepening Democracy and Election Support project is from 28/02/2011 – 31/12/2015, whereas the time frame mapped out for investigation in this article is from 1999 – 2011.



500 Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps, and 150 Military and Road Safety officers during the Presidential Elections in April 2011...<sup>132</sup>

The third document is a report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation that paid a visit to Nigeria, Ghana and Togo between January 16 to 22 2011 under the auspices of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association (*Document 3*).<sup>133</sup> The objective of the visit as stated in the report was:

(i) to strengthen bilateral relations and parliamentary cooperation; (ii) to engage parliamentarians on democracy, governance, economic issues, and the role of the media; (iii) to strengthen relations with regional organizations, most particularly the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); and (iv) to acquaint the delegates with the situation in each country and with Canada's activity in the region, through contacts with parliamentarians, government officials, civil society groups and businesses.<sup>134</sup>

In pursuit of these objectives, the delegation met with Nigerian, Ghanaian and Togolese parliamentarians and government officials, representatives of political parties, Canadian representatives, business representatives, journalists, and members of non-governmental organizations.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> See "Project Profile: Deepening Democracy and Election Support" published on the Government of Canada website and also on file with author.

<sup>133</sup> See "Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting its Bilateral visit to Nigeria, Ghana, and Togo" on file with the author.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

The fourth document is a report from a roundtable on Nigeria held in Ottawa on March 20, 2000 (*Document 4*).<sup>136</sup> The roundtable was organised by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development (CCFD). It brought together experts, academics, NGOs, Nigerians actively involved in the democratic transformation process of Nigeria, as well as government officials. The roundtable examined the current situation in Nigeria, assessed the progress of democratic reforms, examined the role of civil society in the transformation process and explored possible policy options for Canada. Some recommended policy actions for Canada made at the roundtable included: helping with constitutional issues through sharing/imparting on the challenges Canadians have been facing with their own co-existence and thereby encouraging the development of a solid constitutional foundation for Nigeria; strengthening human rights by voicing concerns and alerting the international community of human rights abuses; assisting with judicial and legal reforms; providing assistance in the area of military reforms; providing support to grass-roots initiatives and on-the-ground NGOs; providing help to address the power generation problem of Nigeria; and Canadian private sector could play a role in Nigeria's economic transformation. Socially responsible investment and increased trade links could be particularly beneficial with the creation, by Canada, of a forum for the business community of the two countries to meet.<sup>137</sup>

*Document 5* is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Departments of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria on the establishment of a Bi-National Commission.<sup>138</sup> The Bi-National Commission is focused on four

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<sup>136</sup> See "Report from the Roundtable on Nigeria, 20 March 2000 (Ottawa)" on file with the author.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid at pp, 8 and 9.

<sup>138</sup> "Memorandum of Understanding Between the Departments of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the Establishment of the Bi-National Commission" on file with author.

major themes in the relations between Canada and Nigeria, namely: Political Relations covering human rights promotion, good governance and democratic development both within Nigeria and internationally; Economic Relations covers the reduction of barriers to economic and commercial relations and investments in sectors of mutual interests, maximization of people-to-people ties, negotiation of agreements necessary to promote trade, and promotion of corporate social responsibility and opportunities for international collaboration; Security Cooperation is meant to encourage capacity building to respond to domestic and regional security challenges including terrorism and advance mutual security interests within regional and multilateral fora; and Development Cooperation is meant to explore strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the Goals of the G8 Muskoka Initiative for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health etc.<sup>139</sup>

*Document 6* is a Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA) between Canada and Nigeria. Document 6 describes itself as a “treaty designed to protect and promote Canadian investment abroad through legally binding provisions as well as to promote investment in Canada.”<sup>140</sup>

## **5. Analyzes of the linkage(s) among the literature, interview data, and the framing theories**

In this section, the broad objective is to answer the question whether any linkages exists among the literature on democracy and democratization, the framing theories discussed in section 3 and the interview data examined in section 4.

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> “Canada-Nigeria Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement” on file with author.

When one considers the literature on democracy and democratization; Finnermore and Sikkink's argument about the role of norm entrepreneurs in socializing state and non-state actors to imbibe new norms; and Baxi's TREMF paradigm thesis (which he argues has supplanted the paradigm of the UDH in international relations): if one compares these different discourses with the data-sets gotten from the field research work carried out in Canada and Nigeria (particularly on the issue of the cooperation between both countries in the area of democratization); the evidence strongly suggests that there are linkages among the literature, framing theory, and empirical evidence from the field. Of the nature of these linkages, and what it suggests about the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in democratization, this subsection aims to make that connection.

