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Politics of Protest in Supervised Statehood: Co-Shared Governance and Erosion of Citizenship[1]

The Case-study of the Movement Vetevendosje! in Kosovo

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Abstract: Kosovo's case presents a mixture of post-totalitarian politics with a post-war reality. Its deeply-divided society is struggling to solve the ethnic conflict while dealing with state-building and democratization. Within this context, the existence of a dual governing authority (local and international) has created a unique political and social context of supervised statehood with contested external sources of power. In an attempt to shed light on Kosovo's contentious politics, in this article I examine the case-study of the social movement - "Levizja Vetevendosje! (i.e. the Movement for Self-determination) while arguing that the establishment of co-shared governance between the local and international political institutions has led to the estrangement of the domestic society from the daily political arena due to the reciprocal dependency of both sides on each-other, resulting in the erosion of citizenship in Kosovo.
Key words: supervised statehood, collective action, politics of protest, framing citizenship, Kosovo

Introduction

Kosovo's case presents a mixture of post-totalitarian politics with a post-war reality. Its deeply-divided society is struggling to solve the ethnic conflict while dealing with state-building and democratization. Within this context, the existence of a dual authority - local and international[3] - has created a unique political and social context of supervised statehood with contested external sources of power and competing governing institutions. These circumstances challenge the

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[3] UNMIK & PISG (Provisional Institutions for Self-Government) have co-existed until the declaration of independence by the Kosovar Albanians on Feb. 2008, to be replaced afterwards by another domestic-international couple: EULEX and ICO vs. the governmental institutions of Kosovo.

relationships between civil society, the state and democratization (Keane, 1988; Carothers, 2002), calling thus for a rethinking of social experiences and the ways they are shaped by new configurations (Forbrig and Pavol, 2007; Bunce and Wolchik, 2008).

In this article I explore the case-study of the social movement - "Levizja Vetevendosje (the Movement for Self-determination, to be referred to as LV from now on), in order to better understand the organization and strategy of collective action in Kosovo's intricate political and social setting. Hence, I center on the ways in which organization's activists interpret their collective reality and the ways in which the socio-political context shapes both collective action and the interpretation of reality, based on: documented materials, interviews held with the members of LV in September-October 2010[4] and various activists of different social organizations, LV's website, its official publications and various reports. Thus, in this contribution I study the ways in which the socio-political context and the opportunities in Kosovo today construct the strategies of the LV movement and the ways in which LV's activists interpret and legitimize the organization's actions and strategies. To do that, I combine two theoretical approaches: the political opportunity structure theory and the collective action frameworks approach.

In this article, I claim that the establishment of co-shared governance between the local and the international political institutions has led to the estrangement of the domestic society from the daily political arena, due to the reciprocal dependency of both sides on each-other, resulting in the erosion of citizenship in Kosovo. The analyses of this work seek to reveal the complexity of collective action in Kosovo, which interweaves collective narratives, national interests along with regional and global politics. The interweaving of narratives, interests and socio-political contexts shape the collective action of LV movement, and uncovers the alternative paths adopted by social activists in Kosovo in their struggle for sovereignty and democracy. It is concluded that through their struggle, the LV's members shape new communities and new social spaces of resistance and protest.

Conceptualizing and Theorizing Social Movements

[4] Since my M.A. thesis dealt with women collective action in post-war Kosovo, I have been visiting the region and conducting meetings frequently since 2004. In the framework of my doctoral thesis that explores the praxis and discourses of contention in supervised Kosovo, I have conducted my first field research in Sept.-Oct. 2010, while the second takes place in June-Oct. 2011.

In my understanding social movements are purposive collective actions of informal networks which are: based on shared beliefs and solidarity, mobilized around conflictual issues, frequently involved in protest and oriented towards identities, values and institutions' transformation. Sociological inquiry into social movements began with the traditional approaches of Collective Behavior, moved on to Resource Mobilization theories, and later on to those of New Social Movements. The last's approach claimed that as a result of structural changes societies go through new experiences of deprivation emerged, in addition to those based on class struggle. The power of the new movements is based on new modern identities focused on race, gender, age etc. Thus, the establishment of collective identity is the essential objective of the movements, as it serves to foster a sense of belonging for the movement's members and at the same time it serves as the source of legitimation for their action (Melucci, 1989; 1996). Manuel Castells reinforces that by maintaining that: "identity is people's source of meaning and experience" (Castells, 2004, 6).

