



Master's Thesis

M.A. Culture, Communication & Globalisation

# The understanding of democracy constructed in civil society's discourse

- A comparative case study of Chile and Uruguay

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Melina Kunde

mkunde18@stud.aau.dk

Student Number: 20181194

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Supervisor: Óscar García Agustín

Faculty of Humanities  
Aalborg University, Denmark

## Abstract

Against the background of the protests in Chile that have started in October 2019 where numerous Chileans expressed their demand for a new constitution, this research aims to examine the understanding of democracy from a civil society's point of view. In Chile, which has internationally been recognised as an outstanding democracy in the Latin American context, the civil society seems to challenge its role in the democracy and the existing restrictions on participating in it. The research at hand has taken these developments in Chile as a basis for aiming to examine the understanding of democracy from below, hence analysing the point of view of civil societies who request to actively participate in it. In order to broaden the perspectives on this matter and to include the point of view of a civil society that is ostensibly not reacting as contentiously towards the government as in Chile, the case of Uruguay is taken as a comparison. Both are considered exemplary democracies in the Latin American region, whereas a comparison can be interesting and meaningful, possibly also for the application on other cases. Therefore, the main research question examines

### *How do civil societies in Latin America understand democracy and their role within it?*

Within this research, the diversity of theories on democracy and civil society are acknowledged and valued as it is aimed to understand the perception of civil societies on these two concepts in their discursive construction. Thus, the research is based on social constructionism accepting the social reality as the analysed civil society organisations expose in their discourse. As a method of analysis, a discourse analysis is therefore chosen which is conducted based on the discussion of theories and relevant literature on the concepts civil society and democracy. In that regard, the understandings revealed in discourse of three civil society organisations with diverse, but comparable scopes are analysed for both countries and compared in the following discussion. In order to do so, three categories were established to decide on organisations and compare them and nine criteria were established as a basis for analysing the discourse.

The analysis shows that most of the civil society organisations do not only claim for institutional or legislation changes, but aspire to change the societal and cultural perception on the topics they work on. Therefore, the organisations are inclined to improve civic education and participation in the democracy through an enhanced interaction with individual

and institutional actors. Apart from the potential of the civil society to attain institutional as well as societal changes, which presuppose and reinforce each other, the civil society is able to augment the dialogue and rapprochement of the individuals, representing the private sphere, and the institutional actors, constituting the political sphere.

It results in the empowerment of civil societies to play a crucial role within democracies through their ability in actively communicating the interests of the society. Thus, academically the concepts democracy and civil society should always be considered together as they reciprocally support and condition each other. In practice, Chile and Uruguay both represent cases where civil societies endorse the democracies in different phases and with different emphases. Subsequently, the combination of both cases can constitute examples on how civil societies understand themselves in the context of a democracy and how it can possibly be applied to other cases. However, further research is needed in order to examine the possible application and in order to show that democracy can also be understood to be constructed from below.

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## 1. Introduction

At first sight, discussing the concept democracy might seem rather unarguable. In 2019, almost half of the population worldwide (48, 4%) lived in a democracy. (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2020, 3) Accordingly, for one half of the population democracy might just be an uncontested condition invisible in their daily lives. Consequently, for the other half of the world, it is not a part of their life. In the society, political discussions usually evolve around politicians, public policies or institutions, but the understanding of democracy is mostly accepted as common knowledge. Still, the trust in institutions and politicians seems to decline, democratic values are being disregarded and protests against the respective governments arise in various countries, especially in Latin America where the development to democracies has been rather difficult. (ibid 8f.) Furthermore, according to Latinobarómetro the trust in institutions is still low among the society and the average democracy index in Latin America and the Caribbean is only 6.2 (out of 10). (ibid 18; Corporación Latinobarómetro 2019, 54f.) This low trust in institutions has historically been manifested by widespread protests and social unrests. Also in 2019, many protests broke out throughout the whole region. For example in Bolivia, Peru, Colombia or Venezuela, people stopped their daily life and came to protest in the streets, questioning the system, institutions, governmental decisions and maybe also conveying their understanding of democracy. Heavy protests also broke out in a country that has been reckoned a model democracy in Latin America, in Chile. Despite of the protest, Chile's society is one of the least indifferent to the government type in Latin America, so it appears that no changes of the political system, but within it, are demanded. (ibid 17) Hence, it does not seem that the protests in general are aimed against democracy, but maybe the understanding and implementation of those contesting differs from those conducting it. While this assumption can be made for Chile, the case seems to be different in Uruguay, which is ranked right before Chile with the highest democracy index in Latin America. (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2020, 33) The conditions and situation of the democracy seem to be similar at least referring to statistics published on the quality of their democracies and the acceptance of the society. Henceforth, it can be interesting to compare the point of views of the civil societies in both countries, in order to understand what role they aspire to play.

Taking these conditions and developments of the last year into account, where civil societies have become more visible and contentious, especially in a country where it has not necessarily

been expected, in this research the understanding of democracy will be assessed. The focus therein is the point of view of the civil societies representing those who initiated questioning whether this understanding is as unanimously as it could seem.

#### 1.1. Problem statement and research questions

This research's focus is the situation that democracies in Latin American countries find themselves in. An essential part of the democracy is formed by the civil society, citizens who engage in precipitating political or societal changes. Based on the ongoing protests and the lacking trust in institutions, there seems to be a need for changes. Hence the question arises what these esteemed changes are, what role the civil societies should play and how democracy is understood. Therefore, the main problem that will be examined in this research is the role of civil societies in Latin American democracies with a main focus on how civil societies understand democracy and their role within it. This research will not be examining the whole region, but it will be based on a comparative analysis on the cases of Chile and Uruguay.

The problem researched is mainly of concern for civil societies who do not feel represented by their governments and are unsatisfied with their current living environment as briefly pictured in the introduction. Furthermore, it results in a challenge for governments that finds themselves in a position facing a discontent population and protests. In the end, the situation of ongoing dissatisfaction and protests might lead to a challenge for democracy in general, with those benefiting from it who try to discredit the system. Thus, it should be in the interest of all countries facing challenges towards their democratic system to research the reasons causing the problem and understand the motives of those who express their dissatisfactions.

The main research question that will be aimed to reply within this research is therefore

*How do civil societies in Latin America understand democracy and their role within it?*

The main research question shall be answered by using the following sub-questions to approach the problem:

- *What is the understanding of democracy that Chilean and Uruguayan civil society organisations display in discourse?*



- *How do the civil societies in Chile and in Uruguay present their perceived role in democracy and aim to evoke change?*
- *Through which means do they communicate their understanding of democracy and civil society?*

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research design

The research at hand is of qualitative nature and is conducted using a cross-national comparative analysis. The cases Chile and Uruguay are compared concerning the civil societies' understanding of democracy in order to fathom the relation between the concepts civil society and democracy. In this research, the advantage of a comparative design is that differences in the civil societies' perceptions can be compared in similar conditions, but in two different socio-cultural settings. (Bryman 2012, 72f.) Another advantage of examining two cases is manifested in the assumption that there is a plurality of approaches to understanding civil society in relation to democracy. As the aim of this research is not to explain causes for the protests in Chile, but understanding controversies in this relation, it is expedient to also use an example where the conditions are comparable, but the discontent is minor. The analysis is built up in a deductive way, as the theories presented and discussed in chapter three set the basis for the analysis conducted in chapter four. Based on the discussion of the theory, the data is analysed in chapter four to be able to apply the theory and to possibly extend, criticise or approve it in the discussion in chapter five. The research is also constructed deductively in its approach to emphasise possible challenges for democracy in general, especially in Latin America and apply that approach to the cases Chile and Uruguay, in order to discuss its general application.

Therefore, this research is based on secondary texts and sources. In the first part, theories are presented and discussed that help to understand the concepts democracy and civil society. Through the author's understanding, definitions for both concepts are established which will be applied throughout the analysis and the discussion. Also, the analysis is conducted on secondary texts and documents that are available online, because the discourse and understanding of the civil society organisations in their public presentation shall be analysed. Based on this analysis and against the background of theories and literature, the research questions are answered in chapter six.

## 2.2. Cases

As already mentioned, the idea behind conducting a comparative case study is the valuation of the plurality of perceptions of democracy from the point of view of the civil society in two different socio-cultural settings. The cases chosen in this research are frequently named together and compared because of their similarities as special examples for functioning democracies, low corruption rates and strong institutions in Latin America. (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2020, 33f.) Moreover, Chile as well as Uruguay have had a similar development from a stable democracy, turning into an autocratic regime around the same time and facing similar challenges on their way back to democracy. Reasons for why establishing a democracy in Chile and Uruguay has been easier than in other Latin American countries are the relative homogenous society within the countries and historically deep party systems. Furthermore, democracy has been easier to be established because the roles of the countries in the Spanish legacy were not as important as other countries for example. Hence, the absence of strict and very present Spanish rules favoured democracy instead of autocracies based on deep hierarchical structures. (Fuchs & Nolte 2006)

Difficulties of a comparative case study can be encountered in the estimated genuine comparability of the cases. (Bryman 2012, 74) In the scope of this research, it is kept in mind that some concerns are only applicable in one specific national context and not comparable. The aim to compare the concept democracy in two countries entails the risk of undermining historical and systematic differences and get caught in assumed contrasts that are rooted in the institutional development and cannot be judged. Therefore, in this research, the emphasis is put on agency and not on structure. It is accepted knowledge that the quality of democracy in Chile and Uruguay is similar based on the perceptions derived from the literature. Understanding agency as the capacity of individuals to act independently and not being shaped by existing structures, it is then examined how the analysed civil society organisations make sense of democracy.

Even though both countries have an outstanding role in the region when it comes to democracy, Chile has been confronted by the massive protests supposedly challenging that exact outstanding democracy in the Latin American context. With a comparison with the discourse of civil society organisations in Uruguay, it is hoped to examine similarities and differentiations of their understanding how civil societies should be able to operate in

democracies. In this way it is aimed to also draw conclusions onto which of the countries approximate a desired relation between democracy and civil society.

### 2.3. Philosophy of science

The ontological stance that this research is based on, is social constructionism. The world is believed to come to existence through social interaction as democracy and civil society are seen as something depending on the people living the concepts. Moreover, the people evaluate it differently based on their social experiences and understanding, so there cannot be a realist understanding that this research is based on. Especially, because the aim is to analyse the democratic understanding of Chileans and Uruguayans and what their discontent and mistrust might be based on. (Bryman 2012, 33f.) Therefore, the epistemological viewpoint of this research is interpretivist as the social world is taken to be understood based on subjective perceptions. Hence, the understanding of this world is to be gained through interpreting these perceptions. The researcher is aware of her present role as a main part of the research is the author's interpretation of the data and the theories at hand and the willingness and openness to constantly revise and re-interpret the findings. (Bryman 2012, 28-32) The understanding of the social world that is interpreted in this research is derived through an interpretivist analysis of the civil society organisations' discourse. Through their discourse that becomes accessible through the construction of language, it is examined in what terms democracy is understood and contested. So, it can be further construed that the ontological stance of this research is discursive constructionism of the concepts democracy and civil society displayed in interpretivist contestation.

### 2.4. Data collection

The data used for the analysis is retrieved from documents that were published by civil society organisations in Chile and Uruguay. All of these documents that are subject to the analysis, can be accessed on the website of the civil society organisations or on their respective Twitter accounts. What is special about these kinds of documents and secondary data as sources in general, is that they were not produced for the research, but for other purposes. (Bryman 2012, 543) For this research it has been decided to use documents as a source for the analysis for this exact reason. Based on the analysis of the discourse of the produced documents, it is expected to be able to follow the understanding of democracy and the perceived and

esteemed role displayed in it. Texts especially produced for the research as for example interviews, could be biased as the organisations would maybe want to evoke a specific effect with their responses. However, the researcher is well aware of the fact that the authors of these documents always try to portrait a certain image of their organisation, for which the method of analysis is very important to be well chosen. Hence, it is important to treat the documents not only as a means to showing the reality, but also as representing their own reality. In order to get an insight about the understanding of the reality of civil society organisations, many published virtual documents of different organisations will be compared. (Bryman 2012, 550-554) It has been decided to only use documents that were published by the organisations themselves, because the emphasis of this research is put on their understanding and not on their perception from other actors for example.

The data is collected through desk research until May, 15<sup>th</sup>. All data published after that date was not taken into consideration for this research and can therefore not be included in any conclusions or discussions. The same amount of civil society organisations has been chosen to be analysed, for both Chile and Uruguay. A prerequisite in order to be able to compare the organisations and their communication was for them to have a homepage and a Twitter account where they present themselves and their work. In both countries exist a variety of civil society organisations that operate in different fields and defend the rights of different groups and this diversity shall be represented in this research. Therefore, based on the theories and literature discussed in chapter three, categories are established that represent thematic emphases of the civil society, which define the selection of the organisations. The amount of organisations acting independently from the State, communicating on the respective channels, thus having a considerable size and fitting in the categories, was limited in both countries.

An important feature of this research is that most of the documents are written in Spanish as the organisations only rarely translate their websites into English. Therefore, the documents are analysed in Spanish and translated into English by the author. As the analysis is focused on the structures of the arguments, relations between topics and the construction of language, but not on linguistic details, no disadvantages are to be expected because of the bilingual work.

## 2.5. Method of analysis

The data will be analysed conducting a discourse analysis. It has to be remarked for the understanding of this research that the concept discourse can be defined in two different ways and it will also be used in both senses. Firstly, discourse can be defined as a synonym of discussion and is usually referred to in more serious and public disputes. Secondly, discourse is the production of commonly accepted knowledge in a society. (Ullrich 2008, 19)

In this research, a discourse analysis is not seen as a set method with analytical rules to be followed which can be learned, but it is rather a philosophical approach. The method discourse analysis is even more diverse than the definitions of the term discourse. In social sciences, discourse analysis has been of great interest for researches as communication is what shapes individuals, cultures and social processes. Therefore, different disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, philosophy or sociology have developed discourse analyses in different ways and with different methods and emphases. For this research, an approach to discourse analysis is chosen that focusses on the construction of identity and interaction rather than on deep textual structures. Within the discourse analysis, the social reality produced and represented is in the focus. In the discourse it gets hence exposed what is important for the common reality as socio-cultural phenomena. (Potter 2004, 607f.) Discourse is understood as shaping the world and creating a reality. In that way it challenges or reinforces the common assumptions that are accepted to represent the world. Thus, the analysed discourse and the author's worldview will be put into context of the represented history and current situation in the countries.

In discourse analysis, coding is understood differently than in the context of other methods of analysis, because it is hardly impossible to put discourse in a pre-established pattern. The term coding is connoted with an exclusive manner to sort the material that is subject to the analysis in categories. In this discourse analysis, coding is conducted in a different way being the sorting of relevant material for the analysis as Potter suggests. It is rather seen as being inclusive than exclusive. Hence coding has been the underlying process before even being able to analyse the documents. (Potter 2004, 615f.) In order to still be able to have a structured analysis of the documents and texts chosen, the three research questions serve in the way they are conceptualised through the theories and literature discussed, as a central structure.

Hence, this approach to discourse analysis is oriented on this research's specific questions and on methods introduced by Potter and Hajer, but altered for the sense of this research. As the main focus of this research is the discursive construction of social phenomena, it is believed that no set method and no fixed approach can approximate relevant outcomes.

Potter focusses on the purpose and the backgrounds of discourse, which is also the focus in this research. He states that discourse is action-oriented, situated, constructed and constructive and that it also has to be analysed in this way. The discourse analysis will be conducted against the background of examining the discourse in regards to the action that it is doing, to the situation that it is embedded in and rhetorically put together and in its construction of the author's version of the world. The foci are put on variations as for example in descriptions or in choices of words, on details, on the rhetoric and on accountability that can be granted to the author. (Potter 2004, 616f.) Hajer defines discourse as the ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories that gives meaning to a social phenomenon. The discourse might be hidden and not become clear on the first sight. Therefore, Hajer assesses that discourse is constructed by narratives or story lines and metaphors.

These approaches should not be seen as a strict construct under which the analysis has to be conducted, but an orientation on what the focus can be put and how the discourse can be identified. The main orientation for the analysis however, are the research questions which are translated into categories based on the discussion of the theory and literature review as further explained in chapter 4.1.

In the discourse analysis, it shall be examined how the civil society organisations in Chile and Uruguay conceptualise and understand democracy and their role in it. Therefore, their presentations on the respective websites of the organisation will be analysed. It is taken into consideration that not all websites are constructed alike and that therefore it might seem difficult to compare them. However, every organisation that maintains a website uses it to present itself and its work. In order to compare the organisations, nine categories have been established which are the basis for analysing the organisations' understanding constructed in discourse. These categories are related to the similarities that can be found on the websites being presentations about the organisation, its conceptions and visions, their past and future work and overall the way of communicating it. Moreover, gained knowledge from the theory

and literature review is then added to these topics in order to apply the definitions of democracy and civil society to the analysis.

Apart from the website, social media channels of the organisations are used for the analysis as it is their main source to get into contact online, to inform about their work instantly and to gain visibility and attention. As for a social media platform that represents a comparable channel for communication, Twitter has been chosen to be analysed. Twitter is a popular and commonly used platform to exchange and post text material where words and meaning are in the focus instead of pictures. That is why it is of higher importance for this research as the discourse on the organisations' websites is expected to be followed in a more informal way on Twitter.

## 2.6. Validity and reliability

Regarding the validity of the research, it has been paid attention to establish comparability of the two cases by analysing the same number of documents for both countries that were published on the same platforms and are therefore available to the same public. The documents and sources are ought to believe to represent authentically the civil society's understanding of the social world, because it is the main source of what the organisations communicate about themselves online.

Regarding this research's reliability it is assured that based on the choice of material and on the method of analysis, it could be possible to repeat this study in the future. However, it has to be mentioned that there will never be the exact same social situation as supposedly organisations are changing their approaches and claims depending on developments. Furthermore, the findings of this research are dependent on the author's interpretations. As it is believed in social constructionism that the social world comes to existence through people's perception, there will not be the exact same outcomes if another researcher conducts the same study. Furthermore, as this research is based on social constructionism it is accepted that there is no right or wrong, and therefore no valid or invalid or reliable or unreliable in that matter.



