

Democratization and Security in Central and Eastern Europe and the Post-Soviet States

by *David Bosold and Christian Achraier*

Introduction

The night of November 9, 1989 saw the fall of the Berlin wall. The collapse epitomized the beginning of the end of the Soviet Union (SU), which was officially dissolved on December 26, 1991. Moreover, it was the most symbolic manifestation in a series of events that had shook Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) beforehand. Slow but steady reform processes in Hungary and Poland coupled with peaceful mass rallies in East German had been the earliest signals of imminent change. The then fifteen former Soviet republics¹ eventually became independent and the other six members of the Warsaw Pact² were no longer dominated by the USSR. From the perspective of numerous political scientists, the events of 1989 and 1990 were at the peak of the so-called “third wave of democratization.”³ One scholar, Francis Fukuyama, even declared that the breakdown of the former communist regimes represented the “end of history.”⁴ He argued that the Western values of political and economic liberalism had won over competing ideas made by communist rulers of the Warsaw Pact on how to run a society. Most surprisingly, however, one of the largest political—if not the largest—transformation in history did not result in large-scale violence.⁵ Today, twenty years after the velvet revolutions German politi-

1 Besides the Russian SFSR, the Ukrainian SSR, the Belarusian SSR and the Moldovan SSR these included the Baltic area of the former Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian SSR, Central Asia with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as well as the Southern Caucasus with the Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian SSR.

2 Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Poland and Romania. Albania ceased to be a member of the Warsaw Pact on September 13, 1968.

3 According to Samuel P. Huntington the “third wave of democratization” started with Portugal’s Carnation Revolution in 1974. Since then at first several European states became democracies, followed by countries in Latin America (mainly in the beginning of the 1980s) and Southeast Asia (mainly in the mid-1980s). The wave did however not reach its peak until the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the SU. The former two waves occurred from 1828–1926 and 1943–1962, each followed by reversals. Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave—Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, OK, 1991.

4 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York, NY, 1992.

5 This assessment does not seek to belittle the outbreak of violence in those areas that are today mainly referred to as frozen conflicts, be it Moldova (Transnistria), Azerbaijan and Armenia

cians celebrate that the country which used to be divided along the front line of the Cold War has become the center of a unified Europe that is “surrounded by friends.” With most of its neighboring countries now being member states of NATO and the EU, Germany has profited immensely from the geopolitical restructuring after 1990, be it in terms of new markets for its products or regarding the benefits of political integration of the continent. This fortunate historical coincidence—friendly relations with its democratic neighbors and a significant improvement of its national security—has thus far not materialized with regard to all post-Soviet and CEE states. Sporadic outbreaks of armed conflict, failed democratization efforts and diverging threat perceptions are also ingredients of the political landscape two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Generally speaking, the transformations of the former communist states since 1990 are hardly comparable to the regime changes in the first and second wave of democratization which took place in the late 19th and early 20th century and shortly after World War II. Yet, they also differ fundamentally from other transitions of the third wave in Southern Europe (from 1974 onwards), Latin-America (from 1983 onwards) and South Asia (from 1983 onwards). Therefore, some authors rather refer to the demise of the Soviet Union and its former allies as the “fourth wave” of democratization.⁶ Claus Offe and Jon Elster have argued that the uniqueness of democratization in the former Eastern bloc has been the “problem” or “dilemma of simultaneity.”⁷ This problem persists since at least two and sometimes even three transformation processes had to proceed simultaneously (and are still ongoing in some of the countries): the political transformation (from dictatorship to democracy), the economic transformation (from command to market economy) and in some cases also the transformation of the state and its underlying construction of national narratives and identities (from Soviet nationality to a new nationality). At times, in Western Europe these transformation processes took centuries and proceeded slowly and evolutionary. In the post-Soviet sphere, however, democratization has been considered more of a political project whose full-fledged realization might be attained within a

(Nagorno-Karabakh) or Georgia (South Ossetia and Abkhazia) or parts of the Balkans. The sheer magnitude of political, economic and societal change and the fact that widespread interstate war did not occur does, to our understanding, justify the above characterization.