1) Movements and the Structure of Political Opportunities

Besides identity, another dimension central to these theories is the analysis of the context within which collective action is shaped. Gamson classifies those who become early claimants in a new political sphere as "members", and those who act from the outside "challengers" (Gamson, 1975). The political action of "members" aims to repress every mobilization and organization of the marginal groups, so as to prevent them from threatening the status and interests of the "members" (Tilly, 1978). Therefore, every event or process that contests the existing political structure creates an opportunity for political change (McAdam, 1983). In other words, the concept of the Political Opportunities' Structure (POS) refers to the set of constraints and opportunities present in the socio-political environment. This set has the ability to suppress or to encourage social action, thus impacting its structure and its strategy (Tarrow 1998)

Scholars have mapped out three main dimensions to the POS's approach. The first is the openness/ closeness of the political institutions on the movements (della Porta and Diani, 1999), while the second deals with the absence/presence of the coalition partners that can help the movement become more influential in the political decision-making process (della Porta, 1999). The third dimension focuses on the state's repressive capacity by claiming that the most central factors in the structure of the opportunities relate to state's power and control as well as to the amount of repression the state can allow itself to use (Tarrow, 1998; Crossley, 2002).

Despite the usefulness of the POS model, it applies mainly to the western societies, and as such it raises questions regarding its validity in other social and political contexts that are not built around western realities (elections, political parties, professional associations, media, etc). As such, the paradigm of POS fails to take into account the relevant factors shaping collective action in post-war and undemocratic societies. Furthermore, this model alone cannot adequately account for the relationship between the structure of opportunities and the establishment of action in a society which has supervised statehood and contested authorities, such as in the case of Kosovo.

An additional flaw in this model relates to the subjective dimension of the structure of political opportunities, or as McAdam's puts it: to the process of "cognitive liberation" enabled by the subjective interpretation that the "challengers" produce in light of the changes of the political reality (1982). According to McAdam "before collective protest can get under way, people must collectively define their situations as unjust and subject to change through group action" (*ibid*, pp. 51). It is the subjective dimension that brings to life human agency while raising the question of how social actors decide when the opportunity to act is ripe. These conceptual factors, which do not receive enough attention in the theory of political opportunities, are worked out in the model of Collective Action Frames (CAF).

2) Movements and Their Frames of Action

Snow and Benford (1992) came up with the concept of Collective Action Frames. It should be mentioned that the sociology of movements owes a great deal to the notion of "framing" which refers to the way a movement recognizes and interprets ideas and beliefs that are powerful enough to set people into collective action. Goffman introduced to sociology the concept of "schemata of interpretation" that enables people: "to situate, to grasp, to recognize and to categorize" their worlds, through the processes by encoding (Goffman, 1974, pp. 21). The sociologist David Snow *et al.*, adopted the notion of framing in the context of collective action, while claiming that collective action frames comprise a type of cognitive understanding which explains the mode in which the social movements structure the meaning of their action. In their articulation, a frame is an:

> "interpretative schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences and sequences of actions within one's present or past environment"

(Snow and Benford, 1992, pp. 137)

Thus, “collective action frames” indicate schemes of interpretations through which the members of the movements define and articulate their social situation, as well as grasp and signify their grievances. These schemes of interpretations comprise the source of legitimacy for the member's protest, justifying their very collective action as a way of improving their conditions (Snow and Benford 1992, Benford and Snow, 2000). The members of social movements, on one hand label the injustice, while on the other articulate the broader frames of meaning which are consistent with the cultural spirit of the society. The "challengers" steer the frames of the movement towards the protest, making it fit with the specific context, and basing it on the merger between the culture of the target group and their values and goals. Snow *et al*., refer to this process as the "frame alignment" (1986).

Hence, collective action is interpretative in nature, because the collective actors construct new meanings by calling up existing cultural materials (ethnic identity, gender, sex, social status, etc), which are shared by the movement's members. This common ground molds their perception of reality, their articulation of the injustice and their modes of action. It is also worth mentioning that frames are flexible packages of meanings and adaptable interpretative tools.

This approach accords a special place to human agency since the process of framing is not perceived as a passive reflection of the internalization of ideology. On the contrary, since framing does not occur in a political and social vacuum, it refers to the active process of the construction of meaning (Snow and Benford, 1992; Snow *et al*., 1986; Tarrow, 1998; Crossley, 2002). To conclude, the main principle of CAF is that action frames construct and dictate the contentions action of the movement. Thus, the crucial insights of the above approaches might account for questions such as: what happens to the framing process in the context of supervised statehood, contested authorities and ethnic-divided societies, such as in contemporary Kosovo? How does this intricate socio-political context shape the daily praxis of interpretation and collective action in Kosovo? To answer these questions, it is essential to take into consideration the repertoire of discourse, inhabited by the hegemonic/global norms of “state-making”, "democratic values", "human rights", "liberal standards", etc.

Setting the Scene

In this part, I present briefly the background of Kosovo's politics along with the current processes underway of the ethnic division, supervised statehood and contested authorities, which provide all together the socio-political context of the collective activities of LV and its strategies.