## 2.7. Limitations

It can be understood as a limitation of this research that only documents from the organisations themselves are subject to the analysis. Those documents only show what the organisations want people to believe, but it cannot be compared to what the organisations do in reality. For example, through the inclusion of mass media articles, the claims of the organisations could have been compared to how they are perceived among the public. However, as the focus of this research is the organisations' self-perceptions and understandings of the analysed concepts, purposely only documents of the organisations were taken into consideration. It has also to be kept in mind that there is also another side opposing to the civil society as the government, or politicians for example. It is surely true that democracy is not only lived and held up by the civil society, but also by institutions and the government. However, their reactions towards the claims of civil society organisations, or the discussion of institutional structures, for example have not been included for the same reason that mass media articles were not included. It can be seen as a weakness as it of course can thus not completely solve the problem that democracy might face and that is imposed by the question of civil society's role. However, it can much more likely also be seen as a strength of this research to entirely focus on one side and being aware of this fact. In that way, the role of the civil society can be discovered independently from other factors which might increase the realisation of importance that has to be given to this group.

Furthermore, the author is aware that the analysis of this study, including only the online communication and self-presentation, on social media, is not the only communication done by the civil society. Especially as the intention of communicating online and on social media platforms is not usually to start a balanced and open conversation, but rather a one-sided monologue. It is in the author's utmost belief that problems, especially those about participation in a democracy, cannot be solved in a one-sided monologue and therefore the results and gained knowledge from the analysis will not be taken as a granted solution. However, as the internet and social media is the most common and easiest way to communicate one's opinion nowadays, the obtained data is believed to give an insight to how the civil society in the respective countries sees itself positioned in the democratic system, how they identify and what their aims and beliefs are. Therefore, it is not seen as a solution to all problems occurring in democracies in Latin America, but rather as an important insight

to how these problems can possibly be approached when wanting to include those who live in the democracies, who are represented and who should probably approve of it.

## 2.8. Ethical considerations

The author is aware of her role and that she cannot be completely objective as it is believed based on the ontological and epistemological stance that there is no objectivity. Furthermore, according to the epistemological point of view, the author's interpretation of the data is a fundamental part of approaching a solution. However, it needs to be kept in mind as an ethical consideration that this research is focused on two Latin American countries whose democracies have been built on a specific history and whose problems have particular reasons. The researcher on the other hand is from a European country and has mostly been educated academically in this hemisphere as well. Therefore, the author is aware of the specific sensitivity about those topics and that it has to be tried to approach them also from the local's point of view and not judge them in an almost colonialist manner. Furthermore, as it is dealt with unsatisfied groups and partly violent unrests, there is a danger of exposing specifically sensitive groups within the civil society, especially when looking at Chile and the danger that some protesters put themselves in.

### 3. Theoretical and current scientific background

Different theories on the concepts democracy and civil society will be discussed in the following chapters. The theories are used to understand how different perceptions of democracy came to existence and to comprehend what researchers and philosophers focussed on when defining and explaining the concepts. Hence, the discussion of different theories and literature is used to establish a definition for both concepts that this research is based on. It is important to note that the understanding of democracy is not self-fulfilling or self-explanatory, but it is framed and shaped by culture, media and the political system the individual lives in. In order to derive a definition for this research, common aspects that are repeating in the theories, similarities and understandings that seem obsolete over time are discussed. Moreover, it has to be mentioned that most of the theories on democracy and civil society were developed from a Western point of view and that democracy might not mean the same in the Southern hemisphere. In order to be able to understand the situation of democracies in Latin America, the literature review at the end of this chapter shall shed a light on current research on Latin American, and then especially the Chilean and Uruguayan, democracies. The literature review is also used in order to briefly present the case countries, their history and the political and societal background that are subject to this research.

It can already be seen by the amount of theories presented in the upcoming chapter and by the difficulties in finding one consistent theory on democracy that the understanding of democracy is as diverse as the people living within it. The focus in the discussion of different theories is to display the plurality of theories and perceptions. However, due to the scope of this research not all existing democracy theories can be discussed. Theories were chosen that display different approaches to citizen participation as it approximates the relation to civil society. As the emphasis of this research is put on agency, and not on structure, there will be no excessive focus on institutions, but rather on the role of society and participation in democracy theories and those in connection to the concept civil society.

### 3.1. Democracy

The term democracy is derived from the Greek word *demokratia* which consists of the expressions for *the people* (demos) and *rule* (kratos). Hence, democracy translates to *rule by the people*. The concepts of which the word democracy consists are ambiguous terms questioning for example who *the people* are what *the rule* covers and if the rules of the people must be obeyed unconditionally. (Held 2006, 4-6) It can be disclosed that nowadays the concept *the people* can easily be delimited on the basis of accepted borders that divides regions into states. In that way, *the people* would be linked to the citizenship of a certain state. However, also these borders are sometimes contested or people do not feel affiliated to the state they belong to according to the borders. Moreover, not necessarily everyone inside these borders can *rule* on everything, so is really everyone *the people* and is every matter subject to *the rule* of those? At the end of this chapter, when understanding better the meaning of democracy and the theories behind it, these boundaries to the concept will be elaborated more in detail.

The beginning of democratic theory dates back to 320 BC, when Aristotle defined democracy as opposing to oligarchy, monarchy, aristocracy, tyranny as a category where the many rule in their own interest. Aristotles regarded democracy as the worst possible option in an ideal world, but the most tolerable option in a realistic world. In the ancient Athenian democracy, that can theoretically be labelled classical democracy, the role of the people was taking an active part in the political decision-making and obligations were not seen as private ones. Athenian democracy was a direct democracy as people took part in the decision-making process not via representatives, but did this directly. (Held 2006, 13f.) This model is far away from the democracies that can exist nowadays, because its implementation is not feasible among large populations. However, it still represents the basic idea of democracy and maybe there is potential to return to some of the assumptions on participation in an adapted way. Nowadays, due to the size of populations within a state, participation is usually executed through representation. Representative democracy is supposed to be a solution approximating the ideal self-rule, when the representatives are concerned with the common will of the majority. Then the representative fulfils the function of ruling carried out by the citizens. (Cunningham 2015, 91) Observing the development from direct participation to representatives, the conditions of the modern world are better reflected with representatives

as the group associated with *the people* increases. On the other hand, it seems like more responsibility is taken away from the people, even though they are still expected to be informed in order to choose an adequate representative.

Philosophers that can be grouped to the liberal democracy theory, for example Locke (1689), are concerned with the value of democracy and its legitimation. Basic principles of liberal democracy are a representative government and limitations on the State power. Liberalism in this definition stands for the attempt to “uphold the values of freedom of choice, reason and toleration” (Held 2006, 59) which is also connected to economic well-being of the individual. It is aimed to achieve an independence from the Church as well as avert authoritarianism. Democracy and its institutions become legitimised in people giving their individual power to institutions through elections of representatives. For Locke, the main value of democracy lies within the individual freedom and an independent society. The function of the government and also of the civil society lies within the protection of the citizens to be able to pursue their personal lives mostly autonomous from the government. Nowadays, many states are built upon the theory of liberal democracy. (Rodrik 2016, 2f.) However, it can already be seen that the idea of equal chances for everyone and the protection of everyone can only be achieved through the help of public policies and it can be questioned if the equality pursued in the liberty of everyone can be achieved by majority voting. In the liberal democracy theory, the individual attains more attention, but it is still represented as part of a majority.

Participatory democracy represents the idea of all members making a meaningful contribution to the decision-making process in the scope of democracy. It is built on the principles of a knowledgeable citizenry that participates and strives for liberty and self-development. This form of democracy is for practical and logistic reasons not practiced by any government in the world as it is not feasible to have a population of several million people discussing on one topic. (Held 2006, 213). There is much criticism for this theory not only referring to its feasibility, but also because of the assumption that all people would want to participate in the democratic decision-making. (ibid 215) It also challenges individual liberty when everyone is required to take a standing in democratic decisions. In theory, this should be the ideal concept of how to realise democracy when everyone has a saying and influences the decisions under which they will have to live. It requires a very flexible system and new ideas on how to manage

such a mass of communication, ideas and opinions. For that, a government would have to give away a lot of responsibility and trust its citizens.

Deliberative democracy is a very recent theory that tries to confront these questions of participation and responsibilities. Also, deliberative democracy theories argue that voting and the majority rule should not be the focus of democracy. However, the difference between the participatory and the deliberative democracy theory is their relation to the kind of participation of the citizens. While in a participatory democracy, citizens are expected to actively participate and engage in direct actions for example in polls, the deliberative democracy emphasises on discussions for decision-making where people voluntarily participate. In deliberative democracy theory, the value of democracy is seen in an equal possession of knowledge for a reasoned, open and power-less discussion among the people represented. Discussions are based on the different interests and opinions that exist among the represented to reach a consensus through freedom and equality. If voting is ought to be necessary, such discussions would need to take place before any voting. However, the main idea of deliberative democracy is the decision-making based on collective reasoning. (Cunningham 2015, 92f.)

Della Porta (2013) criticises the deliberative theory in for example the aspect that emotions are supposed not to play a role, but that arguments and discourses should be kept entirely on a rational level. However, emotions can help to create a feeling of commonness as well as to express one's own opinion. Furthermore, usually for people it is not possible to separate emotions from pathos. Therefore, deliberative democracy might foster inequalities, because not everyone is able to communicate and argue on the same level. (della Porta 2013, 64-66) Bringing together deliberative democracy and the criticism on it, the theory would have to be expanded in practice to accept emotions as a valuable part to discussions.

Another theory that challenges the historical theories on democracy and is sometimes used as a synonym for deliberative democracy is discursive democracy. However, it is regarded as a separated concept, even though showing similarities and a common basis. For this research, discourse is very relevant as it is taken as a tool for analysis, but has also the potential to most accurately approximate the understanding of democracy as it is based on discourse and communication and therefore implies the importance of the civil society for democracy.

Dryzek's theory on discursive democracy can mainly be distinguished from the deliberative democracy in its claims for societal change and its relation to communication. Without doubt, discourse and communication is an important part of deliberative democracy, but it is mostly constraint with institutions offering citizens information and an adequate format to question politics and discuss occurring topics. The main focus of discursive democracy however, does not emphasise political institutions, but societal change that can be achieved only through common discourse. Another assumption is that people are able to change their beliefs in discourse which makes it ultimately truly deliberative. An outcome of the discourses through fair discussion is consensus, rather than agreements, which then should influence policy-making over informal ways. (Dryzek 1990, 220)

Summarising and comparing the theories presented, a certain development of covered topics can be exemplified. Firstly, it becomes apparent that the private and the political sphere are drifting apart when focusing on the liberty of the individual and freeing it from responsibilities. Another development in that matter that can be traced is the shift from responsibility on the individual to participation, education, personal liberty and pursuance. In the focus of democratic decision-making, the importance on the individual abates to collaboration and co-existence in pluralism, competition and discourse. Furthermore, there is an increased focus on education as well as on the question of power. What all the theories have in common is the basis of giving power and responsibility to the people, only executed in different ways. Thus, democracy should make it possible for the society to live under the best circumstances possible. It can be manifested in the protection from misuse of power and political authority and the involvement and respect of everyone regardless of their backgrounds.

Irrespective of the applied theory of democracy, all of them evolve around the same problems which become apparent when democracy is carried out in a society. One of these problems is the boundary problem. When it is assumed that everyone in a democracy should have a saying, be it being part of the discussion or voting for example, naturally there would have to be a boundary as it is barely feasible nor responsible to involve everyone in the society. Thus, there will always be a group, which finds itself excluded from the right to take part in the lived democracy. Historically, it has been women or people without property who have been outside of this boundary, being excluded from the rights to vote. Nowadays legally, these

boundaries have been erased and exclusion based on gender, race or the economic situation is expelled. However, the boundaries cannot completely be erased as for example often under-ages or noncitizen-immigrants are excluded from voting. Furthermore, another main argument are the boundaries that are introduced by states as the voting rights are usually subject to citizenship. However, because of globalisation, many of the decisions concerning the citizens do not necessarily take place within the borders of their respective state. Therefore, the boundaries exist within the units that democracy is taking place while the social and economic focusses might be taking place outside of these boundaries. To solve the problem of how democracy can be extended beyond the states' borders, cosmopolitan theorists suggest trans-state institutions as the European Union for example. Other scholars however assert that it will not be possible to solve these boundary issues as the only, and too unrealistic way, would be a single global democracy. (Cunningham 2015, 93f.)

When retracing the development of democracy, it can clearly be seen that much has changed, but many basic principles and the main idea of current democracy are still comparable to those of the early stages. As to boundaries, representation and participation it seems like no real solution has yet been found. Apparently, the whole world is changing fast in every way, but the overall system in the countries in which the changes are established, stays the same. Della Porta dedicates herself to that problem in her book "Can democracy be saved?" where she discusses the future of democracy and the paradox that more and more democracies are established in the world, but the trust in institutions seems to diminish. Her assumption is that the discussed theories have to be combined in a way that "goes beyond its liberal model, [broads] reflection on participation and deliberation outside and inside of institutions" (della Porta 2013, 2) to save democracy.



### 3.2. Civil society

“Civil society refers to the realm of organisations, groups, and associations that are formally established, legally protected, autonomously run, and voluntarily joined by ordinary citizens. [...] In civil society, individual members can affect or prevent change through or by virtue of their organisation.” (Howard 2010, 187)

Summarising this quote, the most important characteristics of civil society can be highlighted as its autonomy, the composition consisting of citizens and its relationship to change. In the following chapter the understanding of civil society in theory and literature over time is discussed in order to define civil society for this research.

The expression civil society originates from Latin and Greek and can be translated to *political community or partnership*. Already Aristoteles and Cicero wrote about civil society, but they understood it to be people who lived under the State and did not actively participate in it as for example women, children or slaves. (Molnár 2010, 341f.) Especially during the period of Enlightenment, philosophers focused more increasingly on the role of the civil society as part of the public sphere contrasting the State. Through the popular establishment of economic ideas intertwining with political theories, the civil society has also been discussed as being closely linked to the market. (Powell 2010, 355)

Gramsci made the differentiation between the state, the economy and the civil society as being the first one to establish the connection that civil society has an autonomy over the state and the economy. (Baker 1998, 81) Gramsci sees civil society in relation to the hegemony that he defines as the power and control that elites oppose on subordinate groups. In the space of civil society where free ideas are spread and lived, it is even more important for the elites to spread hegemony than in the government as people voluntarily believe it. He sees in the civil society the active part to actually impose changes and development, so it is not only the space where hegemony is spread, but also where it can be contested. (Katz 2010, 408-410)

Habermas refers to civil society as to the lifeworld compared to money (economy) and power (State). In those systemic contexts, people are more concerned with instruments and strategy. In the lifeworld the main focus lies on communication and interpretation. He sees in the civil society a collection of organisations, movements and initiatives that play an active part in

politics by influencing the government. The influence can vary from governments explaining their positions, engaging in discourse or in actual change. Therefore, the civil society plays a role as a mediator between the private sphere and economy and the political sphere. He limits the power of civil society to self-restriction meaning that the public opinion they convey can never rule. The civil society has an important role for the government as they articulate problems of the lifeworld which can then influence voter's behaviour and challenge the parties. He warns not to idealise the role of civil society, but values the importance of discourse and deliberation. (Rucht 2010, 413-415) His focus lies more on the discourse and communication that is induced and maintained by and through civil society. For this research, Habermas' focus on civil society inducing and maintaining discourse might be an interesting scope, because the intention is not to discuss the relation to policies, but rather the understanding of civil society that is exposed in the discourse.

In the context of the fall of the Berlin Wall and during the revolutions in Poland and Hungary, the term civil society became more popular when referring to activists. From then on civil society is often understood as empowering groups of people, especially those who have been disadvantaged as women, homosexuals or disabled people. Based on the development and the different definitions used for the term civil society, nowadays it is often understood as all organisations and movement that exist outside of the State and the market that foster civic education and participation. It does not necessarily only include NGOs, but rather all kinds of organisations which could for example be of religious, economic or ethical nature as well as sports clubs, labour unions or professional associations advancing social or political agendas. Most of these organisations are officially registered, but there are many unaccounted grass-root organisations as well. (Carothers & Barndt 1999, 19f.) Examples of these organisations that constitute the civil society can be seen in the graphic below.