6 Michael McFaul, The fourth wave of democracy and dictatorship: Noncooperative transitions in the postcommunist world, in: *World Politics* 2/2002, pp. 212–244.

7 Claus Offe, Das Dilemma der Gleichzeitigkeit. Demokratisierung und Marktwirtschaft in Osteuropa, in: *Merkur* 4/1991, pp. 279–292; Jon Elster, The necessity and impossibility of simultaneous economic and political reform, in: Piotr Polszajski (ed.), *Philosophy of social choice*, Warsaw 1990, pp. 309–316.

decade. This was of course widely off the mark. Still, the variety in terms of time and scope of reforms in the post-communist states has been remarkable. The chapters in this volume illustrate these divergences as well as the different developmental logics of the three areas of transformation.

In addition to the aforementioned three spheres the security situation in the region will also be addressed in this volume. We start from the observation that democracy has not borne fruit everywhere in the region, and that transition has not been smooth and linear, but has often been hampered by setbacks. Moreover, the revolutions have not improved, but often aggravated the security situation in the post-communist states. In order to provide a conceptual overview and rudimentary analytic grid for the ensuing case studies we will at first conceptualize our understanding of democracy before we address the possible linkages between democracy, democratization and security. Our aim is to highlight some of the blind spots of large-N analyses in the field of democratic transition literature. Instead of finding similarities by synthesizing them into a refined typology of factors associated with democratization, the chapters in this volume will address country-specific factors of democratic transition by highlighting different national trajectories and experiences in the respective democratization process.

Democratic Transition in the post-Soviet space

Today, the formerly Soviet-dominated area is comprised of 29 states.⁸ According to Wolfgang Merkel only eight out of the 29 states can be considered consolidated liberal democracies today, namely the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Croatia and Slovakia.⁹ Others, such as Belarus, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, are classified as authoritarian. According to Merkel's criteria, the remaining 16 states are neither fully authoritarian nor full-fledged democratic regimes, but have to be ranged somewhere in between the two ideal-types. Such a phenomenon is not unusual, though, and can also be observed in other parts of the

8 Despite the ruling of the ICJ on Kosovo's declaration of independence the status of Kosovo remains contested. Without an independent Kosovo the area comprises 28 states.

9 Wolfgang Merkel, *Systemtransformation. Eine Einführung in die Theorie und Empirie der Transformationsforschung*, 2nd and revised ed., Wiesbaden 2010, p. 324. The Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) also classifies Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria as democratic, cf. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *Transformation Index 2010*, Gütersloh 2009, p. 7, <http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/fileadmin/pdf/Anlagen_BTI_2010/BTI_2010__Brochure_E_web.pdf> (15 June 2010).

world. Against this background, Aurel Croissant and Peter Thiery have described the third wave of democratization as the victory of restrictive and defective but not as the triumph of liberal democracies.¹⁰

Defective Democracies

The emergence of such deviant forms of democracy has sparked the search for analytical approaches which are able to categorize regimes in transition. For specifying the different subtypes of non-consolidated democracies academics have come up with numerous adjectives in order to classify the degree and nature of democracy. These concepts of “democracy with adjectives”¹¹ comprise a wide range of terms ranging from “illiberal democracy”¹² to “exclusionary democracy”¹³ and “delegative democracy.”¹⁴

One attempt to grasp the increasingly widening and blurred area between democracy and autocracy has been put forward by Wolfgang Merkel.¹⁵ Instead of sticking to the widely used one-dimensional concept of democracy based on everything but the vertical dimension, he identifies five dimensions of an ideal-type liberal, embedded democracy:¹⁶

10 Aurel Croissant/Peter Thiery, Defekte Demokratie – Konzept, Operationalisierung und Messung, in: Hans-Joachim Lauth/Gert Pickel/Christian Wetzel (eds.), *Demokratiemessung – Konzepte und Befunde im internationalen Vergleich*, Wiesbaden 2000, p. 89.