1) Kosovo: the Bone of the Albanian-Serbian Conflict

The roots of the conflict in Kosovo are deeply seated in history. Both sides have different and conflicting claims as to the national "historic" right to the Kosovo belt, a right bestowed by virtue of settlement by the forefathers of both sides. Thus for example, the Albanians see themselves as descendents of the Illyrians, a nation which resided in the Balkans even before the arrival of the Romans[5], among others on land currently known as the Kosovo belt. Hence the historic claim of the Albanians in Kosovo to recognize their independence. On the other hand, the Serbs attribute supreme historic importance to Kosovo following the "Kosovo Battle" of 1389, a battle which they claim proves their settlement and holding in the region. This famous battle is the event which constitutes the basis for the establishment of Kosovo as the mythological cradle of the Serbian nationalism.

Tired of the Ottoman rule and numerous wars, on December 1918, Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, declared their new unified kingdom, a unification which later on (1929) will take the name Yugoslavia. This unification included various nations (Serbs, Slovenians, Croats, Bosnian Moslems etc), equal in terms of legislation, while the ethnic minorities (Albanians, Bulgarians and Hungarians) were perceived inferior to the other members of the union (Mazower, 2000). Despite the refusal of the Albanian population to be adjoined to the union, the European powers decided more than once[6] that Kosovo is an integral part of Yugoslavia. At the outset Kosovo was a district within the Serbian republic, and as such was run by the Serbian communist regime. Only in 1974, Tito[7] granted to the district autonomous status, which allowed the Albanians to run the region virtually independently (Judah, 2008).

With the rise to power of Milosevic, and with the political and economic deterioration of the federation, the condition of the Albanians once again deteriorated. In 1989 Milosevic eventually annulled the autonomous status of Kosovo. The Albanians, who adopted the restrained policy of

[5] For detailed accounts see Castellan, 1991; Mazower, 2000

[6] See: the Berlin Conference 1879, London Conference 1913, Versailles Conference 1919, Paris Conference 1946.

[7] Jozef Broze (Tito) was the communist leader of the former Yugoslavian federation. Following him Milosevic came into power.

Ibrahim Rugova, expected that the Dayton Accord (1995) which put an end to the war in Bosnia would relate equally to the deterioration of the situation in Kosovo. However, the international community did not refer to Kosovo's conflict, and the KLA – Kosovo Liberation Army, was founded. This military body began targeting members of the Serbian police and military stationed in Kosovo. Milosevic sent Serbian military troops in 1997 in order to put an end to the "Albanian terror" (Judah, 2000). The situation deteriorated, and Albanians' ethnic cleansing became the guiding policy of the Serbian forces operating in Kosovo[8].

2) Kosovo After the War: The UNMIK Era

Due to the failure of the Rambouillet Conference in February 1999, because of Milosevic's refusal to withdraw his forces from Kosovo, NATO decided to launch an aerial offensive against Serbia to put an end to the bloodshed and ethnic cleansing in the region. Ultimately, Milosevic succumbed to NATO forces and accepted its demands. Yugoslavian police and military forces were pulled out of Kosovo. On 12 June 1999 international security forces were stationed in Kosovo, both to secure stability and to rehabilitate the social, political and economic structure under the international authority of UNMIK[9].

This appointed institution had the monopoly over the legitimate use of force[10], though in reality it was perceived by virtue of its definition as temporary[11] and foreign. To fulfill its role, UNMIK has legislated many regulations as part of its legislative authority in the region[12]. These regulations bestowed on the representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG) and its administration unlimited powers, until the beginning of 2008. In addition, the establishment in 2001 of the local government called Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) constituted an institution that lacked real authority, as it was dependent on UNMIK for every decision.

Since the end of the war, UNMIK has been playing the role of "educator" in Kosovo, while teaching the norms of democracy and human rights (Gheciu, 2005). Gheciu relates to this dual

[8] For more details see the following websites: www.csmonitor.com, www.hrw.org, www.crisisweb.org.
[9] See the framework of UN Resolution 1244 (10/06/1999)
[10] UN Resolution, 1244, S/RES/1244, 10 June, 1999, Annex 5, "Decides on the deployment in Kosova, under United Nations auspices, of international civil and security presences, with appropriate equipment and personnel as required".
[11] UN Resolution, 1244, S/RES/1244, 10 June, 1999, Annex 19, "Decides that the international civil and security presence are **established for an initial period of 12 months**, to continue thereafter unless the Security Council decides otherwise (author's emphasis)
[12] UNMIK regulations can be viewed in full at: www.un.org/peace/Kosova/pages/Kosova

authority and to its institutions as interpretive authorities, which have struggled for the right "to be trusted to know/speak the truth about Kosovo". According to her, the interesting point is that the two institutions have adopted the framework of liberal-democratic norms (rule of law, democracy, human rights) in order to blame the enemy for the defective administration of the region. On one hand, the Kosovars claimed their right to increase the extent of intervention in the process of decision-making that concerns their interests, while the UNMIK officials on the other hand, rejected these demands, insisting that the interim Kosovar institutions were not sufficiently mature to govern in Kosovo (*ibid.*).