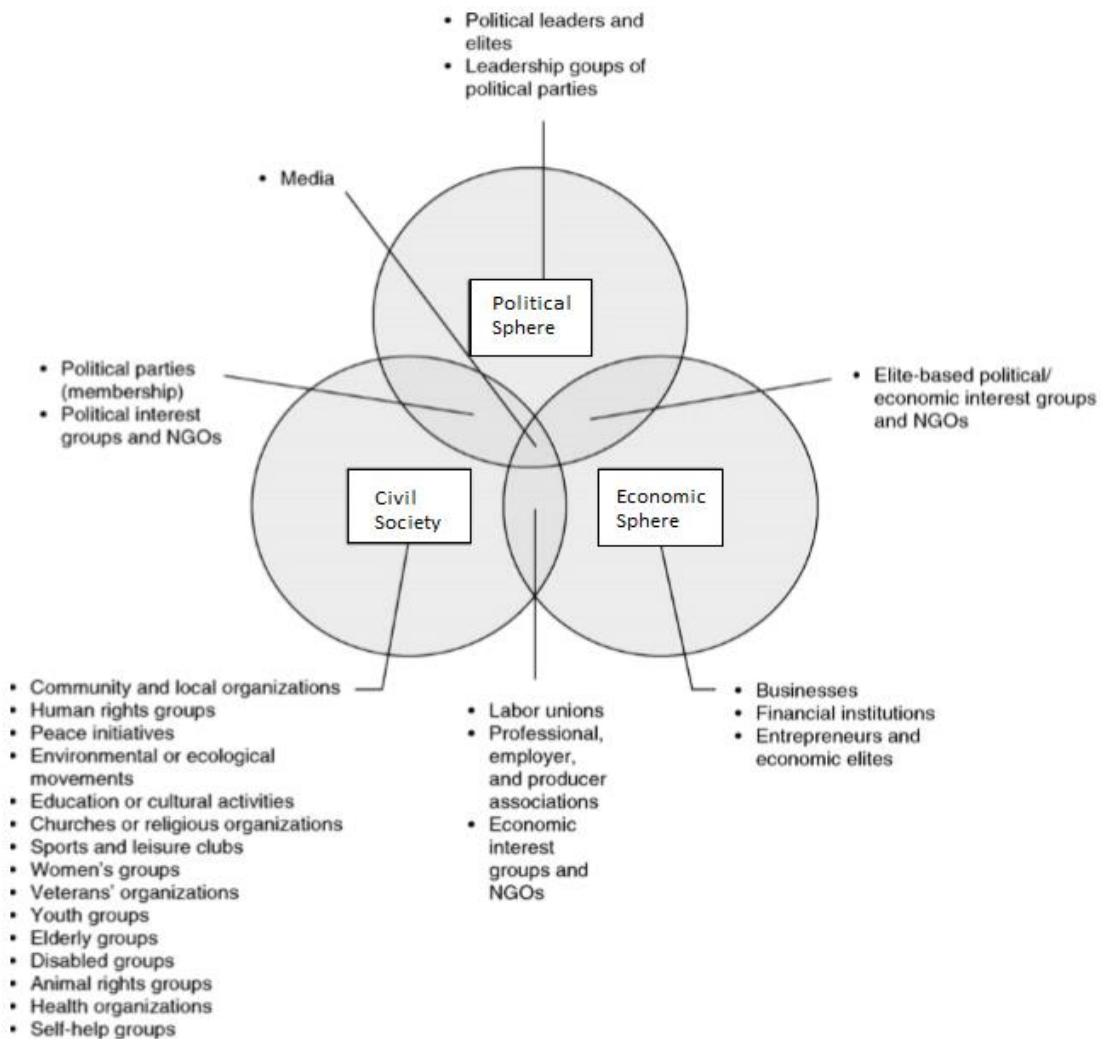


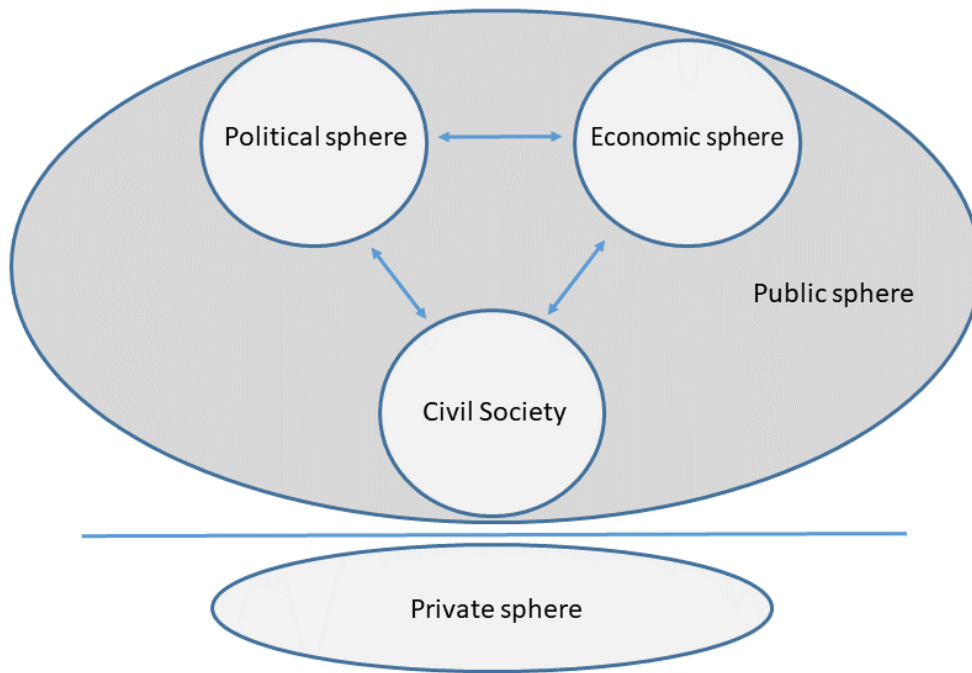
Figure 1: The groups of civil society (based on Howard 2020, 188)

Walzer published one of the most recent theories on civil society reflecting the idea of civil society as a fragmented and diverse collection of organisations and groups. He sees civil society as a project of projects consisting of pluralist fragments representing the organisations. He notes that without the State, civil society would not be able to develop, as both mutually reinforce each other. For him, civil society poses a threat to state power, religious universalism and the exclusivity of nations. (Obadare 2010, 457-459) In his theory, Walzer focusses more on the organisation and the constellation of civil society compared to Habermas and Gramsci who looked at it as one whole autonomy. Walzer also emphasizes the results, but more in a bigger context as to which it imposes a threat and not like Habermas

and Gramsci who emphasise measurable and more immediate outcomes for the individual, the society and the government.

Comparing and summarising the presented theories, the main aspects characterising civil society are its ability to challenge and change the hegemony, or governmental decisions to balance out power and to prevent misuses. Furthermore, its function is to enhance the discourse on public decisions as well as the communication between the different actors. Of importance is also its constellation and members that are referred to as groups and organisations. It seems like within the civil society there is no space for individuals fighting for a cause. This might however be explained that scientifically it is difficult to differentiate single individuals in the group. Moreover, with debates and communication being an essential part of civil society, it is almost impossible that it consists of merely individuals.

The term civil society is thus not used to refer to all citizens in a state, but the political active part of the citizens, though political active does not mean organised in parties. As political parties and their members count as part of the political sphere and are therefore to be seen as outside of the civil society. Definitional boundaries are drawn towards the economic society or political society and on the other hand to the private sphere that include friends and family. As it can be seen in figure 1, it is difficult to draw concrete boundaries between the spheres as they overlap. However, in the following figure the relations of these spheres are illustrated.



*Figure 2: Civil society in the public sphere (based on Howard 2010, 186)*

### 3.3. Connecting democracy and civil society

As seen in the previous chapters, it is difficult to discuss civil society without the connection to democracy, and especially in more modern democracy theories with a pronounced focus on participation, it also seems indispensable to discuss democracy without considering civil society. In the following, the two concepts of democracy and civil society shall be brought together in order to understand the connection between both.

Many scholars agree that civil society is an important concept balancing the power of the State and therefore a guarantor of democracy. Pietrzyk-Reeves argues that civil society “embraces a dynamic range of assumptions, values, and institutions, which are indispensable as the pre-conditions of democracy, such as political, social and civil rights, the rule of law, a public sphere and above all a plurality of associations” (Pietrzyk-Reeves 2003, 39), and can therefore be seen as needed in order to establish democracy. The positive effects Diamond ascribes to civil society are the strengthening and legitimation of the deeply rooted democratic state, the increase in civic participation as well as education and the establishing of a culture of tolerance and bargaining. Furthermore, it fosters the debate on relevant issues which leads to inclusion and education about the topics. Putman adds a social-psychological benefit for the people organised in the civil society turning them into a more peaceful and harmonic democratic society. The benefits resulting are imminent for the individual as well as for the society. The individual has the success of reaching goals that he would not be able to reach on his own. Also, civil society acts like a guarding shield for the society against the State in case it might try to install legislation at the society’s cost. (Howard 2010, 188f.) Several scholars also mention the surveillance part outside of institutions without which governments could not be called democratic. The democratic nature of their politics and the system only comes to existence in the cooperation with the actual core of democracy – the people. Hence, the approaches to democratic theories might lack the “counter-democracy”, the civil society. (della Porta 2013, 4) Also, a strong civil society does not weaken the State or the democracy. The contrary is actually the case, it needs strong institutions and motivated politicians to apply and introduce the changes presented by the civil society. In contrast, democracy is also not guaranteeing a strong civil society. There are countries with stable democracies, but a lack of a strong civil society as Japan for example. “Civil society can and should challenge, irritate and,

at times, even antagonise the state [...] they develop in tandem, not at each other's expense" (Carothers & Barndt 1999, 27).

However, it also cannot be expected from civil society to naturally and internally grant democracy. It should not be underestimated that there are also destructive groups trying to undermine democracy within a civil society. Also, organisations in civil society can be led by authoritarian leaders making use of top-down approaches to enforce their ideas and acts which do not always necessarily involve the good for the society. It is in general difficult to accept organisations in the civil society as representing and fighting for a good cause, which is pluralistic and discussable concept, for everyone. So, within the field of civil society organisations, one may encounter organisations fighting for opposing causes and still aiming to serve their understanding of the common good. Furthermore, a lack of critically questioning governmental decisions and relevant topics can be identified for the civil society. (Carothers & Barndt 1999, 21f.) Moreover, it has to be kept in mind that civil societies are undemocratic as they are not elected. Furthermore, as they are often aiming to empower vulnerable groups, there is a potential of the most vulnerable groups to be harmed when civil society is misunderstood or its aims are misconducted.

There are differences between the roles of civil societies in long traditional democracies and in newly formed or fairly authoritarian governments. However, in instable democracies or under authoritarian governments, the civil society takes an anti-political point of view to counter the current government. It then has to find its position in a constructive relationship with the state. A reason for the absence of a strong and united civil society in developing countries is often seen as the patterns and traditions of authority and the lacking experiences with society to break free from these patterns in a liberal way. (Pietrzyk-Reeves 2003, 43f.)

The role of civil society in a democracy and for the democratisation process is divided by scholars between consolidation and transition. In the transition phase civil society plays an important role in pressuring political change through the engagement and motivation of groups and masses of people. Afterwards, civil society also plays a major role in the consolidation of democracy by monitoring the state of democracy, the decision-making and the realisation of promises. However, it also has to be mentioned that according to the liberal theory, civil society can also have a negative influence on democratic consolidation. Especially

facing a lack of *democratic culture*, social or economic inequalities or regional and ethical differences are often perceived by scholars as potential problems for democratic consolidation. (Cunningham 2015, 94f.) Regarding democratic consolidation, della Porta notes that the democratisation *from below* has been generally disregarded by social scientists where the democratisation by elites were always in the focus. (della Porta 2013, 7) This approach is interesting to the project at hand because it researches the role of the civil society in democracies, hence it looks at democracy from below and not in a top-bottom approach.

In summary, considering civil society together with democracy, it can be seen that the concepts unfold their potential only in cooperation and when working together. Civil society has the potential to fill the empty space that is being left between the political and the private sphere, especially in the last years where politicians and citizens seem to have moved further apart from each other in spite of advanced technical and communicative opportunities. This empty space may be filled with civil society enhancing discourse, mediation and collaboration between both parts.

It can however be questioned if the concept of civil society is overall linked to the global North, or respectively to the West. Often in the literature, civil societies across countries and cultures are homogenised and the geographical differences are underestimated. When looking at civil society in a non-Western perspective, it has to be treated carefully to not obtrude the label *civil society* on something that is not. (Howard 2010, 191) As it can be seen, necessary in order to form a civil society is the separation of the spheres between state and civil society and private and public. The separation of these spheres however, has not been an outcome of a rising civil society, but it has been a precondition for it. The separation was achieved through the bourgeoisie emphasising the importance of the market and separating it from the State. However, this development cannot be seen in the entire world, but is an explicit development of the European bourgeoisie. (Baker 1998, 86f.) Moreover, according to Young, civil societies in the developing world “are often fragmented, unorganised, uncooperative and weak” (Mercer 2002, 13).



### 3.4. Literature review: Democracy and civil society

#### 3.4.1. In Latin America

“South America was the world of ambiguity; political formulae were intrinsically hybrid. In turn, the supremacy of the state over civil society was not always detrimental to democracy.” (Cavarozzi 2003, 42) Based on the quote above it can already be seen that the consideration of democracy and civil society in Latin America might differ from the theories that are state of the art in the Northern hemisphere. In the chapters before, it has not been considered neither an ambiguous and hybrid democratic environment nor good aspects of the state’s supremacy.

Non-profit organisations that are counted as part of the civil society are present in South America since the consolidation of the different states and the end of colonialism. These organisations used to be very fragmented and much align with the State and the economy. The structures and customs of the society in Latin America in general are not made as such for civil society resulting of the long centuries of colonisation. The society has been organised in a hierarchical order and the precondition for civil society of an accepted equality among the citizens is not been given. The first civil societies emerged in order to confirm and spread the ideas of the authoritarian governments to the private sphere. In the Southern cone, the poor economic situation under the authoritarian regimes then led to the establishing of civil societies helping the less fortunate and supporting the democratisation process. This liberalisation of the society from the non-democratic regimes can directly be linked to the civil society. The civil society became the only sphere where political engagement was possible in delimitation to the authoritarian regime. Because of long lasting authoritarian regimes, Latin American democracies are not as consolidated as long-standing democracies in the global North for example. Furthermore, institutions are still hollow, parties are weak and politics are very personal. (Lipset & Lakin 2004, 412f.) Only recently civil societies have come to be more present and engaged in deeper structures of the society and civil societies contributed to the improvement of the relationship between the private and the public sphere. (Feinberg et al. 2006, 37-42)

Delamaza states in her research *Enhance Democracy* that in Latin America, social policies are often introduced without having considered the necessary social conditions. That actually led to a partly contradictory application of democratic processes as the civil society is not

involved. Factors that may jeopardise the relationship between the State and the society are for example a high degree of poverty, inequality and socioeconomic exclusion. It makes it harder for democracy to be established and maintained as it can also be seen by reoccurring outbreaks of social conflicts. Delamaza refers to José Nun's essay explaining that democracy requires some conditions for the social order and the inclusion and participation. This is seen by many scholars as the basis for democracy theory which is not necessarily being fulfilled in Latin America. (Delamaza 2015, 1-6)

Huntington, Cozier and Watanuki introduce the term political *counterculture* that has been established in Latin American democracies between the loss of prestige and the inability of governments to respond to rising unrests among the civil society and its claims. This counterculture is manifested in the lacking socioeconomic conditions to balance the unrests as civil participation is intended to be kept as low as possible in order to prevent the country from becoming *ungovernable*. Hence, it results in weakened citizen participation. Recognising civil society's claims, in the last years some political instruments were introduced in many Latin American countries in order to increase participation. Examples for such instruments are direct democracy in form of legislative reforms, plebiscites and new policy designs. However, the success and the objective of these mechanisms do not stand alone in its mere existence, but it has to be measured by the ability and willingness of governments to make these mechanisms mandatory. Also, it has to be added that afterwards the expressed will and opinion of the participating citizens has to be included in the policy- and decision-making process. (Delamaza 2015, 7f.)

Based on the literature about democracies and civil societies in Latin America discussed in this chapter, it seems that in theory the understanding of both concepts in Latin America is similar to the one assessed in the chapters before. However, in practice it seems a lot more difficult to realise. Civil society has historically played an important role, but seems to be used as an adversary of the system and the governance instead of a collaboration and consolidation. Furthermore, due to governments trying to weaken civil societies and due to their historically fragmented structure, it seems like civil society is less institutionalised and constructively working with the State in Latin America.

### 3.4.2. In Chile

As already addressed in chapter 2, Chile did not have an outstanding role under the Spanish rule, because it was a relatively poor region with scarce raw materials and a reluctant indigenous population. Chile gained independence in 1818 and was led by a government of elites that excluded the masses. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was characterised by political stability due to economic prosperity through free ports and foreign trade. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chile's presidential republic was turned into a parliamentary republic and politically diverse fractions as liberals, conservatives, socialists and nationalists began to organise themselves in parties. In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, strikes and unrests broke out, because the working class felt confronted with growing social and economic problems. Neither a pronounced dependence on the United States, nor radical political powers from the Right or Left could solve the problems of economic inequalities and the dissatisfaction of the lower and middle class. In the 1970s, the oligarchy, the nationalists and the centre Christian-Democrats joined their forces and supported parts of the army which resulted in a coup d'état in 1973 and General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte was installed as president. The pressure on the regime grew within the country as several parties and the Catholic Church demanded a governmental change, but also on an international level due to extensive human rights violations. In 1989, the first democratic elections were held and Pinochet's dictatorship was ended. (Johnson et al. 2020)

The civil society has played an important role in the liberalisation of the country from the Pinochet regime. Since then, Chile developed to an exemplary democracy in the region due to economic stability based on a neoliberal system and political stability. In the reconditioning process, the Chilean government assumed to institutional failures and human rights violations during the dictatorship of the Pinochet regime. (Barahona de Brito 1997) However, the links and trust between the state and society was fractured because of the long period of dictatorship. The democratisation process in Chile was implemented from top-down in negotiations between a military elite and the forces that were about to enter the new democratic government. The constitution that was implemented by the Pinochet regime in 1980 stayed untouched and unchanged. Part of these negotiations was also the attempt to undermine and obstruct social movements and civil participation. Still, social policies were introduced to reduce poverty. Those were effective, but the socioeconomic order in Chile has

not been changed and the civil society has not been strengthened or its existence supported. It resulted in the success of Chile to reduce poverty, achieve a high political stability and economic growth while on the other hand the inequalities rose, the civil society is fragmented and party participation as well as trust in institutions are low. The political debate filled with claims for participation and in 2006, the so-called Penguins' Revolution took place requesting a *citizen government*. It was a result of many protests and strikes because of a dissatisfaction with the public education and working conditions of mine workers. (Johnson et al. 2020) The resulting debate unveiled the fragmented civil society in Chile and the different understandings within the government, among parties and within the civil society of how participation should be accomplished. (Delamaza 2015, 1-10)

In Chile, it can be seen that as it was not in the focus of the government to support a growing civil society, the civil society is relatively weak. (ibid, 12f.) Though recently "there have been an increasing series of social movements, most notoriously the student movement, but also LGBT, environmentalist, feminist, pro-pension and regional and local movements that have openly and frequently exercised their rights" (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018a). Civil society organisations in Chile are increasingly differentiated and their collaboration varies. The organisations differ from religious over sports to organisations that fight for social equality. In general, citizen participation in and the association with the organisations is moderate. (ibid)

On October, 18<sup>th</sup> 2019 heavy protests broke out after the government's announcement to increase the metro prices in Santiago de Chile. The current president, a conservative billionaire, Sebastián Piñera who became elected for the second time in 2017 (first term 2010-2014) declared the state of emergency the next day and deployed the military to the streets. In the following days, one million Chileans protested in the streets and abroad in front of Chilean embassies. On October, 28<sup>th</sup>, the state of emergency ended, the price increase was taken back and the minimum wage and pensions increased. However, the protests and social unrests did not come to an end. The protests reached international attention not only because of the masses mobilised, but also because of the police's repressive reaction. Even though the protests have calmed down over Christmas, they rose again especially in March 2020 demanding economic, social and environmental changes encapsulated in a new constitution. (Feinberg et al. 2006, 78)

“This concerns the pension system, the rights of employees, women rights, children’s rights, the education system, health system, access to water and land, housing, and they want to rewrite history with a new constitution. The protests have revealed multiple grievances and the call for “dignity” allowed to unify diverse social groups and their concerns against the hegemonial capitalist system.” (Hölzl 2020)

In April 2020, there was supposed to be hold a plebiscite having the citizens choose whether they want a new constitution and who will compose it (which was postponed to June due to the outbreak of the Covid19 virus). In the last months, citizens have started to meet in councils to discuss possible changes of the constitution. “The past five months of unrest in Chile underline that society has changed and that the people are ready for real democracy” (ibid). Civil society’s claims go further now than just demanding a new constitution, they also demand a justice for the committed human rights violations.