11 David Collier/Steven Levitsky, Democracy with adjectives. Conceptual innovation in comparative research, in: *World Politics* 3/1997, pp. 430–451.

12 Fareed Zakaria, *The future of freedom—Illiberal democracies at home and abroad*, New York, NY, 2003.

13 Karen L. Remmer, Exclusionary democracy, in: *Studies in Comparative International Development* 4/1985, pp. 64–85.

14 Guillermo O’Donnell, Delegative democracy, in: *Journal of Democracy* 4/1994, pp. 112–126.

15 Cf. Wolfgang Merkel, *Defective Democracies* (ESTUDIOS Working Paper 132), Madrid 1999; Wolfgang Merkel/Andreas Busch (eds.), *Demokratie in Ost und West*, Frankfurt am Main 1999; Wolfgang Merkel/Hans-Jürgen Puhle/Aurel Croissant/Claudia Eicher und Peter Thiery, *Defekte Demokratien – Band I: Theorie und Probleme*, Opladen 2003; Wolfgang Merkel, *Systemtransformation. Eine Einführung in die Theorie und Empirie der Transformationsforschung*, 2nd and revised ed., Wiesbaden 2010.

16 Wolfgang Merkel, Embedded and Defective Democracies, in: *Democratization* 5/2004, pp. 33–58, here 38–41.

- An *electoral regime* (A) that is competitive and transparent and allows for the unrestricted access of prospective candidates into public power positions. Elections have to be equal, general, regular, free and fair;
- *Political rights* (B) enabling elections and the pursuit of collective interests by granting citizens the right to freedom of speech and opinion as well as the right to association and demonstration;
- *Civil rights* (C) as a cornerstone of the rule of law which contain and limit the exercise of power by the state, be it through independent courts or rights of freedoms against the state;
- *Division of Powers and Horizontal Accountability* (D) which manifests itself in the autonomy and not necessarily full separation of the three branches of power, i. e. the state's executive, legislative and judiciary bodies;
- *The Effective Power to Govern* (E), that is the ability of representatives to govern without restrictions. This refers to so-called “reserved policy domains” that are influenced by unelected groups such as the military.

The merits of such an approach are to be seen in the possibility to not only “distinguish between [...] the autocratic and democratic, but also the defective and the liberal-constitutional democracies.”¹⁷

A typology of defective democracies

For most scholars, the key distinguishing feature between democracy and autocracy is the electoral regime. The existence of such a regime within a state is hence a necessary precondition for any democracy.¹⁸ Yet, only in case all five regimes are properly established and operate in the absence of obvious flaws one can refer to a state as a liberal democracy. If one or more of these regimes are dysfunctional one talks of a defective democracy. Depending on the specific regime which is not functioning properly, defective democracies can be classified as either exclusive, domain, delegative or illiberal democracies. Against the background of empirical evidence, mainly hybrid forms of these subsets of defective democracies can be observed. For the sake of analytical clarity, a more in-depth categorization is however beneficial and allows for a first categorization of the countries studied in this volume.

¹⁷ Cf. Merkel, *Defective Democracies* (Fn. 15), p. 5.

¹⁸ The clear-cut distinction between autocracy and democracy is the main weakness of Merkel's concept. The author does not specify under which conditions electoral regimes can be regarded as functioning. Hence, a clear-cut differentiation between autocracy and democracy can hardly be made.

Exclusive democracies are states in which dysfunctions of partial regimes A and/or B can be observed.¹⁹ This does apply, for instance, if parts of the population are excluded from the election or the freedom of expression or freedom of press are violated. A defect of partial regime C is considered a feature of an illiberal democracy and points to a democratically elected government that is not upholding its respect for fundamental civil and human rights. In case of a violation of partial regime D, the horizontal control of power is not fully established and the power of the executive branch is not kept in check by the legislative branch and the judiciary. Merkel refers to such regimes as delegative democracies. Eventually, a domain democracy represents a political system that lacks an effective partial regime E, i. e. a system that prevents a factual takeover of decision-making power by unelected groups or individuals. An overview of the categorization is provided in table 1. In addition, the countries analyzed in this volume are categorized along the lines of Merkel’s concept.