3) After the Declaration of Independence: Establishing the Supervised Statehood

It was the United Nations Special envoy for Kosovo, and former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, that recommended in March 2007 that: "Kosovo's status should be independence supervised by the international community". After a long period of barren international attempts to solve the question of Kosovo's status, Ahtisaari presented his plan to the U.N. secretary-general, known as the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement. In his plan, Ahtisaari advised the transfer of the UNMIK's competencies to the civilian and political missions of the European Union. In days, with the Declaration of Independence on February 17, 2008 by Kosovo's Assembly, the international presence in Kosovo was configurated in accordance with Ahtisaari's vision.

Since then, two international agencies were set up in Kosovo. One is the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX[13]), the other is the International Civilian Office (ICO[14]). The result - a supervised independence – is still a far cry from the de-jure sovereignty it purports to represent. The European Union established the ICO to supervise the implementation of Ahtisaari's plan[15]. In addition, in December 9, 2008 the EU finally deployed EULEX which inherited all the legal authorities of UNMIK (Pond, 2008). To this day, Kosovo's government and Assembly are heavily monitored and assisted by the ICO; the judicial system, the police structure and the custom authorities are advised and observed by the EULEX, while the Kosovo

[13] EULEX – European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, established by the EU Council Joint Action (12.2.08) and EU Council Joint Action appointing the EUSR (4.2.08).
[14] ICO – International Civilian Office, established by the International Steering Group (28.2.08).
[15] See Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement: http://www.unosek.org/docref/Comprehensive_proposal-english.pdf

Security Forces (KSF) are still under the control of NATO's troops stationed in Kosovo – KFOR (Kostovicova, 2008; Pond, 2008).

While presenting their reasons for what is at stake regarding the international presence and investment in Kosovo, King and Mason state that UNMIK: "is the most ambitious peace operation in UN history: on a per capita basis, the world has invested 25 times as much money and 50 times as many troops as in Afghanistan… If Kosovo is deemed a success it will bolster the UN's claim to be the most credible and effective nation-builder in the world; if it's seen as a failure, it will embolden those who argue that nation-building should be done either by powerful individual states or not at all." (2006, pp. 21). The succession of UNMIK's authorities by EULEX has openly proven the failure of the first in the enterprise of state-building in Kosovo, without preventing from the last to abide by the same logic of heavy investment. The EULEX's international personnel of judges, prosecutors and policemen empowered by an annual budget which exceeds 200 million Euros, along with the nearly 300 members of ICO (Pond, 2008), are clear evidences of the European Union's objective to set up its most ambitious political mission. All this multi-layered net of the civilian and military presence, bolstered by the social and political international structures, attests to the heavy supervision of Kosovo's statehood.

4) Some Words about the Movement: Levizja Vetevendosje! (LV)

> "A people in movement. A generation with new conviction
> A community that refuses to submit. For self-determination
> and until self-determination"
>
> (Website of LV, who are we)

In an attempt to position LV within this context, one might say that the movement offers a third version of the right to tell the "truth" of Kosovo, and during their course it has even position itself as the voice of "we" - the people of Kosovo while struggling for the national interest. LV's target is: "Self-determination, because it is something natural; it makes sense that **we** make the decisions about **our** own future much more effectively than anyone and everyone else who wants to decide on **our** behalf" (LV's website, Movements' Manifesto, *bold letters mine*). Therefore, action based on this identity marks LV as a collective actor in the drama of state-building.

The roots of LV can be traced at the Kosova Action Network's (KAN) ideas and activities. Founded in 1997, by a group of international activists led by the American writer Alice Mead

(today Alice W. James), Kan aimed to support citizen's initiatives against Serbia's occupation and aggression in Kosovo. In July 2003 Kan decided to create a network in Kosovo, in order to strengthen individuals and to foster a dynamic and representative society. In June 2004, a protest against Resolution 1244 was organized in its 5th anniversary. The protesters gathered around the UNMIK building and pronounced themselves Citizens[16] by reading the Declaration of Citizen and promised to struggle against the anti-democratic regime of UNMIK (LV website, History of the movement). As recognized by the movement itself, it was this protest that constituted the genesis of the today LV movement. Today, according to its website, besides the Prishtina branch, LV consists of 14 area offices spread all over Kosovo[17]. In addition, the movement has established eight centers in European countries[18] in which diasporas of Kosovo Albanians are significantly present.