In the first place, the examination of the literature on democracy carried out in section 2 demonstrates a number of salient points which need to be highlighted. First, the literature indicates that there is, as yet, no settled understanding of the meaning of democracy. Apart from a broad understanding of the concept as a system of government which, in principle, pursues the preferences of the people being governed, there is lack of consensus among scholars on who exactly make up the people; the process by which the wants and preferences of the people can best be made known; how best to secure the interests of the people; and whether everyone's interests can be protected etc. Second, as a result of these disagreements, the literature indicates that scholarship, has over the years, been engaged in an unending search for a coherent statement of what democracy means. Third, empirical democracy, which is a western "capitalist" vision of democracy, emerged in the midst of these contestations, gaining ground over alternative visions offered by socialism and others, to become the only acceptable vision of democracy there is; this outcome was in large part aided by the events occurring during and after the Second World War.

Fourth, the literature indicates that empirical democracy is an inadequate description of democracy and political systems because of a number of inherent shortcomings in its praxis.<sup>141</sup> Finally, the literature indicates that despite the prominence of empirical democracy, its shortcomings have provoked renewed search for another account of democracy and this has given rise to theories such as participatory democracy, feminism, associationalism, citizenship theories and cosmopolitanism. However, these theories, although important in the specific aspects of their focus, do not offer a more complete account of democracy. As such, they only serve as critiques of empirical democracy.

The understanding in the literature that democracy means empirical democracy is very important for the present discourse on democratization<sup>142</sup> and the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in that regard. A number of important points also need to be highlighted about democratization based on the literature. First, the general focus of democratization theories is the identification of factors which lead to the emergence of democracies. Second, the scholarship on democratization is strongly contested by three dominant approaches,<sup>143</sup> and an alternative approach has been offered in recent times.<sup>144</sup> Third, none of the three dominant theoretical approaches about democratization (modernization theory, historical sociology and transition approach) offer a complete account of what democratization entails. However, when considered together, each contributes an important aspect to contemporary understandings about democratization. Fourth, the alternative vision of democratization offered by Grugel (consisting

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<sup>141</sup> Most consequential of which is its unsuitability for analyzing politics in the South as it ignores the gulf between the formal structures of the political system and the culture and practices which shape political activity on the ground.

<sup>142</sup> This is the main focus of this paper. As earlier indicated, the examination of democracy is meant to lay an important foundation for the main discourse on democratization.

<sup>143</sup> These approaches which were discussed above are modernization theory, historical sociology and transition approach.

<sup>144</sup> I have in mind here Grugel's discussion above about the state, civil society and globalization.

of three main elements – the state, civil society and globalization) is a response to the perceived shortcomings of existing theory in taking account of contemporary influences that have significantly impacted on democratization discourse.

Two consequential arguments will now be offered about the interconnection among the literature, framing theories and evidence from the field. The first argument is that the literature provides a strong enough support for our two framing theories. For instance, Finnemore and Sikkink's theory of norm life cycle and agency of the norm entrepreneur resonates strongly with transition theory and its view about democratization as the creation of conscious committed actors. On the other hand, Upendra Baxi's TREMF thesis finds a powerful ally in structuralism, particularly modernization theory which conceives democratization as occurring in the expansion of capitalism and capitalists interests.<sup>145</sup>

The second argument says that both the literature and framing theories are strongly connected with the data from the field research (i.e. the interview responses and the documentary findings discussed above). A little bit of time will be spent substantiating this claim by pointing to the specific aspects of the interview and documentary evidence where connections with the literature and framing theory are present:

(i) The insights provided by *Informants 1 & 3* as well as *Documents 1 & 2* about the extensive financial commitments/contributions made by Canada towards the successful conduct of elections in Nigeria through CIDA and JDBF resonates strongly with the literature and framing theory (particularly Finnemore and Sikkink's norm theory).

The connection with the literature on democracy is in the primacy, given by Canada, to the successful conduct of elections in Nigeria as an important aspect of the practice of

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<sup>145</sup> These are not the only areas of connection between the literature and our framing theory. There are many other areas which space constraints restrict us from going into.

democracy: this is one of the traditions espoused by empirical democracy with its focus on an electoralist or procedural understanding of democracy which concentrates on the observable behaviour of political actors. The connection with literature on democratization is in the work of transition theorists and their focus on the agency of committed actors for the creation of democracy.