Chile finds itself in a crucial situation that can sustainably determine the role of civil society in its democracy and possibly demonstrate how civic participation can lead to enhanced democracy.

### 3.4.3. In Uruguay

Similar to Chile, Uruguay has been a rather unimportant colony under the Spanish rule due to the lack of minerals and a low number of indigenous people to be enslaved. In 1830, Uruguay's first constitution was approved marking the end of the fighting for independence. However, in the years after the independence, Uruguay was subject to wars and regional claims by Brazil and Argentina. Uruguay's government, struggled by the wars, consisted of two parties that balanced the power and ruled alternating. Especially from the 20<sup>th</sup> century on, Uruguay found political stability under the Colorado's rule and economic growth due to its important ports, foreign trade and agriculture. The economic growth and a constant flow of (European) immigration continued during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and made Uruguay Latin America's country with the highest income per capita and a strong democracy in the 1950s. However, due to decreasing wool prices, the economy declined, the government got the country into debt, the currency devalued and inflation was rising. By reason of the decreasing living conditions, student and union protests broke out and the leftist Tupamaro guerrilla started attacks in Montevideo. When the police was unable to counter the attacks, the military was installed to take control of the containment of the Tupamaros which resulted in the establishing of a military regime in 1973. During the military regime, many people were imprisoned, disappeared or murdered, unions were dissolved and strikes were forbidden. Apart from human rights abuses, wages were held down and businesses forced to modernise which resulted in an economic rise. Much to the regime's surprise, a plebiscite on a new constitution got rejected and finally, especially due to a decreasing economy because of the Falkland wars and Argentina's economic downturn, the military regime agreed to return to a democratic rule in 1985. (Weinstein et al. 2020) In Uruguay, the Church did not play an important role especially not in the cooperation with political parties. Also, human rights organisations have historically been weak and not cooperating and not been accepted by the parties. The newly elected government served as a guarding shield for the military protecting it from serving justice and no institutional fault has been declared and few cases have been persecuted. (Barahona de Brito 1997) In the first democratic elections afterwards, the Uruguayan democracy began the transition from a bipartisan system to a modern pluralist system. It began with the rise of the leftist party Frente Amplio that united many small left-oriented parties in one and consisted also partly of the former Tupamaro movement. However, the

new parties and the two traditional ones still acted in the dynamics of a bipartisan system as it has grown over decades in Uruguay. From this moment on, the two opponents could be separated into the traditional parties and the “unconventional” ones. (Caetano & Armas 2012, 40-43) Still, the diversification of the party system offered new positions to be presented in the political arena. This counts especially for the Frente Amplio that gave the left a voice and room for opposition. It also opened up the space for new political debates and for organisation and movements gathering and demanding justice. In the 1990s, under the lead of the Blancos and especially due to the accession to the Mercosur (Common Market of the South shared by Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and formerly Venezuela), Uruguay’s economy stabilised. In 2004, the Frente Amplio as the first leftist (and “unconventional”) party was elected and President Tabaré Vázquez was sworn in in 2005. Under Vázquez and in the following electoral term under president José Mujica, Uruguay’s economy grew steadily, the unemployment rate dropped, investigations of human rights violations under the military regime began and incomparable social policies for the region were introduced (among those the legalisation of abortion in 2012, same-sex marriage and the consumption and production of marijuana in 2013). The welfare state including healthcare, childcare and unemployment benefits is incomparably advanced for the Latin American region. Furthermore, education is free in Uruguay. After Mujica’s term, Vázquez was re-elected until the 15 years of the Frente Amplio government ended in 2019 with the election of the Blanco candidate Luis Lacalle-Pou. (Weinstein et al. 2020)

The participation of the Uruguayans in politics is guaranteed through obligatory votes for everyone older than 18. (Weinstein et al. 2020) Uruguay’s democracy has the longest tradition in Latin America. Especially labour unions have a strong standing in Uruguay and were included with some other civil society organisations during the democratisation process after the military regime. They were supported by the Frente Amplio who assumed a role of a defender of the poor, the working-class and state-owned companies. While labour unions and business associations have had a strong influence in Uruguay since the 1960s, more social organisations consisting of students, teachers and pensioners and organisations supporting LGBT rights, indigenous people and women evolved in the last years. “In general terms, social groups are inclusive, tend to balance one another, and have pragmatic and cooperative attitudes.” (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018b)

Because of the history and Uruguay's political stability and economic prosperity including public policies that are far more advanced than in any country in the region, it makes Uruguay sometimes being seen as the perfect example for a democracy in Latin America. However, it does not necessarily feel that way living in this seemingly perfect country. Uruguayans are used to comparing themselves to Europe and not to their neighbouring countries, whereas the special standing becomes less important. The stable democracy is valued, but the Uruguayans are worried about increasing insecurities, lacking reformatations of the education system, a high dependence on export and agriculture and on an ageing population. That is where the civil society becomes active and demands changes. (Pardo 2019) And possibly, even though it is not as obvious as in Chile in the last months, the civil society in Uruguay finds itself in a crucial situation as well. Although, in the case of Uruguay, the main task of the civil society could be regarded as changing the discourse on democracy in Uruguay and helping to resolve occurring problems.

### 3.5. Conclusion

All theories discussed about democracy involve a part that is very much focussed on institutions, the structure of the state or the implementation of elections. Of course, it is important to establish a theoretical basis that represents an institutional focus, but as to this definition, the substantial parts are that democracy unites citizens within a state and protects them offering everyone equal chances. They are united under a shared system of rights and obligations and under shared cultural values. Democracy as by its meaning *rule by the people* is hence constituted of the people living within the state deciding together on public matters. Representatives at least on a national level are from today's point of view indispensable, but the focus of this research lies on the participation of the people. Through the participation it has to be assured that everyone is able to communicate its ideas and needs, for which education and information need to be provided by the State. The desirable communication of the people will automatically result in diverse needs and disputes. Democracy needs to assure that these discourses are balanced, that the collaboration is a way of listening, explaining and adapting.

Democracy is thus understood as the political system of a state led by and with the people through representatives and participation in discourse that binds by providing enhanced



education and information and shared values of trust, equality, and protection in form of human rights while granting personal liberties.

In this research, civil society is understood to encompass different autonomous but interacting groups and organisations. These groups can be of different nature as long as their aim is to enhance the discourse between the political and the private sphere. This could either be motivated to bring about change and development or cooperation. The groups are therefore located in the public sphere, as they are independent of the private, but also autonomous from the political and economic sphere, even though they can operate together and influence each other. The groups hence consist of citizens, not politicians.

Civil society is therefore defined as diverse groups of citizens that act autonomously from the political and economic sphere to achieve societal or political changes for the common good reflecting their vision of democracy, as they protect, support, empower and educate citizens and balance state power.

In this research, democracy and civil society are understood as only coming to existence in collaboration. In the social world that exists through people's interaction, the concepts cannot stand alone as they reciprocally require each other. Civil society is understood as being indispensable for democracy in consolidation as well as transition and legitimatises and strengthens it on a daily basis. As this research contemplates democracy from the civil society's point of view, democracy is seen as to be built from the bottom, through civil society.

#### 4. Analysis

In both countries, Chile and Uruguay, the emergence of civil society after the rule of authoritarian regimes was eased because of the long democratic traditions both countries have had. (Feinberg et al. 2006, 42) For this project, it can be resumed from the research Barahona de Brito conducted that the pre-conditions for an active civil society and its role within the Uruguayan democracy have traditionally been less commonly spread. Compared to that, organisations in the Chilean civil society already played an important role in the consolidation phase for the democracy, even though they are not supported by the government. Furthermore, in empirical studies, scholars of the John Hopkins Comparative Non-profit Sector have found out that in Uruguay most organisations can be related to sports and social activities and 70% of all organisations are located in Montevideo. In Santiago de Chile it is only 35% of all civil society organisations. The Civil Society index results for Chile in 1.9 being a not so well-structured civil society of medium strength and for Uruguay in 1.3 indicating a weak civil society. (Roitter 2010, 287-290)

However, especially in the last years and through the diversification of the Uruguayan political sphere, it seems like the civil society has gotten stronger than before. Based on the literature review, it can be assumed that the civil society is more institutionalised in Uruguay as the organisations seem to work more closely together with the government. Furthermore, the civil society seems to act without tensions with the government as well as with each other. Compared to that, especially within the last year, the Chilean civil society presented itself very contentious in relation to the government. Even though the civil society might historically be fragmented, on this cause of changing the constitution and taking part in the development of the democracy of their country, they are all working together with the same goal. The analysis in this chapter assesses how rooted and sustainable these common understandings and goals are and what they mean for the civil society in both countries.

##### 4.1. Introduction

The activities of the civil society and its understanding of the social world they act in can be analysed using organisations that comprise the civil society. Thus, in order to answer the three research questions, for every country three organisations with different foci in their actions are examined.

As derived from the definitions of how democracy and civil society are understood in this research, the discourse analysis is based on categories. It is examined if these categories can be found in the discourses of the different organisations and how they are related. The three questions were summarised in a topic they mainly deal with and to that topic categories were added that have been derived from this research's understanding of democracy and civil society.

The first research question on displaying the understanding of democracy can be categorised in the organisation's vision, the approach to participation and perceived boundaries. The category **vision** is chosen as all the organisations are (according to the definition of civil society) operating with a political agenda and therefore are likely to envision how their preferred political system looks like and how a democracy should be characterised. The category **participation** is chosen as it is a crucial part for defining democracy for this research. As democracy is regarded from a bottom-up approach, the way that the civil society and the private sphere shall participate in it, is important to understand democracy. The last category **boundaries** is chosen, because it has been revealed in the theory chapter that boundaries are still an open question in a democracy and difficult to erase. Therefore, it can be an important part of the organisations' understanding of democracy which boundaries (if any) exist in their vision and how they approach to overcome them.

The second question actually deals with the understanding of civil society and the role it plays in a democracy. However, as in this research democracy and civil society understood as deeply intertwined, the concept civil society is already included in the first question. As the organisations identify as part of the civil society, their self-understanding in context to the democracy is analysed. The self-understanding of the organisation can be categorised in identity, claims and action. **Identity** is chosen as a category because it is something that every organisation portrays on their website, consciously and unconsciously. With the help of a discourse analysis both ways of communicating the identity are taken into consideration. The categories **claims** and **actions** give a deeper insight to its role and what the organisation actually does to evoke change. It might disclose discrepancies between the claims and actions and therefore make the role meaningless in the struggle for their vision of democracy or show structured actions based on the claims that are rooted in the identity of the organisation.

The third question about the communication of the organisation can be categorised in means, spheres and the form of dialogue. These categories sum up the relation between all the three questions. The **means** of communication can be understood in a technical way as well as a linguistic way of how people are addressed. It is important to look at when aiming to examining how the organisation tries to communicate with whom and if it even reaches the appropriate group of people. The category **spheres** draws back to exactly that group of people as well as to the other two questions, because it summarises if the organisation acts mainly in the private, political or economic sphere. Lastly, the relation to **dialogue** is taken into consideration, because it can show whether the vision of democracy and the claims of the organisation are executed in a discursive manner, or if no exchange of opinions is supported by the organisation. So, the third topic can also be seen as a means of constructing the ones before.

At the end of each chapter of analysing the organisations, the organisations' understanding and the finding of the interpretations are contrasted in a table.

<i>Research question, topic</i>	<i>Category</i>
<i>Discourse on democracy</i>	Vision
	Participation
	Boundaries
<i>Discourse on self-understanding</i>	Identity
	Claims
	Action
<i>Communication</i>	Means
	Sphere
	Dialogue

*Table 1: Structure discourse analysis*

As mentioned in chapter two, the analysis aims to capture the diversity of the civil society in Chile and Uruguay. Therefore, based on the theory and on the literature review, different possible foci of organisations that exist in the civil society were established. Furthermore, it has been aimed to choose a diverse range of types of organisations for the analysis, illustrating NGOs, assemblies, foundations or collectives for example. These foci and accordingly the organisations that are analysed can be retrieved from the following table:

<i>Focus of the organisation</i>	<i>Chile</i>	<i>Uruguay</i>
<i>Questions of gender diversity and equality</i>	Chile Mujeres	Mujer y Salud en Uruguay
<i>Human rights</i>	Oberservatorio Ciudadano	ONG El Paso
<i>Student organisations</i>	Asamblea Coordinadora de Estudiantes Secundarios	Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Uruguay

*Table 2: Civil society organisations Chile and Uruguay*

Within the analysis, references to Twitter posts of the organisations are drawn. These are referred to as images which can be found in the appendix.

The organisations are referred to as “it” reflecting the perceptions of the organisations as an entity which might differ from the authors’ or members’ understandings.

## 4.2. Civil society and democracy in Chile

### 4.2.1. Chile Mujeres

Fundación Chile Mujeres (English: Foundation Chile Women) is a foundation based in Santiago de Chile and is mainly focused on the support of women's rights in the labour market. (Chile Mujeres 2019c) Subject to the analysis are the homepage of Chile Mujeres, the Twitter account and articles in form of columns that are published on their website as well as in newspapers.

The organisation Chile Mujeres expresses its **vision** of democracy throughout the discourse in different text materials and articles published on its website. Though focusing on improving the rights of women in the economic sphere, the organisation presents itself on the "who we are" page as to work for the "construction of a more equal and fair country" (translated by author, Chile Mujeres 2019c). The rhetoric behind not only demanding equality, which would, based on the scope of the organisation, count for the labour market, but referring generally to the country, is important in this context. It shows the active role that it claims to take in that process and that problems of inequality are to be solved in a national far-reaching context. Its vision of a more equal and fair country with opportunities for women can only be achieved through a change in the execution of the democratic understanding, which is to be achieved through the involvement of the public which then leads to legislation changes supporting women. This assumption is supported through the narrative that is used in one of the columns where violence against women and the gender pay gap are equated. Chile Mujeres implies that the pay gap is as important and everyone should agree in fighting the pay gap on the same level as violence against women. However, the gender pay gap is nothing visible and nothing as obviously false and dangerous as violence. (Campino 2019) So, Chile Mujeres uses this narrative in order to communicate its vision that beneath these acts are the same principles as undermining women, not treating them equally and even putting their lives in danger. It clearly shows that men are the ones in charge of power in Chile and that women have to suffer from it. The narrative of supporting women and therefore supporting the decrease of inequality and doing so through a cultural and social change of perceptions gets reinforced for possible implications as empowerment of the vulnerable group and education on the issues for the whole society can be derived. Drawing on the narrative of women in danger of violence adds to that perception, as it is already present in the public discourse.

Overall, analysing the discourse on democracy, the organisation presents itself as dealing mainly with topics that are applied in the economic sphere which are rooted in the understanding and re-thinking of democracy. Because of the focus on equality, empowerment and self-fulfilment of the individual through economic well-being, parallels to a liberal understanding of democracy can be drawn. However, the approach to add to the common discourse in order to achieve change, adds to a discursive component to arrive at a liberal understanding of democracy.

The organisation's relation to power and therefore its understanding of **participation** evolves around the whole society. Through its communication, the organisation constructs a discourse showing that only through a cultural change, meaning only with the help and support of the whole society, its vision can be achieved. In order to achieve that effect, it aims to give power to the society by giving advices as "the key to reversing this situation lies in a cultural change that must be fostered with better adaptability of working conditions, on the one hand, and with greater parental co-responsibility on the other [..., because] 53% of Chileans believe that working women neglect their children" (translated by author, Chile Mujeres 2019b) The economic and political sphere (in reference to working conditions) and the private sphere (in reference to parenting responsibilities) are connected to precipitate a cultural change. It becomes even more apparent through the use of the narrative of a woman neglecting their children. Neglect is defined as "not giving enough care or attention to people or things that are in your responsibility" (Cambridge Dictionary 2020), thus it would mean for working women not to care enough for their children. The discourse is constructed to present the picture of the negatively connoted word *neglect* is creating an exigence for the reader to add to changing this seemingly societal perception. It gives insights to the vision of democracy as including a high degree of participation in a discursive understanding in order to achieve change. Another article written by Veronica Campino starts with a quote of J.F. Kennedy "don't ask what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" (translated by author, Campino 2020). The exigence behind that sentence supports the empowerment, if not constraint, that the reader (as part of the whole society) should not demand from their country, but actively engage in improving it.

Image 1 shows a Twitter post from December, 31<sup>st</sup> where Chile Mujeres refers to the topic "ConstituyentePariaria" which can be explained as the egalitarian construction of the new

constitution written by the same amount of men as women. It shows how the organisation aims to participate in the actual realisation of democracy as working on a new and fair constitution. (Chile Mujeres 2019a) Analysing the discourse of this post, the actual idea of application of this participation can be manifested. Participation of the whole society seems to be desired in order to advance the cultural change through changing the discourse on topics about equality between men and women. And then it is the civil society that actually participates in formulating the new constitution in cooperation with the political sphere. It should be questioned though that only because the constitution is written by an egalitarian team, equality is automatically given.