Before I proceed to my analysis, a note of self-reflection regarding my research subject is in need. The research reveals a lot about the identity of the researcher, the question he/she asks, the choice of materials and the ways in which he/she reads the social reality. Following this rule, my research tells a lot about my fascination with tracing social change and thus my exploration of politics from "below". So far, the scholarly attempt to explain the state-building and democratization processes in post-communist Europe and post-war Balkans, has been dominated mainly by the paradigms of Democratic Transition and Integration Approach (Krastev, 2002; Carothers, 2002). Since they are both top-down oriented approaches, their first priority is the governmental interest, failing thus to pay attention to the social actors, their interactions and impact on state authorities. In this sense, I choose to adopt a perspective that centers on the experience of the citizens in order to understand contemporary Balkan politics.

Using the concept of contentions collective action can be a significant tool in studying the inner logic that drives the actions of social agents and the change they bring upon. At the same time, I am fully aware of the nationalistic identity that embodies the LV movement and the problems that are often associated with this identity. My choice to present the case-study of LV is based on the fact that this movement's objectives, discourse and praxis are tremendously different from those of

[16] People in Kosovo, until the declaration of independence (Feb. 2008) were considered residents as opposed to citizens, a status that usually refugees enjoy.

[17] The centres of LV in Kosovo are: Burim, Decan, Drenas, Gjakove, Gjilan, Kacanik, Kline, Lypjane, Mitrovice, Peje, Prizren, Sharr, Viti and Vushtrri.

[18] The centres of LV in Europe are: U.K, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Norwegian, Sweden, Turkey and Switzerland.

other social organizations, providing thus a better case in demonstrating the emergence of co-shared governance and erosion of citizenship in present Kosovo. As a political sociologist, I endeavor to think critically of the ways in which agency generates social change, and to leaf through the condemnatory rhetoric of politicians.

Part 2: Framing the Action – In the Name of Kosovo‘s Citizens

2.1) Co-shared Governance: The Alliance of the International and Local Authorities

While several analysis (King and Mason, 2006; Kostovicova, 2008; Lemay-Hébert, 2009) have focused on the conditions of the direct governance mainly by UNMIK, but still present in the rule of EULEX and ICO, they overlook a very important aspect of this governance and that is the establishment of the alliance between the international authorities and domestic institutions. While UNMIK's governance has been reduced significantly by the reconfiguration of the international presence, i.e. the entrance of the EULEX and ICO into the political arena in Kosovo, the foreign-domestic political alliance has been present, and even getting stronger in years. This is how Tansey defines this alliance: "Since 2001, Kosovo's own elected officials have been "cohabiting" with international administrators. In general, this relationship has worked well, and neither side has sought seriously to undermine the other" (2009).

Nexhmedin Spahiu, a Kosovo Albanian political analyst, in his criticism of this relationship, argues that the domestic political elite has pursued a servile approach towards the international organizations (Spahiu, 2004), which has developed in time into a politics of inferiority (Spahiu, 2010). Although at times, the cooperation between the two allies has hit some tension due to their clashing agendas (Tansey, 2009), over the years they have developed a unified political block which has strived to maintain the logic of Security and Stabilization, and have cooperated in critical issues like Kosovo's decentralization (Spahiu, 2004; 2010), formations of political coalitions (Tansey, 2009) and dealing with criminal structures (Kostovicova, 2008). But what are the consequences of this co-shared governance between the international institutions and the domestic authorities? In this part, I argue that the establishment of this long international-domestic political alliance has led to the estrangement of the domestic society from the daily political arena due to the reciprocal dependence of both sides on each-other, resulting thus in the erosion of the citizenship in Kosovo.

2.2) The Disengagement Gap: The Erosion of the Kosovar Citizenship

How can one account for the formation of this international-domestic political alliance? On one hand, the international organizations in spite of their authoritative powers have needed the active engagement of the domestic political leadership in order to fulfill their mandates (Lemay-Hébert, 2009). On the other hand, due to their weakness, the domestic authorities have constantly depended on the heavy political, technical, military and financial support of the internationals for their survival. A Human Rights Watch's report has based its analysis of the "Kosovo's accountability gap" on the local institutions' debility: "The lack of formal mechanisms to ensure international accountability is particularly problematic in Kosovo because local institutions, media, and civil society are weak, and have been largely unable to act as an effective check against the authority of international institutions."[19]

Adam Fagan while tracing the transformation of EU's role from assistance to state-building policies demonstrates EU's stakes in Kosovo: "The Mission to Kosovo (EULEX), once fully operational, will confirm the Commission's status as the main development agency in the Western Balkans region and represents the most ambitious and costly foreign policy adventure in the EU's 50-year history" (2010, 2). Also, Pond's analysis following her interview with a Senior German diplomat illustrates well this reciprocal dependency: "[w]e are doing so much for Kosovo in troops, money and [the] EULEX, referring to the 16,500 NATO-led peacekeepers, the €2 billion the EU has poured into this land of 2.4 million people, and the offer of future EU membership. He added, "Kosovars know they are dependent on us. They have to reform" (Pond, 2008).