Table 1: Merkel’s concept of “defective democracies.”

Type of Democracy	Defective partial regime	Mainly affected dimension	Countries featured in this volume
Liberal Democracy	None	None	Czech Republic Poland Estonia
Exclusive Democracy	A (electoral regime) or B (political rights)	Vertical	
Illiberal democracy	C (civil rights)	Horizontal	Bosnia-Herzegovina Kosovo
Delegative Democracy	D (checks and balances)	Horizontal	
Domain Democracy	E (effective power to govern)	Transversal	Georgia Ukraine
Autocracy	A and/or regimes B-E	Vertical	Belarus Uzbekistan Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Azerbaijan Armenia

Source: Own illustration; cf. Merkel 1999, 2010, Merkel/Busch 1999 and Merkel et al. 2003.

19 The partial regime A—the electoral regime—must not be affected too much since a state can otherwise no longer be considered at least partly democratic in nature. A full defect of regime A is hence characteristic of autocracies.

A normative ranking of defective democracies?

In full-fledged liberal democracies the five regimes mentioned above are all mutually supportive and keep the whole system in balance. Proponents of the defective democracy approach argue that a defect in one regime may have spillover effects by affecting other regimes, too. Yet, most defective democracies of the third wave have displayed considerable resilience and should therefore not be classified as being in transition.²⁰ Their defects are usually deeply entrenched. Still, notwithstanding the widespread stasis in defective democratic systems some countries in the post-Soviet space such as Georgia and Ukraine have experienced improvements in the nature of their democratic system over the last decade.

In order to understand these changes scholars like Møller and Skaaning²¹ have criticized concepts such as Merkel's defective democracy typology for not qualitatively ranking the defects in terms of their negative impact on the democratic nature of a state. According to them it is useful to additionally distinguish between thin and thick types of democracy, thick meaning implementation of all five of Merkel's regimes with regime A taking precedence over the other four.²² They agree that all post-communist countries can—and should be—analyzed according to their deficits regarding electoral rights (Merkel's regime A), civil liberties (regime B and C) and rule of law (regime D and E). But unlike Merkel, who does not rank the different types of defective democracies on a normative basis, they consider any defect in regime D and E as being normatively less problematic than a defect in regime B and C which, then, is considered less significant than a defect in regime A.

The space here is not sufficient to discuss this ranking in full detail. Suffice to say that such a ranking has problems in making sense of the cases of Georgia and Kyrgyzstan and, based on our assessment, Ukraine and Bosnia.²³ According to Møller and Skaaning this theoretical weakness is negligible given their assessment that only two out of 28 countries cannot be satisfactorily classified. It is interesting to note however that the case of Georgia and Kyrgyzstan—as well as to our understanding Ukraine and Bosnia—fail to fit into Møller's and Skaaning's analytical grid since the authors find a considerable degree of political and civil liberties (exemplified by a

20 Cf. Wolfgang Merkel, *Embedded and Defective Democracies* (Fn. 16), pp. 48–49.

21 Jørgen Møller/Svend-Erik Skaaning, *Post-communist regime types: Hierarchies across attributes and space*, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 1/2010, pp. 51–71.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 61.

strong and active civil society) and a set of political institutions and legal regulations that is comparatively much weaker. Based on the findings of the authors in this volume we suppose that these distortions are due to external democratization programs and funding. The chapters of Khelashvili, Bokonbaeva or Wolters demonstrate that both external democracy promotion and numerous democracy experts have tended to overestimate the importance of civil society and the sustainability of democratic reform programs. Once funding for these groups ceases, the political influence of civil society groups vanishes and the weak nature of the state's key democratic institutions becomes apparent.