Within the discourse on democracy, Chile Mujeres approach to participation can be interpreted as inclusive and empowering for the whole society giving them responsibilities to evoke a cultural change in order to develop independently which adds to a discursive understanding of democracy, though the actual realisation is only applied by small groups.

Chile Mujeres clearly establishes in its discourse **boundaries** it perceives currently in the democracy. These boundaries are manifested in an economic inequality between men and women which is employed by societal and cultural factors as well as reinforces them, so that a circle develops. Chile Mujeres tries to break this circle trying to improve the situation for women in the economic sphere hoping to induce changes that result in a democracy marked by equality. For this vision of participation and democracy, the boundary limiting the power for the society as well as their education and confidence to participate in change, is aimed to be disrupted.

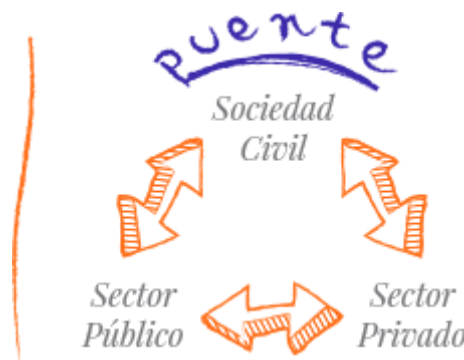
Vision	Liberal democracy, focus on equality, economic well-being
Participation	Citizens in discourse, civil society in decision-making
Boundaries	Disadvantages for women, limit of power and education of private sphere

*Table 3: Discourse on democracy - Chile Mujeres*

In the discourse on democracy and the organisation's **identity**, it presents itself in the "who we are" section on its website as "born in the civil society" (translated by author, Chile Mujeres 2019c). Hence it should be seen as an organisation that understands its role as advancing its visions on democracy through cultural or policy changes and existing detached from the



private, political and economic sphere. The perceived role of the civil society is graphically explained on its website:



*Figure 3: Civil society as a bridge between private and public (Chile Mujeres 2019c)*

It becomes apparent that the civil society is understood by Chile Mujeres as the bridge (Spanish: puente) between the private and the public sphere, therefore seeing itself as a part of that bridge and thus a connector between the spheres. A bridge between those spheres also implies that there is a distance to be overcome between both spheres.

In a column published on February, 26<sup>th</sup>, the co-founder of Chile Mujeres relates to the metoo movement, its importance and the interpretations of the organisation's identity that can be derived from it. The author claims that the success of the metoo movement that has helped women gain visibility and changed "the habitual" (translated by author, Campino 2019) within one year, was only possible because women were "empowered so they dared to tell their stories" (translated by author, Campino 2019). Keeping in mind the situation and construction of this discourse it seems to be creating a distance between those women who need empowerment and the woman already powerful as the co-founder of Chile Mujeres, writing the article. It needs powerful women to strengthen and support the rights of those who cannot, and Chile Mujeres identify as one of those who empower others. On the one hand, the discourse gives the impression of a division between the author that already knows, and the society that still has to learn. On the other hand, it shows the support of social movements as the metoo movement and the recognition of its importance which speaks for a vertical inclusion of like-minded movements and organisations in the civil society. Also, the mere combination of an organisation that mainly emphasises its activities on issues that can be found in the economic sphere, but aiming to solve them in the political sphere, speaks for inclusion and cooperation among different spheres. These solutions in the political sphere are

mainly introduced by public policies that the organisation promotes and successfully partners with the State.

The main **claims** that Chile Mujeres presents in the discourse on its website are very much align with what is necessary in order to achieve its vision of democracy. Chile Mujeres claims for cultural changes in order to have the society supporting its work of empowering women and making Chile more equal. The organisation also supports the claims of the civil society that was actively demanding a change of the constitution in the last months. However, its emphasis is the claim on granting equality among those who will compose it.

Chile Mujeres understands the collaboration with the political sphere as a prerequisite for its **actions** to achieve the claims. Explicitly, the organisation explains in the “who we are” section that they “promote public and organisational policies of labour adaptability, parental co-responsibility, salary equality, selection of people without bias, spaces free of harassment and leadership for the common good” (translated by author, Chile Mujeres 2019c). The promotion of public policies aims for the common good, clearly showing the cooperation with the state as to promote and suggest new policies in order to achieve the vision of a more equal country. In order to improve the economic situation for women in Chile, changes in the public sphere have to be made which is then expected to lead to general changes and their implementation within the whole society.

Identity	Partner of political sphere, supporter of vulnerable groups
Claims	Cultural and institutional changes
Actions	Promoting policies, enhancing discourse on equality

*Table 4: Discourse on self-understanding - Chile Mujeres*

Considering that discourse is always action-oriented it has to be kept in mind that everything that is written in the “who we are” section on the website serves presentational purposes to **communicate** ideas of the organisation’s claims. Hence, the discourse is trying to convince the reader of the most positive aspects, understandings and visions of the organisation. Chile Mujeres mainly communicates through its social media channels and website and publishes columns in newspapers in order for them to be read by a broader public. However, there is no mentioning of personal contact or meetings, so it can be assumed that the organisation is not focused on personal conversations and a dialogic form of communication. This can especially

be assumed for the private sphere, as the collaboration with the political sphere is mostly emphasised. Chile Mujeres seems to mainly inform, empower and motivate for participation of the private sphere through making the issues part of the common discourse and trying to include everyone. However, the concrete dialogue still seems limited. Also, the Twitter account which could be seen as the easiest way of getting in touch with the private sphere online, is used by Chile Mujeres almost on a daily basis. The main emphasis however is information, so that it can spread its vision on democracy.

Means	Mainly online, newspapers
Spheres	Mainly economic and public
Dialogue	Little dialogue, rather top-down communication

*Table 5: Communication - Chile Mujeres*

All in all, the understanding of democracy of Chile Mujeres seems to be one that is characterised by the protection of rights and promotion of equality. It is achieved based on dialogue and collaboration, but not necessarily including those who are the ones being protected. Chile Mujeres is fighting for women and seems to do that successfully in their field, but it does not necessarily seem inclusive for anyone to join or collaborate who is not strongly related to the same field. Even though the cooperation, also with the State, is strong and they seem to be able to make a difference. Changes are mainly evoked institutionally through the cooperation with actors from the State. Even though, it is aimed to change cultural settings and social structures in their discourse, it seems like the organisation is not rooted deeply enough within the private sphere to actually get to change thinking patterns of the society. Its role therefore appears to be from a superordinate point of view. The understanding of the civil society's role therefore approximate Gramsci's theory, with a focus on contesting, but also spreading the hegemony. Even though hegemony in this scope would be in general mean the political sphere and its approaches.

The organisation identifies as contributing to the cooperation between the private and political sphere in constituting a bridge between both. However, it seems as if in its actions the bridge is only accessible for the political sphere. This understanding, the role and the change it tries to impose are communicated through its owned channels as well as in opinion columns in newspapers. However, they are more informative and scientifically connoted which adds to Chile Mujeres' accountability, but not to a proximity to the poorest and most in

need. So, even though the organisation envisions a discursive approach to cultural changes, the capacitation for realising those is missing.

#### 4.2.2. Observatorio Ciudadano

Observatorio Ciudadano is a non-governmental organisation with offices in Temuco (capital of La Araucanía, the poorest region in Chile) and Santiago de Chile that monitors and defends the human rights situation in the country. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018d)

The organisation's **vision** of democracy can be derived, amongst others, from the discourse presented in the "mission" section on the website, where it states to aim for "a world respectful of human rights, so that peoples and local communities can define their own fate within a framework of diversity, solidarity and reciprocity" (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018a). Thus, the organisation does not only see a special role for the political sphere to establish a framework of legislation, but in its vision of democracy, the whole society is expected to respect human rights. A respectful integration and contact between the communities which emphasises the indigenous peoples, is presented as the main focus of the organisation. Another main focus can be derived from the discourse on the organisation's website as intercultural appreciation what Observatorio Ciudadano often refers to on its website. As the organisation speaks about democracy in one country, it might seem unconventional to emphasise an intercultural understanding. However, it underlines the understanding of democracy based on personal liberties not imposing the assumption on the society that everyone in one country identifies as being part of the same culture. Observatorio Ciudadano's vision of democracy rather includes the protection of everyone's human rights and the inclusion and appreciation of diversity, so that everyone can develop individually and freely. The only reason for why indigenous peoples need a special emphasis and protection of their rights is to integrate them and make sure that no difference between them and other peoples are made. This understanding can be traced back to the idea of reciprocity stated in the organisation's mission, meaning to treat everyone equally and give back.

Summarising, Observatorio Ciudadano presents its vision of democracy especially focused on the respect and protection of human rights as well as the overall esteem of diversity and inclusion, especially working on the inclusion and protection of indigenous people. Applying the organisation's vision to the theories discussed, aspects of the liberal democracy, but also

the discursive theory can be found. As on the one hand, it envisions the State only to provide a framework of protection and enhance the right for everyone to develop freely. On the other hand, Observatorio Ciudadano wants this to be achieved through discursive discussions among the society.

Observatorio Ciudadano supports the citizens through discourse, training and enhancement of **participation**. The organisation wants to achieve transformations on a societal level that should be reached through an active and intercultural citizenship which implies the contribution and participation of all citizens in the democracy. With the notion of talking about cultural transformations the organisation aims to strengthen human rights and its vision of a democracy by making it an issue for the whole society and thus increases its importance while giving power and responsibility to the people. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018c) Observatorio Ciudadano allows citizens to “generate critical and participative consciousness in discourse that tends towards the construction of a democratic, equitable, inclusive and intercultural society”. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018c) Hence, democracy is not only the framework in which the discourse and the aspired transformations should take place, but also the tool through which a more democratic society shall be reached. It seems logical that the way to a more democratic country is a living democracy.

The understanding of democracy that Observatorio Ciudadano represents does not involve **boundaries** neither to other states, nor between different cultures. The understanding is conveyed in the way the organisation presents the protection of human rights as a basis for democracy and continue the argument working on protecting human rights internationally. The section “mission” on the organisation’s website reflects this understanding of democracy as the political sphere should provide the protection of human rights for everyone, not only limiting the vision of democracy to one state. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018a) However, the organisation identifies existing boundaries in the current order as to excluding groups as for example indigenous people from an equal treatment.

Vision	Liberal democracy based on equality, inclusion, diversity through discursive approaches
Participation	Discursive civic participation
Boundaries	Division in the society

*Table 6: Discourse on democracy - Observatorio Ciudadano*

In the “who we are” section on the website, the organisation presents a narrative telling the story of its founding and its development from which assumptions on its **identity** can be derived. The organisation was founded by “a group of citizens from diverse places of the country, varied professions and ethnic origins” (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018d). The fact that the organisation was not only established for indigenous people, but also founded by a group of diverse origins speaks for the lived diversity and inclusion in the organisation. The organisation itself understands the world from a constructionist point of view and supports an approach to identity as established through interaction and people’s identification. In an article, published by Observatorio Ciudadano it is mentioned that 12% of the Chileans identify as indigenous, which on the one hand increases the need to take care of the integration of a significant percentage of the population. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2019a) On the other hand, the organisation accepts as a definition for *indigenous* the identification of someone as being indigenous and not only their biological roots. Accepting this definition means also that every individual who feels excluded, disadvantaged and disempowered from its human rights needs to be supported and protected.

In 2008, the organisation changed its scope and name to Observatorio Ciudadano (Citizens’ Rights Watch) when feeling confronted with new emerging challenges to the human rights situation for all of the citizens. However, the organisation does not lose the focus on indigenous peoples’ rights as it would always state that the development to more international and more intercultural topics is only an addition to its foundation. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018d) The organisation thus unites contrasts in its identity such as acting domestically in the poorest region of Chile as well as internationally, or focussing on rights of indigenous people and discussing human rights in an economically globalised world. The discourse that is revealed through these contrast that marks its identity, can be understood as the organisation seeing themselves as a connector of what has drifted apart.

Further in the discourse, the organisation applies its mission to the actual work formulating **claims** to contribute to social, cultural and institutional transformations in Chile and in the Latin American region. This is planned to be achieved through the promotion of an active and intercultural citizenship in order to allow “individuals, peoples and local communities the full exercise of human rights” (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018b). In the way, Observatorio Ciudadano aims to address social, cultural and institutional transitions, it is actively contributing to a dialogue with the private and the political spheres to evaluate what needs to be changed and how to implement it. Furthermore, Observatorio Ciudadano speaks of transformations instead of changes. This research is based on the question how changes can be evoked, but the organisation goes further than that and talks about significant internal changes as transformations are understood. Changes can be barely notable, but transformations are deeply rooted inside institutions. Whereas change is often nudged externally, transformations can only be successful when they are nudged internally. This speaks for a strong collaboration that Observatorio Ciudadano must have with the public as well as private sphere. Furthermore, it shows that its vision cannot only be realised through institutional changes, but need to be internalised publicly which speaks for a discursive approach to democracy. The claims can be summarised as demanding an active citizenship to enforce society’s opportunities to fulfil the transformations on a societal and a cultural level and pushing the state to enforce them on an institutional level as well. The organisation’s role can therefore be characterised by giving the society the responsibility and power to challenge and transform the current world view and its implications.

The main support Observatorio Ciudadano offers for groups in need through projects and **actions** are presented on the website under “our programs”. The topics cover questions of specific importance for Chile as the protection of indigenous peoples’ rights, questions about economic integration and globalisation, questions about migration, integration and interculturality as well as questions about the protection of the environment. All programmes share a focus on research, documentation, promotion and advocacy to address the respective topics. Furthermore, the organisation promotes the dialogue between indigenous peoples and other actors and training for indigenous communities, civil society, public organisations, police and judges, among others which underlines the organisation’s approach to sustainably evoke changes in all spheres as well as to making the topic accessible and understandable

through education. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018b) The order in which the programs are organised matches the discourse that the organisation has already presented before. It gives first priority to protecting the human rights of indigenous peoples. Based on the order in which the programs are organised, the second most important program is about citizenship and interculturality. It makes sense that it is as important when relating it to the understanding of democracy and the approach to change that Observatorio Ciudadano presents. In the development of the organisation and also in its aims, it can be understood that it first wants to solve the current and significant human rights violations that indigenous people are exposed to and then engage with the whole society to improve the interculturality and the inclusion and acceptance of indigenous people. Thus, education and training are considered a fundamental tool to promote a culture of respect and exercise of human rights. As the organisation claims to fight against human rights violations and foster a more democratic country, the fourth topic of protecting the environment is presented as a human right. (ibid) The narrative the organisation uses to present the topic differs from the common discourse on the protection of the environment, as for example global warming and metaphors like melting polar caps. Instead, the focus is on the “cultural, material and spiritual sustenance” (Observatorio Ciudadano 2018b) that needs to be protected in the biodiversity of the indigenous peoples’ territories. It thus underlines the importance for indigenous peoples to protect the environment and to discuss alternatives to development as being crucial rights for human beings, as they feel connected to nature in a special sense. Observatorio Ciudadano underlines its support for the indigenous people in the way it accepts the approach of indigenous people to their territories and do not question other reasons for needing to protect the environment.

Through the discourse on the organisation’s actions, its perceived role as part of the civil society can be summarised as a safeguard and voice-giver for those in need, an educator for prevention and societal improvements and a promotor and contestant of public policies.



Identity	Supporter, mediator, connector
Claims	Cultural and institutional changes through participation and multiculturalism
Actions	Promoting policies, enforcing dialogue and education, help and support legally

*Table 7: Discourse on self-understanding - Observatorio Ciudadano*

At first, regarding the **communication** of the organisation it has to be mentioned that Observatorio Ciudadano is the only organisation whose website is translated to English. It supports the international aspirations the organisation has, possibly working outside the Latin American region. Furthermore, the organisation actively encourages the dialogue with various actors, among different spheres. In the campaigns on the organisation's homepage, any interested citizen is invited to join a campaign on renewable energies in Chile for example. There is an easily accessible way to join the campaign following a link. Another way to take part in the campaign is to join a "citizen's round table" to openly discuss the issues. Both ways make it possible for citizens to participate, simultaneously respecting everyone's individual abilities to get involved, which is important for the Observatorio Ciudadano's understanding of democracy as deliberating citizens to participate. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2019b)

Analysing the organisation's Twitter account as a way to communicate to a broader public, the discourse there seems to differ to the one presented throughout the website, as presented in the example in image 2. In a post from the April, 30<sup>th</sup> it is stated that "the historical causes for the conflict between the State and the indigenous peoples lies in the dispossession and occupation of their territories. Moving towards #AnotherFormofRelationship, requires fundamental solutions and consulted policies that guarantee their rights and forms of organisation." (Observatorio Ciudadano 2020b) Other than on the website, on Twitter the organisation uses the term "conflict" referring to the relationship between the state and the indigenous people. (ibid) In the discourse represented on the website, the relationship seemed more as a collaboration based on a discursive nature. Maybe an explanation for these differences can be found when examining the different platforms where it is published and for what reasons. On the website, the content stays for a long time for the reader to be seen, hence it shall present a view that is sustainable and constructed for the long run. With the content on the website the organisation informs the reader about its vision, actions and identity. On social media however, also due to the limited

length of posts and the velocity in which content is published, the approach is distinct. With posts attention and reach shall be created. The posts are usually more instant and not thought of as sustainably long-lasting content. It can be assumed that the organisation wants to catch attention with more extreme statements and wants readers to become aware of the difficult situation indigenous peoples are in. In general, it can also be assumed that the idea of a conflict between the State and indigenous people is conveyed all over the discourse, it is just not expressed that clearly. However, the need to protect the indigenous people and the need to discuss new legislation already reveals that there must be a conflict. In another post on Twitter, shown in image 3, the organisation refers to the country's principal richness as being its cultural diversity. (Observatorio Ciudadano 2020a) Usually, when thinking about a country's richness the common discourse would be about natural resources and raw materials. Another way of referring to a country's richness could be in a touristic sense meaning landscapes and sights. As Observatorio Ciudadano takes the Chileans as the source of richness, it simultaneously incentivises them to value each and every one who might appear different and try to expedite the inclusion of multiculturalism. The organisation uses a metaphor that gives another insight to how it understands its role as being the facilitator for the dialogue between the cultures. It is described to construct bridges to start a real intercultural dialogue. Observatorio Ciudadano seems itself as the initiator to construct bridges to overcome challenges and start a fruitful dialogue.