The connection with Finnemore and Sikkink's norm theory is in their argument that norm entrepreneurs try to socialize other state and non-state actors to imbibe new norms through the use of organizational platforms – in this case CIDA and JDBF – to persuade non-compliant entities to become compliant with new norms. They also argue that persuasion is one of the effective tools deployed by norm entrepreneurs. In this case, Canada has used, amongst other means, financial persuasion to motivate Nigeria to conduct free and fair elections.

(ii) The account of *Informant 2* and the insights derived from *Documents 5 & 6* connect strongly with Baxi's TREMF thesis as the evidence from *Informant 2* and *Documents 5 & 6* show that the expansion of Canadian trade interest, and the protection of that interest, is an integral part of the democratic cooperation between Canada and Nigeria. This is also a strong link with modernization theory of democratization which sees democratization occurring when there is an expansion of capitalism.

(iii) The account of *Informant 5* confirms a critique of empirical democratic theory that it is unsuitable for analyzing politics in the South because it “ignores the gulf between the formal structures of the political system and the cultures and practices which shape political activity on the ground.”<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Jean Grugel (fn 4 above) 21.

(iv) *Document 3* connects strongly with Finnemore and Sikkink's theory of the operation of norm entrepreneurs as socializing agents of new norms. The account of the activities of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association in strengthening parliamentary cooperation between Canada and Nigeria and engaging parliamentarians on democracy, governance and economic issues is quite telling in this regard.

(v) *Informant 4* and *Document 4* which show the significant role being played by civil society in Nigeria's democratic process as agents of change, in collaboration with Canada through its extensive funding of civil society in Nigeria, resonates strongly with Grugel's theory of an alternative vision of democratization involving the state, civil society and globalization. This theory, as earlier discussed, is an answer to the perceived short comings of traditional theories on democratization.

## **6. The Attainments, Problems and Prospects of Canadian-Nigerian Cooperation in the Area of Democratization**

What have been the attainments, problems and prospects of the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in the area of democratization? This section of the paper will address this question in three subsections.

### **[A] The Attainments**

The evidence in section 4 chronicles the substantial contributions Canada has made to support the electoral process in Nigeria (through the UNDP/JDBF). Much of this funding-support has been deployed to promote credible, transparent and sustainable electoral processes; improve the democratic quality of political engagement; enhance the participation of women, youth and other



marginalised groups and strengthen channels of civic engagement.<sup>147</sup> Although there are still observable shortcomings in outcomes such as lack of genuine engagement by members of the political class with the electorates;<sup>148</sup> complaints of election rigging by politicians; incidence of violence; and the connivance of staff of the electoral commission, it cannot be denied that there appear to be a current trend towards improvement in the conduct of elections in the country.<sup>149</sup>

In the ongoing engagement between Canadian and Nigerian parliamentarians under the auspices of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association, an important forum has been created for potential peer-review by the parliamentarians of both countries. While it is still early days for the documentation of any impact from that cooperation, it is certain that as the parliamentarians of the two countries engage more deeply, it would substantially deepen the democratic culture of Nigerian parliamentarians who will be learning from their Canadian counterparts who have many years of democratic experience to share.

Finally, through the investment in training of Nigerian parliamentarians on governance and the organization of joint retreats for federal legislators and senior members of the executive arm, Canada has been able to make substantial contributions towards promoting bridge-building measures between members of the legislative and executive arms of government. The dividends

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<sup>147</sup> See United Nations Development Programme, 'Nigeria: Democratic Governance for Development (DGD II) Project' online: <<http://web.ng.undp.org/dgd/index.shtml>> accessed 2 May 2014.