External embeddedness

Given this observation, it therefore seems more apt to return to Merkel's concept of embeddedness. Not only do the five partial regimes in their entirety allow for the successful transition towards a liberal democracy. They are also dependent on their mutual embeddedness which do in sum stabilize a liberal regime. This is what Merkel refers to as internal embeddedness.²⁴ In addition, external factors influence the nature and degree of stability of a given democracy. Among the most important factors of such an external embeddedness are the socio-economic dimension, civil society and the degree of regional integration which are, in their entirety closely related.²⁵

That the membership in NATO and the EU has had a tremendous impact on the democratic consolidation of the CEE states who joined the Alliance in 1999, 2004 and 2009 and the European Union in 2004 and 2007 (or are close to joining) is barely disputable. The new EU members rapidly had to adjust their institutional democratic hardware to common standards set out in the *acquis communautaire*, while politicians, civil servants and civil society actors were undergoing a process of social learning and adoption of democratic norms. Especially the example of the first CEE countries to join both, NATO and the EU demonstrate that the additional external embeddedness of their respective democratic system make a democratic roll-back significantly more difficult and costly. The latest developments in Hungary over citizenship status and freedom of press make this all the more pertinent. It is therefore not surprising that the prospect for membership in either NATO or the EU can be a significant factor in order to speed-up and entrench democratic reforms. As the chapters on Ukraine and the countries in the Balkans and the South Caucasus demonstrate this can, however, also complicate matters and delay reforms. The attempts of the EU

24 Cf. Wolfgang Merkel, *Embedded and Defective Democracies* (Fn. 16), p. 43.

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 44–48.

to push for democratic reform in those countries without offering a clear membership perspective is therefore laudable, but simultaneously seem to try to square the circle. Tightly connected to regional integration is the socio-economic dimension of external embeddedness. Breaking with the old system of a planned economy, all post-Soviet and CEE states have since undergone significant economic reforms. The extent to which the economy has been liberalized and to which an integration into the European market has been achieved is closely related to the degree of democratic transition. The external embeddedness of the new democracies in the political arena has in fact been paralleled by a shift in the overall economic situation. Trade patterns reveal that the former trade with Russia and other former Soviet republics has now moved westwards. Economic interdependence with the EU-15 members has steadily increased as have, most often, the trade relations with other parts of the world, particularly Asia and North America. As a rule of thumb, one can characterize the overall situation in Central and Eastern Europe by stressing that the degree of democratic consolidation coincides with the degree of market openness. An important caveat is however in order when one investigates the situation in the post-Soviet space, particularly in Central Asia. Here we find a disentanglement of economic and political liberalization which, again, demonstrates that it is useful to complement large-N studies of the third wave of democratization with case studies in order to contribute to a deeper understanding of the domestic developments in the respective countries.

Content of this Volume

The volume is divided into three parts which focus on three regions of the post-Soviet sphere, namely Central and Eastern Europe (1), the Balkans and South Caucasus (2) and Central Asia (3).

In the first chapter of this volume *Lukas Kello* highlights the three key aspects of Estonia's democratic transition by pointing out the importance of identity narratives which relate the country's history to Europe and, even more so, to its Nordic neighbors. This has most significantly been reflected in the country's economic transition which has seen particularly strong links to Sweden and Finland. As regards the security posture, Estonia is now not only a member of NATO, but has also carved out a small but innovative niche by being a leader in cyber security.

Nik Hynek and *Vít Stritecký* examine the Third Site of the US Ballistic Missile Defense and its development in 2007 and 2008. Those years saw controversial bilateral

negotiations between the US government on the one side and Poland and the Czech Republic on the other. Challenging the widely-held view that Poland and the Czech Republic were both members of the “New Europe” basing their foreign policy on a similar logic, the two authors identify significant differences regarding the political behavior and expectations. Whereas Poland preferred a strictly bilateral relationship with the U.S., the Czech Republic was more interested in the multilateral transatlantic relationship of the NATO-framework. Shedding more light on the relations between the two countries, the authors are able to prove that the differences in their posture are stronger than often claimed. Hence, a division between the New Europe—including Czech Republic and Poland—and the old Europe—including France and Germany, for instance—is not very productive since the so called “New Europe” is not a homogenous actor. Besides, Hynek and Stritecky highlight that none of the actors analyzed—Russia, the USA and Czech Republic (Poland is an exception here)—officially referred to geopolitical considerations in the official discourse even though all actors were clearly motivated by such reasoning in their decision-making.