Means	Website, Social Media, in offline encounters
Spheres	Political and private
Dialogue	Enhancing dialogue, but also contesting political sphere

*Table 8: Communication - Observatorio Ciudadano*

Oberservatorio Ciudadano expresses its understanding of democracy in an inclusive sense that values the different cultures, roots as well as identifications of people. An emphasis is always put on the indigenous peoples that are especially in need of support und inclusion, even though it is aimed to put them discursively on an equal level with the non-indigenous Chilean society. This inclusiveness can only be achieved through an enhanced discourse and thus a dialogue between the State, the civil society, private persons and especially those whose rights are violated. Oberservatorio Ciudadano identifies in different roles. Firstly, is sees itself as a supporter for those exposed to human rights violations. Secondly, it perceives itself as a facilitator of the dialogue between the different spheres that also pushes for institutional changes. And lastly, the organisation sees itself as a provider for opportunities to induce a cultural and social change for increasing an atmosphere of lived multiculturality in Chile. Therefore, the organisation's understanding of civil society can be applied to Habermas' theory as it emphasises the potential of civil societies to improve the dialogue with the State in order to achieve change and doing that on various channels in order for everyone to be able to participate.

#### 4.2.3. Asamblea Coordinadora de Estudiantes Secundarios

The Asamblea Coordinadora de Estudiantes Secundarios (Coordinating Assembly of Secondary Students), or shortly ACES, is a collective of secondary students, which was formed to integrate any student who wants to discuss and work on student interests. The secondary school is the last step before university, so students are typically between 16 – 18 years old. (ACES Chile n.d.)

ACES' **vision** of democracy becomes present in the explanation of how the organisation works. Decisions are taken "from below in assemblies of free convocation, where every opinion is important" (translated by author, *ibid*), so everyone is asked to participate and in the decision-making process, consensus is more important than majority voting. As ACES deliberately designs its own structure that way, it can be expected that this would also be the preferable

system for the state as presented in the deliberative democracy theory with enhanced focus on participation. Furthermore, it becomes clear in the discourse of the organisation that the democracy envisioned would have to be one with a changed government and a changed system, supposedly to a more deliberative and participatory democracy. As for them, the current order does not correspond to a democracy which is explicitly stated for example on Twitter as can be seen in image 4. The vision of democracy involves participatory parts as to actively motivating to contest the government and deliberation in the approach on decision-making.

**Participation** therefore is strongly requested and desired in a form without intermediates or representatives. The loose structures enable everyone to participate to the own will. (ACES Chile n.d.) However, it seems feasible in the scope of the assembly, also considering that a rather homogenous group of people, as students of a similar age, are united, and questionable if these ideas can be translated to the whole country.

**Boundaries** can be constituted from the ACES' discourse as being the limited ability for students and under-aged to participate in the political occurrences without having a possibility to take part in it. Apart from that, in a post on Twitter on the March, 11<sup>th</sup> that is pictured in image 4, ACES makes clear that the economic model in Chile is considered a boundary for the democracy, as is neoliberalism makes it impossible to establish a democracy. Reasons for that are seen in the inability for citizens to freely develop and to carry out basic needs like washing hands as interpreted from ACES' discourse. (ACES-Chile 2020c)

So, ACES' envisioned democracy can be described a political counter-democracy as illustrated in the literature review. This counter-democracy opposes the current system and government which should be achieved in a participatory way where everyone should engage actively in evoke changes.

Vision	Radical change in order to establish democracy
Participation	Direct participated highly admired
Boundaries	No real democracy

*Table 9: Discourse on democracy - ACES*

ACES **identifies** as an inclusive collective that follows the ideas and arguments of its members without stipulating them. It understands the assembly as an open space where different opinions and ideas are welcome and where only the aim for fighting for a recognition of the rights for students constitutes the framework for arguments. So, there is no structure that regulates the assembly and everyone who wants to participate and share their opinion is welcomed to do so. Also, topics, the work, as well as the meeting place differ, depending on the respective needs of the members. It underlines even more ACES' identification as a very participatory and bottom-up organisation. Apart from that, it identifies as an organisation that communicates and challenges claims in demonstrations as it is stated that the "formula is in the streets" (translated by author, ACES-Chile 2020). Most importantly, the organisation identifies as a contestant of the system and an organisation that dares to speak up and reveal flaws in the system.

ACES is founded based on the main **claim** to "speak out, demonstrate and fight for the right [...] of a dignified, free, comprehensive education for all" (translated by author, ACES Chile n.d.). The right for education shall be executed based on the understanding and assumption of equality. The execution of these rights is claimed to be started peacefully offering to communicate, but is going to be raised to fighting if the rights are not being respected. The atmosphere this climax creates adds to the organisation's discourse strongly contesting the system and the political sphere. On the website, mainly reforms from the Ministry for Education are contested and rejected, but no cooperation with them is fostered. However, it can be seen that the main focus has been shifted to more general claims on current problems that concern the whole country, moving away from issues only concerning student rights. One example can be seen in image 5 that shows a Twitter post from the March, 22<sup>nd</sup> where awareness is raised on issues on the privatisation of water in Chile using the example of washing one's hands as being a privilege. (ACES-Chile 2020c) As ACES claims to fight for student rights, it can be interpreted that the general problems that come with privatisation in Chile, are problems concerning everyone, including students, who should actually be a protected group and not be exposed to economic measurements. Overall, in the discourse on claims of the organisations, the strong demand for equality becomes apparent. As the organisation advocates for free education and against privatisation, it becomes clear that it is fighting for giving the same rights for everyone regardless of their monetary possibilities.

ACES' **actions** very much evolve around organising demonstrations and gaining visibility for topics that concern student rights. (ACES Chile n.d.) During the period of the Penguin Revolution, ACES was the organisation to unite different youth groups and gather in the streets to start demonstrations. The organisation was also the leading force in the following discussions with the governments rejecting alterations of the contested reform. (Chovanec & Benitez 2006, 44f.) So, even though the organisation chooses demonstrations to speak out their rights, they are aware of the fact that changes are finally achieved in direct discussions with the government.

Identity	Contestant of the system, daring and inclusive
Claims	Democracy, equality, free education
Actions	Demonstrations

*Table 10: Discourse on self-understanding - ACES*

The organisation's focus in regards to **communication** is very much put on internal discussions and participation. However, the congresses or debates that are planned are open for secondary students, but not a place to foster the communication with other spheres. It becomes very clear throughout the whole presentation of the organisation that the main focus is put on being present in demonstrations and in the streets. The website for example is very old and barely updated. Communication online is mainly introduced via social media which speaks for their contentious nature, preferring fast and instant communication over thoughtful extensive texts and dialogues. There, the organisation clearly positions itself opposing to the government and specifically opposing president Piñera. This is underlined by ACES' aim to personalise any problems in the country on him and his government and thus enhance a discourse against him. Examples for that can be found on Twitter as in image 6. (ACES-Chile 2020b; 2020d) ACES shares and spreads images like the one shown, making Piñera responsible for human rights violations, the state of emergency and 40 deaths adding to the construction of a discourse against the president and his government.

Means	Social Media and in the streets
Spheres	Public sphere to gain visibility
Dialogue	Only within the organisation

*Table 11: Communication - ACES*

ACES sees its role and the role of the civil society to fight for democracy and therefore against the current system and government that cannot be called democratic in its belief. The organisation itself seems to be historically grown and well-working internally. However, the discourse it presents and that can be derived from its presentation is one of a very contentious and structurally weak organisation that has only loose connections and collaborations. ACES seems to be successful in accumulating like-minded people and especially students in demonstrations against the government. However, its main motivation seems to be against the president and growing inequalities in the country for achieving a democracy where people are requested to act directly. Of course, it also has to be mentioned that an organisation founded and led by 16-18 year old student cannot be expected to have the same organisational structure, experience and nuanced view on democracy as other organisations. Still, also a student organisation is important to look at, especially because its members do not have any other option to engage politically and because it has historically played an important role. The understanding of civil society might be relatable to Gramsci's theory in an altered approach as civil society is not offering the space for the hegemony to be spread, but only to be contested.

#### 4.2.4. Conclusion

	<i>Chile Mujeres</i>	<i>Observatorio Ciudadano</i>	<i>ACES</i>
<i>Democracy</i>	Liberal approach, focus on gender equality	Discursive approach, focus on multiculturalism and participation	Participatory approach, demanding change of system
<i>Civil society</i>	Empowering, but mainly collaborating with government based on Gramsci	Protecting, educating, supporting, promoting policies, based on Habermas	Contesting government, based on Gramsci as to contest
<i>Communication</i>	Mainly with the political sphere	Enhancing dialogue between different spheres and actors	Gaining visibility, demanding changes

*Table 12: Discourse of civil society organisations Chile*



#### 4.3. Civil society and democracy in Uruguay

##### 4.3.1. Mujer y Salud en Uruguay

MYSU, short for Mujer y Salud en Uruguay (Woman and Health in Uruguay) is a self-declared feminist non-governmental organisation based in Montevideo. The organisation was founded when several organisations fighting for women's rights united to form MYSU together in 1996. The main emphasis is debating and promoting developments in the field of healthcare and sexual and reproduction rights. (Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020c)

MYSU's **vision** of democracy can actually be applied on any aspect of life as the organisation aims to

“democratise power relations at the interpersonal level, at the level of couples, families, community and neighbourhood life, within social organisations, at the level of religious structures, at the level of political parties, at the level of trade unions; also, in State institutions, in educational institutions, and in the exercise of national, departmental and municipal government” (translated by author, Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020c).

Consequently, power is needed in order to achieve this change and to break power relations. Breaking power relations stands equally for establishing equality among the whole society in which MYSU makes the compromise to empower everyone in order to balance it out. It also shows that MYSU includes every aspect of the daily life that needs to be changed and democratised in its opinion. So, democracy is something that everyone should work on and be able to enjoy everywhere and always which also means to make any situation in life more just and compromising.

“The construction of very strong alliances between feminist organisations, the women's movement and other social movements with a long history and strength in the process of redemocratisation of the country, is one of the most important factors in the process of cultural change besides the legal one” (translated by author, *ibid*).

From this quote, it can be derived how MYSU tries to arrive to its vision of democracy and how it understands social change. With the term *redemocratisation* the organisation refers to the period after the military dictatorship in which with help of organisations the democracy was

able to be re-established. Thus, the civil society is a grantor of democracy in MYSU's eyes and is as much responsible for cultural as for legal changes. In the way the argument is constructed, the organisation is giving power and credit to the civil society. It seems like the cultural change MYSU is referring to, which was expedited by the civil society, is the actual core of redemocratisation. Also, it is pointed out that the public policies in regards to sexual and reproduction rights were being realised because of the work of civil society organisations in the past. (Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020c) Sexual and reproduction rights are understood as human rights which therefore are to be protected from the State. Civil society thus is understood as an essential part of the democracy that actively participates and resembles the ideas of a deliberative democracy where committed citizens and a pluralistic civil society engage in open discourses in the decision-making. So, MYSU expresses how it perceives the civil society as being especially important in the transition phase of democracy. However, it seems like for MYSU the transition phase is not yet concluded, as it still sees a need in democratising power.

It becomes thus apparent in the discourse that MYSU gives a lot of importance to **participation**, additionally specifying how it defines the form of participation. The organisation sees in the civil society the most important factor for participation in the democracy. In the enhanced communication with the private sphere, the civil society is expected to include the society's will through participation in the promotion of public policies. (Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020b) Hence, participation is mainly realised by civil society, not by all citizens. Therefore aspects of the deliberative theory can be determined as it refers to the group of people who deliberately participate in the democracy.

In regards to **boundaries** to this specific understanding of democracy, it can be seen that the understanding of democracy in the form of supporting women's rights does not stop at the country's borders, but is aimed to be broadened internationally. This becomes apparent through the enforced cooperation with international organisations.

Furthermore, the organisation sees in democracy not only a concept for the whole society, but also for interpersonal contact and for the women's body and identity.

Vision	Deliberative with focus on equality
Participation	Participation through civil society, aspects of deliberative democracy
Boundaries	Democratisation of personal settings

*Table 13: Discourse on democracy - Mujer y Salud en Uruguay*

MYSU **identifies** as an organisation of the civil society and therefore as an important part of a functioning democracy.

“The political progress made in the field of rights in Uruguay has been the result of the work and historical demand of social organisations; today, once they have been conquered, their defence, continuity and deepening will also depend on them” (translated by author, Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020c).

MYSU identifies as part of the transition to as well as consolidators of the democracy, even if it can be questioned if the democracy is even understood to be consolidated. Moreover, the organisation engages internationally, taking part and supporting the Uruguayan participation in UN bodies and making sure that connections outside of the country’s borders are realised. (Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020b) Moreover, the collaboration of science and citizens’ demands are considered to be of high importance and should have a constructive impact on politics. Hence, MYSU is not only linking the private and the political sphere, but also include a so-called *scientific sphere*. Proudly, MYSU presents itself as one of the most interviewed and consulted organisations in the country showing that it identifies as an organisation that is very important for the country and is confident to be able to keep creating change in the future as they already did in the past. Furthermore, it identifies as a representing Uruguay internationally and as an inclusive organisation cooperating with diverse organisations.

MYSU formulated **claims** for three different groups that it aims to influence and collaborate with. These are divided into “the State should”, “the society should” and “every person should”. (Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020a) The organisation presents the civil society as having historically defended its role in the democracy, so there is no need to claim something other for them to do than keep on safeguarding democracy. Claims of what the State should do evolve around providing a legal framework that manifests the protection of human rights with an emphasis on sexual and reproduction rights for everyone. Mainly, MYSU’s understanding of what the State can accomplish is to improve the communication and

strengthening of the respective rights. Also, it is aware that it is not only through legislation changes that the rights can be strengthened. However, that education is needed and that people are needed to address the issues, but also to listen to grievances and to help. MYSU thus claims for the State to work more closely connected with the private sphere. The main responsibility of the society is to respect everyone's rights and making sure that no one has to fear discrimination. (Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020a) Therefore, changes have to be reached on different levels. One level can be described as the discursive level that constitutes the basis for preventing and decreasing discrimination. The second level could be called action level that refers to minimising common behaviours that may cause either violation or discrimination. The third level could be described as an organisational level as the society is encouraged to engage in organisations in order to help support the implementation of those rights. What every person should do mainly evolves around empowerment and education. MYSU claims that every person should decide freely on their sexual and reproduction rights and must therefore be well informed about them. Thus, to protect everyone's rights, an important factor is education and the confidence to make independent decisions. Furthermore, support for others should be given by maintaining a balanced and respectful relations with the other gender and denouncing violations of the rights when they are noticed. Through the organisation's discourse of the claims it can be interpreted that the individuals are expected to be influenced through the responsibility the society as a whole is carrying. MYSU trusts in the power of governments to educate and strengthen rights, the society to learn and respect these rights and thus make them common discourse which then influences the individual to change his behaviour and act accordingly.

In order to realise these claims and therefore its vision of democracy, the organisation describes how it translates them into **actions**. MYSU engages in promoting the implementation of public policies in the field of health and education in order to support the political sphere. Furthermore, it has organised the first National Encounter on women's health and was part of promoting the first public policies for women's rights. (Mujer y Salud en Uruguay 2020b) The organisation brings forward demands by citizen campaigns to translate them into public policies and therefore constitutes a link between the private and the political sphere. Following that approach, MYSU founded the National observatory for gender, sexual and reproduction health that monitors the implementation and collects citizen's demands.

The actions that MYSU realises, differ depending on the regional scope and on the participants. Examples for those are workshops, marches and demonstrations, seminars, international forums, round tables or courses. These different actions are taking place in the legislative buildings, so with an emphasis on the political sphere, in universities and schools, with an emphasis on youth education or for example in companies or consortiums. It clearly shows how diversely the organisation is interacting among the different spheres, aiming to make the topics available and understandable for everyone. Even though, MYSU's aim is to empower all actors to participate deliberatively in the democracy, it also emphasises a discursive component of this approach as to giving importance to the public discourse.

Identity	Driver for transition and consolidation, protection
Claims	Education, prevention, collaboration
Actions	Connecting spheres, education

*Table 14: Discourse on self-understanding Mujer y Salud en Uruguay*

MYSU argues that **communication** is one of the most important parts of the work of civil society organisations in order to gain visibility and to give vulnerable groups a voice. Especially as it identifies as an organisation that works closely connected with academia it is important for them to publish their findings. Establishing a public discourse and make the topic of sexual and reproduction rights something concerning the whole society, is a main emphasis. In the discourse of making sexual and reproduction rights equal to human rights, MYSU animates even the ones who are not endangered of violations to educate themselves about the topic and to not ignore it.

The organisation also uses its social media channels as Twitter for example, in order to share its vision and to inform about its work. MYSU uses Twitter also to share dates of events or demonstrations encouraging people to participate. In one post, which can be found in image 7, a new project that deals with abortion and the collection of different stories on it in order to change the discourse of it is presented. A few years ago, abortion has been legalised in Uruguay, however the organisation shows with the post and the related project that the focus is not only on changes in the legislation, but also on cultural/societal changes. (MYSU 2020b) The discourse that is represented all over the organisation's presentation is the relation to change in two different ways. Through discourse and bringing it to people's attention, MYSU aims to enforce legislation changes and societal changes. To bring about these changes, MYSU

does not only use Twitter to establish a discourse on the issues, but also to invites people to participate in endorsing them. A Twitter post that can be found in image 8, adds in two ways to the development of a discourse: firstly, it spreads MYSU's opinion on protecting women online. Secondly, is evokes attention offline and gives space for people to interact, meet and feel united in a demonstration, which has taken place on one of the main streets in the city centre of Montevideo, so that it definitely came to attention in many people during their daily routine. (MYSU 2020a)

Means	Online and offline
Spheres	Political, private, academia
Dialogue	Between and with the spheres

*Table 15: Communication - Mujer y Salud en Uruguay*

MYSU seems to be an organisation that is very well institutionalised and connected in Uruguay as well as in the international sphere. It contests the realisation of the existing legislation and lacking respect and understanding for sexual and reproduction rights in the society and therefore imminent dangers for the individual. The organisation acts as a protector for the individuals in a way that it aims to change the discourse on these topics, educate people and demonstrate scientifically how the situation in Uruguay evolves. Communication and discourse are crucial for the organisation in order to realise its claims and vision of democracy. In the contact and dialogue with all spheres, the organisation tries to make the existing rights respected and trusted among everyone in the society which adds to its idea of a deliberative-discursive democracy. The understanding of civil society approximates Gramsci's theory as the focus is put on achieving changes through communication.