<sup>148</sup> In a Sahara TV interview of Clement Nwankwo, a member of a civil society group that monitored the Anambra State governorship election in 2013, one of the issues he identified as a short coming in the electoral process was the absence of genuine engagement by some political parties with the voters in areas such as informing the voters of the party manifestoes and planned programmes of action if their candidate is elected. See Sahara TV Interview of Clement Nwankwo, online: <<http://saharareporters.tv/election-officials-were-not-properly-trained-clement-nwankwo/>> viewed 1 May 2014

<sup>149</sup> In 1999, 2003 and 2007 there was a consistent and steady decline in the standard of the general election in Nigeria with reports of the complicity of officers of the Electoral Commission (at the highest level of authority). However, the 2011 general elections marked a positive departure from this downward trend with the conduct of a general election that was acknowledged by local and international election observers to have been largely free and fair.

of this training will manifest during moments of disagreements between both arms of government when compromise is necessary to avoid overheating the polity. On Nigeria's part, the close cooperation with Canada has enabled the country correct some of the Western notions about democracy in the South which fails to take into account the peculiar circumstances of each state in the consolidation of its democratic system.

## [B] **The Problems**

Perhaps the biggest problem confronting the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in the area of democratization is how to gauge the effectiveness of that cooperation in terms of its yield. How much of the norm socialization in the area of democratization is actually rubbing off on the political class in Nigeria and bringing about the desired deepening of democracy in the country? There are many who will vehemently oppose any claims that changes are taking place in the direction of more democracy in the country.<sup>150</sup> It is clear that this is a question of degree for which there may be no empirical basis for assessment. Some of the most obvious problems confronting the democratic system of Nigeria include:

(i) The culture of election rigging which still appears to be rampant in the country in spite of the significant investments that have been made in training law enforcement agents, providing support to INEC and sensitizing citizens through civil society;<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> This appears to be the most vocal message of opposition parties in the country [such as the All Progressives Congress (APC)]. The thinking of opposition parties such as the APC is that Nigeria's democracy under the ruling People's Democratic Party is severely deficit of the ethos of the democratic system. How much of this condemnation is simply opposition talk remains is a moot point. But clearly there are clear issues that require urgent attention in the deepening of the democratic culture of the country.

<sup>151</sup> A case in point is a recent scandal involving the military in the conduct of the gubernatorial elections in Ekiti State in 2014. A leaked audio tape recording provides concrete proof of the high level official connivance of the military and senior politicians in rigging the election for the ruling party (PDP) and this discovery has raised a lot of problems about the possibility of rigging the 2015 Presidential elections by the ruling People's Democratic Party. See Gbenga Ariyibi and Bashir Adefaka, "Ekiti Election Rigging Tape: Real Reason PDP, Jonathan Pressed for

(ii) Although substantial efforts have been made to increase women participation in the electoral process, only little gains have been recorded so far especially in the election of women into political offices. Notwithstanding this fact, a lot of progress has recorded in other areas such as the appointment of women into political office(s) such as Federal and State Cabinets. For instance, under the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria, a deliberate policy of increased women involvement in government has given rise to the appointment of more women as Federal Ministers than was the case in previous administrations. As a result of this policy, women currently control (or have controlled) the most sensitive Ministries in the country – Finance, Aviation, Petroleum, Foreign Affairs and Education. And at one point in the Judiciary, women were in charge of the top two Courts (the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal) in the country.<sup>152</sup>

(iii) Finally, violence in the electoral process is still a part of the country's political culture and some of the key perpetrators of this violence are to be found in the legislature and executive

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Polls Shift – Falana” *Vanguard* (February 16, 2015) online: <[www.vanguardngr.com/2015/02/ekiti-election-rigging-tape-real-reason-pdp-jonathan-pressed-polls-shift-falana/](http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/02/ekiti-election-rigging-tape-real-reason-pdp-jonathan-pressed-polls-shift-falana/)> viewed 19 February 2015.

<sup>152</sup> Comparing the situation in Nigeria to that of the United States (US) for instance, we can conclude that Nigeria is not performing too badly in the circumstance. For instance, Nigeria currently has a total number of 7 female Senators in the current National Assembly (2011-2015) see ‘Female Senators – 7<sup>th</sup> National Assembly 2011-2015’ online: <<http://www.nigerianwomentrustfund.org/index.php/component/content/article/13-resources/60-female-senators-7th-national-assembly-2011-2015>> accessed 2 May 2014. By contrast the US Senate currently has only 20 female Senators in the current 113<sup>th</sup> Congress; only 44 women have served in the US Senate since its establishment in 1789; and the first time a woman was elected to that body was in 1992 (For further reading see ‘Women in the United States Senate’ online: <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_Senate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_the_United_States_Senate)> accessed 2 May 2014; However, if we compare the situation in Nigeria to that of Rwanda, we get as sense of how badly women in Nigeria are faring politically because Rwanda presents an example of a country that has created constitutional guarantees for women participation in politics and this has given rise to a situation where more than half of the Parliament of Rwanda is made up of women: “Rwanda has the highest representation of female parliamentarians in the world.” See Juliana Kantengwa ‘Why Rwanda Has the Most Female Politicians in the World’ (Published 17 September 2013) online: <<http://www.leftfootforward.org/2013/09/rwanda-has-the-most-female-politicians/>> viewed 1 May 2014

arm of government. These critical issues cast doubt on the effectiveness of the normative construct of Canada's cooperation with Nigeria in the area of democratization.