Squeezed in between the EU and Russia and constantly being pushed and pulled towards either side, Belarus is today Europe’s political and economic odd man out. As *Hanna Vasilevich* demonstrates, the country’s infamous record as the last autocracy in Europe is strongly related to its past as the Soviet Union’s most prosperous Socialist Republic as well as the officially promoted identity politics which has severed most of the links to its pre-Communist past. Not denying the autocratic nature of Lukašenka’s regime, Vasilevich highlights the difficulties of the opposition to act jointly. According to her, the failure of the opposition to push for reform should not be seen solely in the regime’s repressive nature, but also in the lack of a collective narrative that can be used to galvanize the opposition movement.

Characterized by a similar geopolitical situation as a central energy corridor and largest country between Russia and its CEE neighbors, Ukraine’s political track record since 1990 has however been significantly different. *Svitlana A. Kobzar’s* main thesis is that democracy promotion by the EU had an important impact on the democratization of the country, but cannot be considered as the sole explanation for this transition. She differentiates between active and passive leverages that have characterized the relations between the European Union and Ukraine. Active democracy promotion in this respect means that the EU becomes active by stick and / or carrot strategies. A passive leverage on the contrary refers to the fact that a country like the Ukraine might democratize since it wants to join the EU and without any active efforts from the EU. Kobzar finds that the EU’s power of attraction—passive lever-

age—was one of the most powerful tools for democratization in Ukraine. Hence, the EU mainly influenced Ukraine indirectly. Other factors, such as the role of other external actors like Russia have been even less important.

Echoing these findings, *Vsevolod Samokhvalov* explores the Russian foreign policy towards democratization in the European periphery in the last ten years and comes to the conclusion that the Kremlin's position on democratization has often been mischaracterized in the West. His study of the Serbian, Georgian and Ukrainian cases are strongly related to the democratic peace theory and theories of Russia's identity. His main argument is that Russia is mainly interested in re-asserting its Great Power status and that NATO and EU enlargement have been undermining this goal. The key factor which is crucial for Russia's attitude towards democratization in a country is the countries will for rapprochement to the Euro-Atlantic security community. Hence, Russia adopted a more aggressive policy towards Georgia and Ukraine since Tbilisi and Kiev were interested in joining NATO. Russia tried to create insecurities—energy leverage and trade wars—to show that democratization and Westernization cannot provide security, while cooperation with Russia may result in numerous benefits.

Democratization and Security in the Balkans and the South Caucasus

Pascal Fendrich scrutinizes the current situation in Kosovo and pinpoints the reasons for the shaky political situation in the country by relating it to mixed signals of the EU's member states regarding the recognition of its independence and the contradictory political motivations that are embodied in the EULEX mission and the role of the EU's special representative. The status neutral nature of UNMIKS's mandate which has implicitly been transferred to the EULEX mission cannot be reconciled with the EU's task to support the transition of Kosovo towards a viable and independent new state. The political way forward for Kosovo is therefore even more hampered than that of Bosnia, which serves as a model for a number of problems the EU might encounter in its future relations with the three republics of the South Caucasus.

Against this background, *Dominik Tolksdorf* discusses the EU's involvement in the Western Balkans. He identifies two key challenges—unsettled status issues and divided societies—and works out lessons for the EU in its democratization programs in the South Caucasus. The chapter also highlights the controversies regarding Kosovo's independence and sheds light on the EU's instruments and strategies in

the Western Balkans in general and Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular. Regarding the Southern Caucasus, Tolksdorf argues that the EU can learn from its experience with unsettled status issues in the Balkans since the situation will be similar there. According to the author, the EU policy in the Western Balkans has lacked consistent strategies and a united position. Thus, the EU did not have too much influence in the region and should act differently in the South Caucasus.