#### 4.3.2. ONG El Paso

The non-governmental organisation **ONG El Paso** (English: NGO The Step/The Move) situated in Montevideo presents its main emphasis as being the protection of human rights in relation to gender and generation issues. The organisation especially focusses on protecting children, adolescents and women who are affected by violence, discrimination or social exclusion. (Asociación Civil El Paso 2020b)

The organisation reflects its **vision** of democracy in emphasising that structural problems have to be solved in institutional and societal solutions and it is manifested in the conception that a democracy needs to offer protection for its citizens to live without violence. According to the scope of the organisation, this violence specifically refers to human rights violations against children and women. In the ten years that the organisation has existed, it has tried to “transform the world [...] and let the world transform” (translated by author, Asociación Civil El Paso 2020a) the organisation. El Paso sees itself as part of the transformations it induces. Further, it is stated “we firmly believe that another world is possible, we firmly believe in collective and participatory actions and we are convinced that there is no other possible path than the one that is walked, together with companions” (translated by author, *ibid*) in which the claim for a new world with different understandings of collaboration and participation is reinforced. The three main emphases appearing in the organisation’s discourse repeatedly are participation, collectiveness and companionship which can be believed to constitute the main pillars of El Paso’s understanding of democracy. El Paso gives another important insight on to how this participation is conducted as they state to “[having] chosen to discuss power, [...] and] violence from a feminist perspective” (translated by author, *ibid*). The emphasis on power as being discussed and not power being fought for example, shows the importance of dialogue and collaboration to achieve change opposing to only demonstrations and riots for example. The organisation’s feminist perspective can be referred to the focus on gender issues as well as on a more gentle and discursive approach on change drawing on the common discourse of feminine connotations.

It can therefore be concluded that El Paso envisions a discursive approach of democracy for Uruguay. This discursive approach is marked by equality for all citizens as well as protection and the option for everyone to develop freely. El Paso gives a lot of importance to collaboration and open discussions including establishing trust to share emotions and weaknesses. As emotions in political discussions and decision-making have been criticised as a weakness for the system, the organisation’s vision can possibly offer a different attitude against seeing emotions as problematic.

The organisation’s understanding of **participation** becomes apparent in its discourse as to giving a voice to everyone, especially as to the most vulnerable groups in order to empower them and giving more responsibility to the society. Furthermore, El Paso presents itself as a

part of a bigger construct that is only successful in cooperation and in discussions among different spheres and within the civil society supporting a discursive approach to participation.

In regards to **boundaries** for the organisation's vision of democracy, it can be derived that it approaches the topic from a worldwide perspective. The state's borders are not seen as boundaries for aiming to achieve its vision based on equality and protection. Thus, it becomes apparent that the equality that is demanded, does not only count for Uruguayans, but for citizens all over the world. The understanding of democracy is based on collaboration and collectiveness in order to widen the influence and potential. El Paso cooperates with organisations around the country in order to be able to reach all parts of the population to get understand to their needs and claims and international ones. Thereby the organisation is helping the rural population to overcome a potential boundary that is the impeding the participation for people living outside of the capital, which is the central hub for commerce, politics and civil society organisations as mentioned in chapter three.

Vision	Discursive democracy, focus on human rights and equality
Participation	Equality, inclusion, consensus
Boundaries	Beyond borders and equality within country

*Table 16: Discourse on democracy - El Paso*

Based on the discourse on the website and in different material published by El Paso, characteristics of the organisation's **identity** can be deviated. The organisations understands itself as a long-term companion of the groups affected by gender violence who does not only see their actual problems, but also tries to solve the cause for these problems. It can be important for the victims to understand that they are not personally the reason for what is happening to them, but that a solution has to be found on a societal level. Important points about El Paso's identity can also be derived from thanking its partners to "have walked hand in hand [with El Paso] building alternatives, knocking down obstacles, creating unimaginable paths, inventing impossible possibilities, supporting and sheltering [El Paso] in moments of great darkness" (translated by author, Asociación Civil El Paso 2020a). The image of walking hand in hand supports the understanding of dialogue in the cooperation with other parties and gives insights about what can be achieved when working together, so that nothing is unimaginable. In this image they also admit its own weaknesses and add to the claim of



cooperation that the organisation alone would not be able to reach its exalted goals. Therefore, it clearly identifies as part of the construct civil society, well aware that success and achieving the unimaginable is only possible through cooperation and dialogue. The discursive nature of the organisation is emphasised again in the claim to act “from a combative, firm, stubborn and persevering position; from humility and power, from criticism and self-criticism” (translated by author, Asociación Civil El Paso 2020a). Mentioning opposites as identifications and strategies shows that the organisation constantly adapts, evaluates and discusses its position. The idea of civil society being a pluralist project as Walzer expresses, become illustrated in El Paso’s understanding. However, it does not seem to pose a threat for authoritarianism, but the acceptance of socially rooted violence.

In all discussions and among all **claims** for an enhanced sense of living together and treating each other reciprocally with respect, the organisation clarifies that in the centre of its claims and actions is always the enforcement of human rights and the minimisation of its violations. It reflects the organisation’s understanding of gender violence as something structural and that it is not sufficient to protect one individual victim. Therefore, the organisation claims to not only focus on working with the vulnerable groups, but with all social actors. (Asociación Civil El Paso 2020d) Both approaches are treated with the overall purpose to adapt the awareness for protecting human rights for everyone and with a special emphasis on those who are more vulnerable and more likely to be affected from violations of those and to anchor it in the collective memory of the whole society. As this collective memory is established and maintained by everyone in the society, there is no need to differentiate between different spheres nor to distinguish based on power.

“Its **actions** are characterised by the development of intervention strategies in the social and community field, the impact on public policies and the production and transfer of knowledge on a permanent basis” (translated by author, Asociación Civil El Paso 2020c). The sentence describes the organisation’s action on three different levels, the private sphere where the actual abuse and violence is happening, the political sphere where abuse and violence could possibly be prevented or sanctioned and the societal or cultural basis. These three levels presented in the organisation’s discourse can be translated into steps that will be executed in different time frames being effective immediately, in the medium-run and in the long-run. In

the first step, El Paso aims to empower and educate the vulnerable groups in order for them to be able to organise themselves in groups and work actively and participative in the protection of their own rights constituting the most immediate and sudden support there is for the affected group. The second step is mainly concerned with a collaboration and a dialogue with groups and individuals in the public sphere who are either in touch with the vulnerable groups or can contribute to supporting them such as young professionals, students or social workers. It reflects again the organisation's focus to value human rights and to make society aware of the dangers that can become reality especially for children and women and even in their usually safe considered home. Furthermore, through projects with the political and private sector El Paso claims to be working on an enhanced dialogue and collaboration between both spheres. The way El Paso represents the collaboration with the private and political sphere, it seems like boundaries between the spheres are diminishing. The only differentiation that is emphasised is the one between the vulnerable groups, or the affected individuals and those who can contribute to their support.

El Paso understands its work as impacting the social world of the Uruguayan society, especially for the vulnerable groups. A sense of responsibility can be seen in the work as the organisation is aware of its need to always adapt and evaluate its actions. An important substance of its work are emotions as it states to be united by "passion and love for what we do, rebellion in the face of injustice, anger in the face of abuse of power and pain in the face of pain" (translated by author, Asociación Civil El Paso 2020a). Presumably, emotions and the identification with the vulnerable groups are the most motivational factor to continue working, because they proceed as long as its support and work is needed. The focus on emotions in its work as well as in discussions, contradicts the aims of the deliberative democracy theory basing discussions on rationality. The organisation shows that in a discursive manner, emotions can even be helpful to improve cooperation.

Identity	Supporter and companion for vulnerable groups
Claims	Individual, institutional and societal changes
Actions	Prevention, education, dialogue

*Table 17: Discourse on self-understanding - El Paso*

In the way the organisation **communicates** its actions, it makes it a part of the common discourse and hence a matter for everyone who identifies as a being part of the community,

because they are given the responsibility to intervene. Furthermore, it can be seen as a responsibility to transfer the knowledge on a permanent basis, so to the collective memory of the Uruguayan society. There is no power distance established in the discourse in delimitation to the political sphere. It is rather seen as a common construct where everyone has the potential and, following El Paso's discourse, also the responsibility to make a cultural change possible. This responsibility is conveyed through including more and more actors in the steps in the process to support the affected groups. Furthermore, El Paso is aware of the importance of the way that the topic is communicated for which workshops are organised in which

“communicators and journalists from all over the country [participated]; it was a meeting of rapprochement and exchange that seeks to deepen the knowledge about human trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation in Uruguay, from a communicational perspective” (translated by author, Asociación Civil El Paso 2020c).

With this aim it becomes apparent that communication is not only a way to help people in their situation, but also means to actually convey the message to the public as following its understanding of democracy.

El Paso makes sure to meet people enhancing personal contact in order to learn more about the situation of vulnerable groups. However, the communication is also taking place online, for example on Twitter, where El Paso also shares actions that the groups targeted can participate in. An example can be seen in image 9 where pictures and a subtle call for joining the demonstration are presented. Furthermore, the organisation shows with the sharing of pictures from participating in marches or demonstrations that it is contesting the current situation and underline the claims. (Asociación Civil El Paso 2019a) In another post, shown in image 10, it is clearly stated how El Paso positions itself in relation to civil society and the political sphere, enhancing the dialogue and the collaboration between both spheres. The statement underneath the picture that the State and the civil society are working together on public policies to prevent sexual exploitation can be seen as a justification and confirmation of the organisation's work. (Asociación Civil El Paso 2019b)

Means	Website, Social Media, personal encounters
Spheres	Political, private, public
Dialogue	Influencing the public discourse, emphasis on dialogue

*Table 18: Communication - El Paso*

Overall, the discourse can be characterised as showing a world view based on equality and participation in discourse, always evaluating the situation and filled with trust in partners and the vision which also means exposing one's weaknesses. Above that, a parallel can be drawn to El Paso's work with the vulnerable groups who are also encouraged to share their emotions and trust in them, not be shy to expose weaknesses and trust in their partners who share the same vision and want to achieve change. In the discourse that is pervaded by the organisation, El Paso identifies as a guardian and companion for the vulnerable groups as they work closely together with them in workshops for example. It sees itself as the driver that can actually change the situation, not by helping in the moment of violation, but by changing the society's perception on these violations. This conception is portrayed in the discourse as children and adolescent being underrepresented in the acceptance of their rights and in a relation to power that exists within the society. Therefore, the claims go beyond an institutional change for an improved protection of human rights, but also demand a societal change making the vision of democracy truly discursive. Through the workshops and actions in the respective cities and institutions, the organisation is also able to get in touch and transpose dialogues with the society. However, this will not be possible if El Paso takes up a superordinate position merely lecturing and not paying attention to the counterpart, but only in a constructive discourse.

#### 4.3.3. Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Uruguay

The Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Uruguay (Federation of University Students of Uruguay), or shortly FEUU, was founded in 1929 to facilitate all university students in Uruguay to unite and organise themselves. (Secretaría de Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Uruguay 2020b)

As the organisation formed its identity in constituting the opposition to the military dictatorship, it can definitely be derived that its **vision** of democracy consists of free and equal elections. Moreover, it should be a democracy governed by the people and not by an authoritarian government that does not respect human rights. "Throughout this period, the

ASCEEP-FEUU participated in the mobilisations that led to the democratic opening” (Secretaría de Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Uruguay 2020a), showing the important part the organisation has played in the democratic transition. Even though the main concerns of the organisation are dealing with rights for the university students, it has a political agenda where it has successfully been demanding a more extensive autonomy of the university from the State. An important feature of the vision of democracy seems to be the aim to make education a public good that is accessible for everyone. Furthermore, the FEUU claims “for memory, truth, justice and never again state terrorism in Uruguay” (translated by author, Secretaría de Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Uruguay 2020a) which shows that its vision of the Uruguayan democracy is influenced by the past. As represented in the literature review, the State has not taken full responsibility for what happened during the dictatorship. However, in the FEUU’s understanding, part of the democracy of today or the future are also acts from the past. It is underlined through repetitions throughout the presentation on the website that the State is responsible for human rights violations, so there is no differentiation between what happened in the past and the government of today.

For the vision on democracy this would speak for a liberal view on democracy, because the FEUU emphasises the autonomy from the State, even though this would mean that its influence in the democracy in terms of participation is rather limited. The State would then act as a provider of the framework that the organisation pushes for and then the actors within the public sphere are expected to develop freely. However, the idea of free education might be understood as a contrast to the liberal democracy theory as the free aids given from the State are limited. So, there is a tendency that might also lead beyond the liberal approach.

**Participation** in political ways is legitimised by the organisation in a way to protect students and the whole society from possible violations of their rights from the government. However, on the other hand, the FEUU does not want the government to participate in issues related to the universities.

The organisation is built on very strict organisational structures that involves different systems and bodies with members who are elected for a fixed period of time. There is no direct participation or room for open discussions among all members or anyone who wants to join. (Secretaría de Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Uruguay 2020b) The organisational design could possibly be applied to the vision of participation supporting a liberal democracy.

Furthermore, the claim for independence from the government adds to the understanding of a liberal democracy with limited participation and decision-making through representatives.

**Boundaries** could be stated as for the organisation to be manifested in time. Because it does not limit the responsibilities of a government to the time where it governs. So, from the organisation's point of view, State and citizens are concepts that do not change over time, but have to maintain the respect and responsibilities for the rules and principles as for example the concept of human rights. Furthermore, as addressed before, the power of the government and its reach as influencing fields like education, constitutes a boundary in the understanding of democracy for the FEUU.

Vision	Liberal democracy
Participation	Limited, via representatives
Boundaries	Time and past responsibilities, government's influence

*Table 19: Discourse on democracy - FEUU*

The organisation has been founded on the basis of an organisation that has organised student strikes for autonomy and the claim for co-governing. It can be derived that the organisation still keeps a part of that in its **identity**. The FEEU works alongside other international student organisation, with a special focus on Latin America. Furthermore, it is also collaborating with the influential trade union Pit-Cnt. With the cooperation with different organisations as for example organisations fighting for LGBTI rights, the FEEU shows the importance of integration and cooperation for the organisation. (Secretaría de Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Uruguay 2020b) Furthermore, it identifies as still opposing the military regime until the responsibilities of the State have been admitted. Most certainly, the organisation identifies as being autonomous from the State as it claims education in general should be.

The organisation's **claims** can be divided into claims related to student rights and claims related to the State and democracy. However, the main focus are rights for university students and free education for everyone. Furthermore, an important claim of the organisation is for the State to assume its responsibilities for the human rights violations committed within the military dictatorship.

A main pillar of the organisation's **actions** next to organising and participating in events and conferences among students, is expressing its claims in the streets. In the example of the Twitter post that can be seen in image 11, where the diversity of these claims and the plurality of marches the FEUU organises or joins is demonstrated. Amongst those, some related to university and some to economic topics and the support of workers showing the diverse political agenda of the organisation as long as it contests the State. (FEUU 2020a)

Identity	Contestant of the system
Claims	Free education, State's responsibility
Actions	Demonstrations

*Table 20: Discourse on self-understanding - FEUU*

The FEUU **communicates** more intensively on its social media channels than on the website. However, it mostly seems to prefer communication through demonstrations. The focus of the communication is the same as has already been derived from the discourse underlying in its presentation, the responsibilities of the State during the military dictatorship. On the FEUU's Twitter page, the profile picture states "they are memory. They are present. Where are they?" (translated by author, FEUU 2020b) referring to the many people who disappeared during the dictatorship. The effect of combining usually contrary words memory and present represents the FEUU's understanding that the past is still not processed. The disappeared people are forming part of the memory, because no one knows what has happened to them, but they will continue forming part of the present until the circumstances have been declared.

Furthermore, the organisation uses hashtags to get in contact with its followers and members to share their personal stories and pictures with the FEUU. In that way, it reaches people, encourages interaction and adds to being part of the discourse. (ibid) Though the difference to other organisations is that the FEUU does not seem to explicitly work on influencing the common discourse itself. The members mainly emphasise in their posts that the organisation always keeps the interests of the society in mind and defends them.

Means	Social Media and in the streets
Spheres	Public sphere to gain visibility
Dialogue	Only within the organisation

*Table 21: Communication - FEUU*

The organisation envisions a democracy where the state is strongly responsible for protecting its citizens, for providing truth and justice and assuming responsibility for what has happened. The vision for that democracy resembles the liberal theory. However, to achieve these changes, the FEUU relies on participation in order to contest and gain visibility. The understanding of civil society can be applied to Gramsci's understanding, in the way the organisation uses the space of civil society to contest the hegemony.



#### 4.3.4. Conclusion

	<i>MYSU</i>	<i>El Paso</i>	<i>FEUU</i>
<i>Democracy</i>	Deliberative, focus on equality	Discursive	Liberal
<i>Civil society</i>	Education , protection and empowerment, based on Gramsci	Enhancing dialogue and influence the common discourse, based on Walzer	Contesting government, based on Gramsci
<i>Communication</i>	Between and with the spheres	Discursive, connecting different spheres	Only limited dialogue

*Table 22: Discourse of civil society organisations Uruguay*

## 5. Discussion

Despite of the diversity and the different scopes of the civil society organisations analysed in two countries, similarities among them can be established. Most of the organisations aim to achieve a cultural or societal change and do not stop at demanding changes in the legislation or of the government. It could be an insight for either mistrust in the power of institutions or the trust in the power of collaboration and consolidation in order to back up their claims to achieve the legislation changes. However, it seems that democracy is mostly understood as something that is lived not from top-down following legislations, but that it is more important to build democracy from bottom-up. Taking the example of Chile, it can be seen that the promise of the government to change the legislation does not go far enough, but that the civil society wants to be part of the change. The citizenry and especially the civil society demands for these changes to be realised from bottom-up. These claims are successful when the society organises itself closely and connected and combines their forces to collaborate and influence the government and inducing a discourse that spreads around the country. Relating these findings to the theories discussed, it can be seen that those mostly approximating the visions of the organisations would be a combination of deliberative and discursive democracy, as both theories combined cover the institutional as well as societal changes. Most organisations add a discursive component to the envisioned democracy, so the potential to add a discursive approach to democracy theories should not be underestimated. It most definitely makes sense that civil society organisations enhance discursive approaches as they aim to challenge the accepted knowledge in discourse. More contentious organisations however, envision a rather participatory democracy as they claim for direct actions and changes. So, in the analysis of the different organisations it became apparent that not one theory can be established as the perfect system. However, that the plurality of understandings and visions has to be recognised and taken into consideration.