[C]    **Prospects**

There are many reasons to believe that the current cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in the area of democratization will bring about substantial benefits to both countries if it is sustained.

(i)    One reason that can be advanced is that given the focus of the cooperation on the strengthening of democracy and democratic institutions in Nigeria, this will translate into greater stability in governance resulting in the economic prosperity of Nigeria and thus strengthening Nigeria's position as an economic partner of Canada; at the moment Nigeria is already a major trading partner of Canada on the African continent and a very important market for Canadian goods and services. It is therefore in the economic interest of both countries for Nigeria to be a stable and thriving democracy.

(ii)   Another prospect arising from the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria is the way that cooperation has brought to the front burner gender issues in the democratic system of Nigeria. More than before, women are becoming more politically aware and involved in the political process not just as voters, but also aspirants to political office. If this process is sustained, it is sure to close the current gap in the participation of women in the country's political system.

(iii) While insecurity continues to bedevil the country,<sup>153</sup> citizens are now more conscious of the power of their vote and are less pliable to the shenanigans of dubious politicians. This is in large part the result of the activities of civil society groups in the country engaged in the process of voter education. Canada can partly claim responsibility for this positive outcome by virtue of her contribution to the UNDP/JDBF which is used to support the activities of these civil society groups in the country. The availability of more of such funding in future elections creates hope for the consolidation of Nigeria's democracy through the activities of civil society.

(iv) The current engagement between Canadian parliamentarians with their Nigerian counterparts through the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association is also a positive development arising from the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria. It is expected that as the parliamentarians of both countries continue to engage more deeply, they can learn a lot about the unique situations of both countries and be better positioned to utilise this lesson in a manner that will be beneficial to both countries.

(v) Finally, the coming on board of the Canada/Nigeria Bi-National Commission and other recent initiatives signify a deepening of the ties between Canada and Nigeria. There are clear benefits to be derived from the closer cooperation of both countries, giving rise to great optimism for the future.

## **7. Conclusion**

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<sup>153</sup> The activities of Boko Haram terrorist organization in the North East was offered as the reason for the rescheduling of the Presidential and National Assembly Elections from 14 of February 2015 to 28 March 2015. This was to allow the Military carry out a major offensive against the terrorists, according to official statements. See "INEC Postpones Nigeria's Elections to March 28 and April 11" *Channels Television* (Updated: February 7, 2015) <online: [www.channelstv.com/2015/02/07/inec-postpones-nigerias-elections-to-march-28-and-april-11/](http://www.channelstv.com/2015/02/07/inec-postpones-nigerias-elections-to-march-28-and-april-11/)> viewed 19 February 2015.

This paper which investigates Canadian-Nigerian cooperation in the area of democratization begins by examining the literature on democracy and democratization; Finnemore and Sikkink's theory of norm life cycle and strategic social constructivism as applied to the human rights area in catalyzing human rights change; Baxi's TREMF paradigm/discourse which he argues has steadily supplanted the paradigm of the UDH; and findings from the field research work undertaken in Canada and Nigeria. The paper then examines what has been the nature/character of the cooperation between Canada and Nigeria; how it has proceeded; how it interconnects with the literature and theory framing the research; and what have been the attainments, problems and prospects of that cooperation.

In the final analysis, the paper finds significant implications for the validity of the theoretical claims advanced by Finnemore and Sikkink and Upendra Baxi respectively, namely: that the evidence derived from the field work can serve as an exegesis of the literature on democracy and democratization as well as key aspects of the theoretical claims advanced by Finnemore and Sikkink and Baxi, respectively. As such, the evidence from the field offers real-life exemplification of the understanding in the literature and theory. The paper then identifies the problems currently bedeviling the democratic cooperation between Canada and Nigeria in democratization and the prospects ahead.