George Khelashvili explores the democracy promotion in Georgia from 2005 to 2010. His overall question is why democracy promotion failed to make a continuous positive impact on Georgia. His argument is that the rhetoric of democracy promotion—from within and outside Georgia—was mainly an ideological tool and not a means for furthering better governance. This mainly served the domestic interests of Georgia as well as that of the involved great powers Russia and USA. At the same time it caused stagnation and even backtracking of democratization and eventually endangered the regional security situation by culminating in the brief Georgian-Russian war of 2008.

That the volatility of the region has been considered as problematic in Brussels, is explored in chapter 10. *Raquel Freire and Lúcia Simão* analyze the role of the ENP for the democratization of the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) and the limitations of the ENP regarding its implementation. The authors argue that the EU regards democracy promotion as a fundamental aspect of security promotion in its neighborhood. Thereby, the EU follows a normative and value-based conceptualization of security. This view implies important setbacks regarding the implementation of democracy assistance policies. Two main problems are identified by Freire and Simão: Firstly, the balance between bilateral and regional approaches is hard to sustain—the EU remains a driver for reforms in Georgia while single member states turn away. Secondly, the need to respond to short-term security needs is sometimes at odds with the long-term democratization efforts. Instead of muddling through, European strategies will therefore have to reconcile short and long-term interests while balancing the objectives of the EU's bilateral programs with these countries with those of the ENP in general.

Democratization and Security in Central Asia

Assel Rustemova develops a theoretical framework for authoritarian states that rhetorically instrumentalize democracy as a pretext to remain in power. She poses the questions why authoritarian leaders with strong political power use democracy in

an ideological fashion in order to convince people that they are moving their countries towards democracy and market economy. Rustemova states that authoritarian regimes refer to democracy in two ways: Firstly, as a goal and an aspiration in the future (often in a blend with nationalist sentiments) and secondly, as a phenomenon that requires initial preconditions. Those preconditions can (temporarily) be mended by authoritarian regimes which secures economic wealth in the short run. Rustemova argues that referring to democracy as a goal helps an authoritarian government to stay in power since the opposition stays weak in this manner and is unable to mobilize the population. Moreover, her case studies of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan reveal that the authoritarian regimes there are also relying on a number of liberal aspects, especially in the economic sector. That means the regimes are able to stay in power, because they can secure economic wealth in exchange for political support. Accordingly, economic development is the sole legitimization for these governments.

In her article *Zhanyl Bokonbaeva* analyzes the failures of US democracy promotion in the Kyrgyz Republic. She states that American efforts played a crucial role for the democratization process, but lacked efficiency in the last years. Hence, Bokonbaeva poses the question if and how the democratization process could have been more effective. She argues that American democracy promotion only produced short-lived and limited impact because of too many shortcomings. No solid ground conditions for a sustainable democracy could be created. According to Bokonbaeva this is mainly due to the fact that the applied top-down approach was not successful and bottom-up efforts de-valued democracy. In addition, she finds that the focus on civil society groups and NGOs at the expense of political institution building led to a failure to anchor democratic values and procedures within the state apparatus.

The chapter by *Alexander Wolters* also addresses the effectiveness of democracy promotion in Central Asia. The author highlights that the question in the academic literature is mainly discussed by asking whether the bottom-up or top-down approach is more successful. His argument is that not the type of approach is the most decisive factor. Rather, the organizational and operational structures underlying the development aid provision are crucial. Hence, democracy promotion in Central Asia and particularly in the Kyrgyz Republic permanently fails not only, because the wrong approach is employed. Instead, based on core assumptions of development anthropology, Wolters identifies a just and equal representation of cultural heterogeneity as a key factor for successful democratization assistance. He suggests being more active in the public space for more efficiency in the democratization efforts in Central Asia.