The major implication of this dependency is that the international and the domestic governing authorities have become each-others sources of legitimacy, generating thus the erosion of the domestic social power as the genuine source of state's institutions legitimacy. This dependency results in the detachment of the local and international governing institutions from the local population. The society thus, becomes insignificant to the political processes designed by the international-domestic alliance. Consequently, the isolation of the citizens from the political sphere generates their disengagement gap, resulting in the erosion of their citizenship.

Furthermore, this dependency maintains Petrit Zogaj, has shaped an image of the domestic political leader as being "beyond any power and above any law, a figure whose control and

[19] See HRW Report "Better Late than Never", April 13, 2009: http://www.hrw.org/en/node/82371/section/3.

dominance are ultimate[20]. According to Avni Zogiani "the curtains of alienation are raised during the periods of elections, when the local politicians need the public votes in order to play the democratic game"[21]. Whereas Albin Kurti has put it: "the people of Kosovo is deprived of being the source of sovereignty and if continued I am sure it will result in an increase of contestation and generation of crises"[22].

2.3) Self-determination: Reframing Citizenship

According to Steinberg (1999), the construction of meaning along with the voicing of movement's aspirations, are the products of the negotiations and of the discourse that continuously preoccupy the members of the movement. As presented in the theoretical part, framing does not occur in a political and social vacuum, Collective faming refers to the active process of the construction of meaning by the activists, to themselves and their opponents as well (Snow and Benford, 1988; 1992; Snow et al., 1986; Crossley, 2002). The members of the movement steer the frame of the movement towards the protest, in ways which fit both the specific social and political context, and the culture of the target group along with their values and goals. In this part, I argue that in light of the alienation of the Kosovar citizens and their disengagement from the political sphere, which results in the erosion of their citizenship, LV's activists not only frame their struggle for Kosovo's self-determination as a collective and national interest, they also frame a new citizenship. This new citizenship is based on the identity of citizens who are active and involved in daily politics.

> Self-determination, because it is something natural; it makes sense that **we** can make decisions about **our** won future much more effectively than anyone and everyone else who wants to decide in **our** behalf.
>
> (LV website, Movement's Manifesto)

In terms of advocacy, according to Benford and Snow frames are notable if they are consistent with the national myths, the cultural narrative, and the political perceptions of society (Benford and Snow, 2000). Thus, the movements' justification:

> Self-determination because this is the minimum moral compensation for centuries of injustice, repression of identity, hundreds of thousands maltreated, tens of thousands killed, and

[20] Interview with Petrit Zogaj, co-founder of the Fol Movement, Prishtina, September 16, 2010
[21] Interview with Avni Zogiani, journalist and co-founder of the organization COHU!, Prishtina, September 17, 2010
[22] Interview with Albin Kurti, leader of movement Vetevendosje!, Prishtina, September 22, 2010

> widespread destruction… Self-determination! Unconditionally!
> ... Until the complete liberation of our country.
>
> (LV website, Movement's Manifesto)

The frame salience of freedom and sovereignty used by the movement in the course of its activity for self-determination is notable according to this definition, as it overlaps with the national myth of historical and political injustice caused over the years by the past political decisions of western powers (Malcolm, 1998; Mertus, 1999; Judah, 2000). Simultaneously the frame of looking after the collective interest and carrying out the will of the people, is consistent both with the cultural narrative of the long historical national struggle for independence, and the political perception that espouses the definition of an independent state for the Albanians in Kosovo.

In the absence of a sovereign state and in the political context of dual governing authorities – domestic and international, the movement sets the dual-governing system not only as the target for their complaints and demands, as is customary both in democratic and totalitarian societies (Tarrow, 1988; Brockett, 1991; Kriesi et al., 1995; Tilly, 1995), but also as the object of their protest, the cause of their resistance, as pictured in Kurti's words: "The declaration of independence didn't change a thing… the domestic institutions are still subordinated to the international missions be them: EULEX, ICO, UNMIK and KFOR. People are very disappointed with the domestic and the international politicians because Kosovo still suffers from heavy unemployment, grave poverty and maladministration."[23]

Consequently, the dual governmental structure constitutes an array of constraints which repress collective activities. This occurs because the duplication encumbers the implementation of the principle of accountability by increasing the chances that the two authorities will shirk their responsibility while casting blame on the opponent (Belloni, 2001; Gheciu, 2005). However, the movement seems to overcome this barrier in terms of the structure of political opportunities by adding to their politics of protest yet another sphere, that of formal politics. In June 2010, LV declared that it will run as a political party for 2011 elections, which were held eventually on December 12, 2010[24], due to the resignation of the former President Fatmir Sejdiu.