Furthermore, many organisations focus on power and the aim to empower the citizens or vulnerable groups and to balance or limit the government's power. Especially the idea behind deliberative and discursive democracy covers a power-less discourse between the different spheres and from the political side. It can be seen in the discourse of the organisations which advocate a deliberative or discursive vision on democracy that it is aimed to take away power from the State and to empower the citizens, in order to balance out the power distance and

arrive to conditions for an equal discussion. These organisations represent the idea of democracy that this research is based on as it is actually understood as to be an environment where the place of power stays empty, because it is not centred in one person, but shared among all.

Another point that the majority of the organisations shares, is their approach to international cooperation. While for governments, international cooperation is important, but in many aspects only possible to a certain limit, most civil society organisations are collaborating and working beyond borders. In this globalised world it is of course difficult to keep it out of one's focus and to not use the potential of international cooperation in order to fight for the same goal. Of course, it is also used for sharing knowledge and resources to make the work in one's own country more successful. International cooperation also makes civil societies more effective and facilitates constituting an example for global governance. It offers potential for governments to enhance their social policies, but might also pose a threat on foreign organisations influencing national policies.

Even though in this project there were only three Chilean organisations analysed, it has become apparent that they differ extensively from each other. The organisations analysed for Uruguay are also different, but still two of them make gender issues part of their claims and even the student organisation that is a lot more contentious and does not have such clear and detailed claims as other organisations, engage in the fight for diverse topics including gender issues. The organisations in Chile however, are very diverse in their claims, understandings and actions. Still, it can be seen that the engagement for one common cause was successful so far as the society has the opportunity to actively take part in the legislative decision-making through their collaboration, contestation and discourse. The analysis has also shown that the civil society in Chile might be heterogenic and contentious, but that some organisations are still well-institutionalised and not as weak as presented in the literature.

Taking into consideration the search for comparable organisations in Chile and Uruguay, it has become apparent that the number of significant, well-organised civil society organisations in Uruguay is rather limited. Firstly, all organisations that are able to be compared to those that have been chosen to be analysed for Chile, are situated in Montevideo. Secondly, those analysed were among the only ones that act non-governmental and reach a similar size and

organisational structure. Another point that is particular about Uruguay compared to Chile are the topics and scope of the organisations. Looking for organisations that deal with questions around gender, reveal very feminist organisations or LGBTI collectives for example. However, there has not been found an organisation with a thematically comparable scope like Chile Mujeres for examples. The claims of feminist organisations in Uruguay go further than demanding economic equality, but deal with issues that could be classified as violation of the identity on women, for example in the sense of sexual exploitation, or of not having the possibility to unfold their identity. However, this does not mean that these problems do not exist in Chile. It rather seems like in Uruguay the discourse has been opened and widened on gender issues for example with the government allowing changes of identity for transgender people or legalising abortion which gives more rights to the women's bodies. It seems like in some aspects, especially regarding questions about gender and sexuality, that the legislation might be a step ahead compared to what has been accepted by the majority of the population. It can be seen in these two examples that the civil society is active in both ways, towards institutional changes and towards strengthening society's acceptance, and that both ways induce each other. In Chile, this is not yet the case, abortion is only legal in three cases (danger to the mother's life, foetal inviolability and rape). So, it might be understandable that organisations are still working on the way towards similar changes as in Uruguay in terms of strengthening and protecting women's rights. This can be assumed that in regards to some topics, as gender issues for example, the civil society Uruguay occupies the role in the consolidation of the questions, while the civil society in Chile is in a transition phase.

Furthermore, it was rather difficult to find comparable organisations in Uruguay that contest the State in a similar way to ACES. There might be some individuals and most certainly a political party that would like to substitute the president, but not in a similar way to how ACES aims for it. Apart from there not being organisations that clearly speak against the president, the government and the system, it was also difficult to find a student organisation similar to ACES. A reason for that could be that the amount of public universities in Uruguay is very limited. It has to be remarked that student organisations have had an important role in both countries and are maybe underrepresented in the democratic system as participation in election is only allowed from the age of 18. The student organisations in both countries are successful because they close the gap between interested and engaged students and the

impossibility for them to engage politically directly. Maybe this shows what civil society actually does and its potential when it is the only way to achieve change and bring together both spheres. Students show that participation should not only be possible through representation. Especially in regards to the student organisations, it can be seen that the more reactionary and contentious organisations are more active on social media and thus, seem to care less about their website's appearance. They rather seek the articulation in the streets instead of the discussion with the government. This however makes sense against the background of them, especially the ACES, wanting to substitute the president and government, so it does not necessarily see an added value in the cooperation.

Based on the structure and the degree of contestation in the civil society, it can be understood that in Uruguay the changes are demanded to be happening in the existing system, so, as expressed before, consolidating. Nonetheless, the citizenry and thus the civil society have worries about issues that are possibly not attended well enough by the politicians. These are addressed through an active and well-institutionalised civil society, in discussions or demonstrations. These discussions between the civil society and the State can actually constitute as a good example on how collaboration can be established and how a participatory, deliberative or even discursive system might work. Chile finds itself in a different position where also the civil society plays an important role as they are aiming to change the system manifested in the constitution, or, as expressed before, evoke a transition. It does not matter for them if the democracy index is relatively high compared to Uruguay as the democracy is not carried out in the will of the people.

The concepts transition and consolidation are used in the theories presented as describing the phase towards establishing democracy in a state or having institutionalised democracy in a state. According to institutionalised definitions and measurements, both Chile and Uruguay can be described as a consolidated democracy in the Latin American context. However, as in this research, democracy is regarded from below, so from the civil society's discursive point of view, maybe the use of the concepts can be diversified. In the scope of this research it makes sense to view consolidation and transition depending on how the civil society understands it and moreover, also related to relevant topics, not only related to the institutional state of democracy.

Therefore, it can be depicted that Chile shows an example of a country in transition and Uruguay in consolidation. In the literature review, the picture of a rather weak civil society in Uruguay and a stronger one in Chile became perceptible. The analysis has shown that the civil society in Uruguay is indeed, compared to Chile more homogenous, less contentious and more institutionalised in its collaboration with the political and the private sphere. However, this also leads to a civil society that seems to be very well connected in the private and political sphere and has the influence to actually mediate, establish a dialogue and thus implement the society's will. Of course it has to be mentioned in this aspect that Chile's population is five times bigger than Uruguay's and therefore it seems to be easier to establish a well connection between the spheres in Uruguay. Though, if the heterogeneity, the distribution within the country and the degree of contention are taken as measurements, it can possibly be argued that the civil society in Uruguay is rather weak. However, as for this research the understanding of the civil society is taken into consideration, it depends on how the organisations perceive their roles. It could possibly be argued that in consolidation, it is more important for the civil society to be well connected and institutionalised in order to act as a facilitator for discourse.

For the civil society in Chile it can be said that the connection between the private and the political sphere, as well as aiming to influence the common discourse are most important. So, both countries can state examples for the region in Latin America as giving examples on how the civil society can be integrated in the democracy or in democratisation. As mentioned before, Chile's civil society finds itself in a crucial position, because they might be the ones to actually achieve a saying in re-writing the constitution and enables a change in the system. In the Latin American context, it is undoubtable that in countries, where a long democratic history is missing and the civil society have never played an important role, it will be difficult to implement a discursive culture. Especially in authoritarian regimes where society have to fear their governments, the examples presented in this research might only have a limited influence. However, it can be derived from the civil societies in Chile and Uruguay that a collaboration among different organisations and strong connections with the private sphere should be established. Firstly, it is important to protect vulnerable groups and to be able to understand the society's worries. Secondly, it will be necessary to establish a common discourse on an issue that is aimed to be changed in order to induce a societal change and consequently, institutional changes. Finally, it can be expected that civil societies have the

potential to fill up the empty space that might exist between the private and the political sphere and add to approximating their visions and claims. In the end, these findings do not only apply to the Latin American context, but can possibly give insights on how to understand democracy from a civil society's point of view and how to converge both spheres.

## 6. Conclusion

As already seen in the discussion, the differences between the civil societies in Chile and Uruguay become apparent through their approaches to deliberation and the degree of participation and contention in the democratic happening. This is demonstrated now in the case of Chile, where the civil society demands to contribute in this process and to gain power in the discourse, to finally be part of their own constitution. In this whole research it has become evident that from a civil society's perspective, discourse and communication is important and feasible for democracies in the future. Civil society has to become aware of its role to be able to fill the space between political and private sphere and possibly the only way to do that is discourse, which has the potential to bring spheres together. The ways to achieve the power-less encounter and discussion are participation, education and empowerment for the society through which the State is held accountable for providing a framework offering protection and liberties. The civil society can also be seen as a role model for the political and the private sphere as it shows that through discourse, a common way of reaching consensus and collaboration is possible. It has been shown in the research that different understandings of democracy or the role of civil society are not problematic for the interaction and collaboration, but are a consequential outcome of liberties, the value of plurality and an equal power balance.

- *What is the understanding of democracy that Chilean and Uruguayan civil society organisations display in discourse?*

The civil society actors portray their understanding of democracy through their visions, claims and actions that can be seen in their communication as well as interpreted from their discourses. Main values like equality, participation, protection and liberties can be found among all organisations, but their understandings of democracy including the foci they emphasise are diverse. Della Porta (2013) approximated with her quote the visions of democracy among the civil society organisations when saying that it “goes beyond its liberal model, [broad] reflection on participation and deliberation.” However, in this research it can even be gone further that the understandings of democracy go beyond the liberal model, broad reflections on participation and deliberation and disclose discursive approaches.



- *How do the civil societies in Chile and in Uruguay present their perceived role in democracy and aim to evoke change?*

Mainly the role of civil society organisations in Chile and Uruguay can be constituted as mediating, empowering, educating and guiding the different spheres and actors. Changes are not only tried to be evoked on an institutional or legislation level, but also and foremost on a societal level. This is only to be realised through discourse and interaction, by that meaning, the civil society has the potential to bring the political and private sphere more closely together.

- *Through which means do they communicate their understanding of democracy?*

The communication has to be happening in different spheres and through different channels, offline and online, in order to make everyone able to access, accept and understand it and therefore to reduce communicative or informational boundaries. The main foci of the communication of the organisations are either establishing a dialogue or gaining visibility through protests. Usually both approaches are used in different situations and perceptions of the organisations. However, they can possibly go well hand in hand.

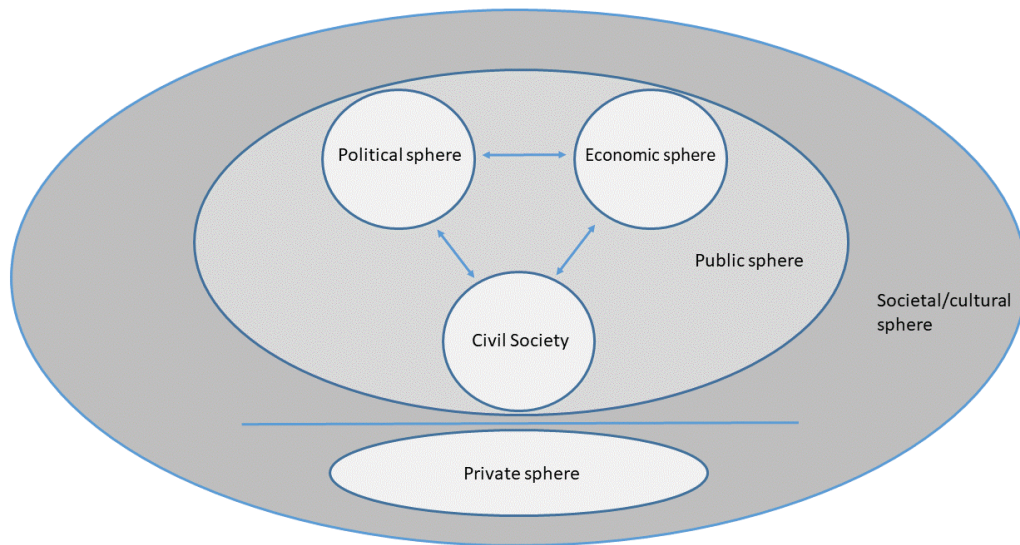
In this research, discourse is understood as more than an analytical tool. It is subject to the theoretical understanding of democracy, of combining it with civil society and in the end the only common applied way to actually turn claims into actions for civil society organisations. It is of course, a rather abstract approach to the problem, but it concludes that the shared understanding of democracy is based on equality, participation and protection of rights as prerequisites for the discourse.

## 6.1. Contributions to theory

This research can contribute to the theories on democracy and civil society as it emphasises that both are working reciprocally and that they determine each other to work well and to be accepted. Especially democracy theories are often viewed from an institutional perspective and with the approach that it is established from a top-down perception. Even though, for example participatory and deliberative theories on democracy try to take away power from the State, it still remains in the centre of the theories. This research adds to the theory that when observing democracy from a bottom-up approach, the actual perspectives from those who are taking part of it and who, taking democracy by its literal meaning, should actually constitute it, are pivotal. However, in the discursive democracy theory, the State is almost not considered as taking part in the discursive implementations of changes, though should not be undermined that the political sphere plays an important part of the social reality of the citizens.

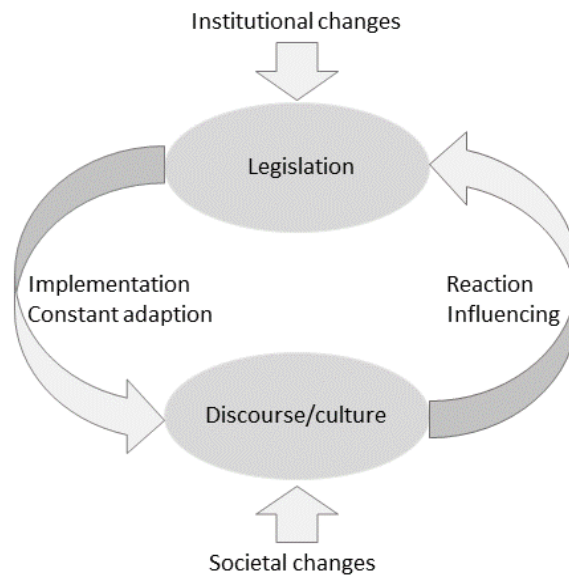
The aim of this research is to bring the theories on democracy and civil society together and to emphasise the potential that civil society has to also bring together the private sphere and the political sphere in discourse and through education and participation. Furthermore, it should be added to the theory that the perception of contentious civil societies with the main claim of confronting the public sphere and the state are not necessarily realistic. Furthermore, it can be critically assumed that through a closer collaboration within the civil society and with the political sphere, the civil society gets more homogenous as its claims are realised. So, maybe civil societies do not necessarily have to be measured by heterogeneity. Contrary, a homogenous civil society whose claims align with the State could mean an advanced version of deliberative-discursive democracy.

Societal agendas that go beyond legislation changes including everyone and every public actors, seem to be more important to the organisations. Therefore, a so-called societal or cultural sphere can be added to the graphic that has been shown in chapter three, by including every individual and every societal actor in the state as they are all part of the society and the common discourse, where societal changes are actually happening.



*Figure 4: Civil society in the public and societal sphere*

The potential of civil societies to interact between both spheres and to evoke change through and with this interaction has been illustrated in the following graph, which shows that the claims and influence of the organisations can achieve changes on an institutional and societal level. As illustrated in the figure below, legislation changes and societal changes condition each other in order to be sustainably embedded. Civil societies should not be understood as to aiming for either one of them, but should aim to incorporate both.



*Figure 5: The relation between institutional and societal changes*

To conclude, this research will not come to a theory on democracy that can give an outlook to how democracy would have to change in order to be more trusted and valued in the future. In contrast, what this research is trying to illustrate is that there is not one formula that constitutes the solution to all democratic problems. However, through constant adaption, communication and collaboration with different spheres and actors, the right vision for any state could be found. Though it becomes apparent that maybe a state will never be fully consolidated, but there has to be the will and courage for constant feedback and improvement, making sure that the private and political sphere and the civil society understand each other and work together.

This research has been started with the assumption that democracies might find themselves in a crisis, or at least encountering challenges. However, during this research it became apparent that Chile and Uruguay actually constitute examples for how democracy is lived and for how it constantly develops. Acknowledging this fact and being open for discursive and deliberative discussions, the States do not have to view these developments as crises, but as natural progressions. These progressions can either be made together with the civil society, or without them. However, if excluded, it can be expected that active civil societies demand their participation.

## 6.2. Reflections on research

A feature of this research is that its outcomes cannot be measured and maybe not be transferred directly to different cases in the same way. However, the background of this research was to understand democracy from a different perspective being the one of the civil society, and to raise an awareness that a concept which is often understood institutionally does not have only to be operationalised that way. In the understanding of this research, it is more important to a democracy how the people who constitute it perceive it, rather than how it is constructed institutionally. Therefore, this research shall be seen as an insight to looking further into the perspectives and understandings of civil societies. Furthermore, it has also been tried to look at civil societies from a different perspective than on social movements that might manifest a more contentious view on them. However, the conclusions leave spaces for further research in that area as for example analysing the discourse of different organisations, in different countries and in a different region. It can also be interesting to contrast this research with the perceptions of mass media on civil society organisations or of politicians and state actors.

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