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[23] Interview with Albin Kurti.

[24] According to the CEC (http://www.kqz-ks.org/SKQZ-WEB/en/shv/ovpp/zotesijuridike.html), PM Hashim Thaci's Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) received 33.5 per cent of the vote, Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) 22.6,

I read LV's decision to expand their civic symbolic resistance to the realm of the political instrumental practices, as a direct answer to the problem of facing a dual governmental structure (local and international). By becoming a two-headed political actor, the movement confronts its marginalization and radicalization, and not less important struggles to translate its growing popular support into political power. Although publically banned by the current US Ambassador to Kosovo, Christopher Dell[25], receiving 12.2% of the votes in their first electoral campaign (coming 3rd after PDK and LDK from an overall turnout of 48%[26]) clearly indicates that the movement is perceived less radical and dangerous for the future of the people. On the contrary, in light of the daily economic and political struggle[27], one might even argue that LV is transforming into a legitimate collective actor.

In which ways can one account for this emerging legitimacy and its sources? The LV members claim the right to tell the "truth" of Kosovo, and during their action have even position themselves as the voice of "we" - the people of Kosovo, struggling for the national interest. As the representative voice of the national body, LV activists call up the need for a new community of citizens that is entitled to "make its decisions about its own future"[28]. LV rejects the international narrative of administration and its logic of supervision in which the collective will of Kosovar people is absent[29].

The point in concern here is the connection between collective action and identity, while the term identity relates to the process through which social players identify themselves and are identified by other players as belonging to larger organizations (della Porta and Diani, 1999; Melucci, 1996, Castells, 2004). Touraine claims that the action happens when the players are capable of defining themselves, the other players and the essence of the relations that connect them (Touraine, 1981). However, identity should not be seen as a precondition for action, as the identity is created and defined anew every time during the course of collective action (Gamson, 2007).

Vetevendosje 12.2 per cent, Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) 10.8 per cent, New Kosovo Alliance 7.1 per cent, Democratic League of Dardania 3.3 per cent and Fryma e Re 2.2 per cent.

[25] See: Koha Ditore, November 19, 2010, *Dell: Vetevendosje Doesn't Deserve my Visit* (my translation).
[26] See: BBC, December 12, 2010, *Kosovo PM Hashim Thaci Claims Election Victory*, at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11978021
[27] See the Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2010 – Kosovo Country Report*. Gutersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2009.
[28] Interview with Liburn Aliu.
[29] Interview with Glauk Konjufca.

The self images of collective players seek the recognition of other players, as only in the context of mutual recognition can social relations exist between them (Simmel, 1955). Similarly to Simmel, Calhoun posits in his book 'Social Theory and the Politics of the Identity' that dialogue about identity is a modern dialogue (Calhoun, 1994). According to him, this dialogue deals not only with shaping and preserving the identity of the individual but also with its recognition by others. Thus, the main essence of movements is the ability to enforce certain images and identities, and to challenge experience aimed at presenting the movement differently. Therefore, in Calhoun's terms, the identity of movements is political "because they involve refusing, diminishing or displacing identities others wish to recognize in individuals".

In Castells' definition it is *resistance identity* (2004) because it is constructed by a social actor, who is stigmatized, downgraded, controlled and pursued by both, the domestic and international authorities in Kosovo. But at the same time, LV constructs a *project identity* (*ibid*) as well, since by claiming the representative identity of the national interest, the movement seeks the transformation of the entire structure of dual authority and supervision, in politics and society both. Thus, one can assert that while opposing the local-international governing system, the LV activists are shaping a new body of citizens, a "we" who participates daily in the drama of state-building, a "we" who claims a political voice and visibility. Attaining collective visibility and political voice challenges the logic of dual authority in Kosovo, while shaping at the same time a new identity of collective action, awareness and strength that do not obey the foreign rhetoric and praxis (Gordon and Berkovitch, 2006).

Conclusion: Politics from below?

> "Yes, anti-political politics is possible. Politics from "below". Politics of people, not of apparatus. Politics growing from the heart, not from thesis. … In conditions of humdrum "everyday we have to descend to the very bottom of the well before we can see the stars."
>
> (Vaclav Havel, 398 in Keane, 1988)

The nature of political and social processes in times of transformation calls for extensive change that upsets the old principles and structures. The political, social and economic vacuum created by wars and regime-changes is quickly pervaded by new actors, (international and local, private and public), who penetrate and take over every aspect of the transition, inviting political and

economic re-engineering (Klein, 2007). The instability, fear and disorientation that characterizes this period facilitates the redrafting of politics and the democratic order. It also invites social movements to define themselves as political actors and to propose their agendas for the new political order. The case of the LV movement, illustrates the model of collective action that perceives politics as every-day praxis of the citizen, rejecting the alienation of politics from above and promoting this way the political participation of each individual. Claiming that: "… collective freedom is a fundamental condition for individual freedom" (website LV), points to the position of LV's activists, for whom state and society become one.

The politics of LV movement resist the alienation of politics from the social life, by daily interference and defiance of the governing practices of both international authorities and local institutions:

> "Freedom is not negotiable; is the unhindered development of one's possibilities. A people is this possibility. Freedom is the development of the self- the free choice of the path for building a collective future. **Citizens should decide and not politicians**."
>
> (Website LV, Movement's Manifesto)

In addition, it is important to point out here that the shaping of identity is subject to the traditional cultural context, while acting for self-determination is built as serving the collective will. Claiming the rhetoric of national liberation, provides LV with the language, symbols and the sense of belonging which are all generated within the national culture. However, this rhetoric focuses on, embraces and fosters not other than the national subject. Meaning, those who are not perceived as such are excluded from the national culture, and in the Kosovo setting that means mostly the Serbs. Based in Schöpflin assertion: "What is significant about the impact of civil society on nationhood is that where society is well established and self-confident, it finds it easier to take its own existence and identity for granted and does not have to concern itself with its own survival and self-production" (Schöpflin in Blitz, 2006, pp. 17), one might speculate on the weakness of self-confidence presented by LV and its inclination to grasp politics in ethnic terms solely.

One cannot help wondering what notion of freedom cultivates this national culture, which is both construed by and construes the rhetoric of this movement? What space is left for the identities and the political participation of other-national subjects within the actions of LV? Does the

essence of citizenship as construed by LV apply to the Serb citizen as well? Can the multitude of identities concurrently challenge the tradition of national rejection and move to the practices of building cultural dialogues and moral communities? Being conscientious of "the other" while undergoing a process of reshaping and re-expression, might be one way to ensure co-existence within and throughout the social rhetoric and action.

The growing participation of the Serbian population in Kosovo's last elections (December 2010), while they still refuse to recognize the state and its authorities, might be interpreted as a pragmatic approach of the Serbians towards their citizenship in Kosovo. According to B92 (Dec, 29, 2010), the leader of the largest Kosovo Serb political party, the Independent Liberal Party (SLS), Slobodan Petrovic, has confirmed that after expecting nine seats in Kosovo's parliament, is willing to reform a ruling coalition with Hashim Thaci's Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK). Since the publication of the Swiss senator Dick Marty's report on his investigation of the traffic of human organs in Kosovo and his findings on Thaci's direct involvement as a former top KLA leader[30], one might suggest that a new reading of the political map is in need. Although, the last major political events: the Protest against the Thieves[31], the Highway's motion proposed (not adopted) by LV[32] and the thorny Kosovo's intervention in the northern checkpoints 1 and 31[33], might signal about the strength of PDK's power within the domestic society and its legitimacy established on the foreign support. In spite of the other actors (LDK, AAK etc) inhabiting the political arena in Kosovo, it seems that PDK and LV are the main political rivals offering citizens different discourses and practices of state-building.

In summary, the daily actions of contention indicate that various levels of framing are engaged in the overlapping, competing and intertwined practices of state-building in Kosovo. The interpretive analysis of the collective action frame of LV movement, in the context of the supervised statehood, contested authorities and the erosion of citizenship in Kosovo, posit that as

[30] The 27-page draft report was submitted by Marty on Dec. 12, 2010 (the day of the elections in Kosovo) to the Council of Europe's legal affairs committee. For the full report see: http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/APFeaturesManager/defaultArtSiteView.asp?ID=964

[31] June 22, 2011, Prishtina, "Protesto Kunder Hajnise", the protest was organized by the movement Vetevendosje.
55 June 30, 2011, Prishtina, see: www.unmikonline.org/Headlines/Headlines%20-%2001.07.2011.doc.

[33] July 25, 2011, Mitrovica, http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kosovo-press-review-july-27-2åaaaa

a result its activists struggle to structure a new identity of citizens, active and involved in the daily political decisions. LV movement constructs a model of collective action which is not perceived as instrumentally *per se* but as a normative praxis since it frames civic participation as the essence of citizenship and as the foundation of a democratic society and a sovereign state. As for the future consequences of its entrance into the realm of formal politics, we remain to see in which direction, LV's two-headed contention will develop. Will its potential vulnerability towards cooptation yield it into a formal political head in search of conquering state-power or, will LV pursue the true "legacies of dissent"[34] as in Rupnik's words by engaging in ethical politics and building true civil society?

[34] "The Other Europe 20 Years Later", an interview with Jacques Rupnik, July 2011, see: http://www.citsee.eu.

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