Civil society and active citizenship are rooted in the historical transformations that accompanied the transition from “traditional” to “modern” societies, which eventually led to the emergence of the nation-state. In today’s increasingly interconnected world, however, the concepts of civil society and citizenship cross national borders. Scholars have therefore developed notions such as “global” or “transnational” civil society (Keane 2003) and “global citizen action” (Edwards & Gaventa 2001). By drawing on different theoretical frameworks and a wide array of sources, this panel uses comparative as well as historical methods to inform today’s debate on the role of civil society and citizenship in a globalized world.

Transnational civil society and its actors have been vehemently criticized over the years. Invariably, post-modernist approaches have informed these critics’ theoretical approaches. Both Donald Fisher (1983) and, in a more recent monograph, Inderjeet Parmar (2012) have used Gramscian and Foucaultian paradigms to analyze the impact of philanthropic foundations and to point to the power dynamics that develop between grantor and grantee. Similarly, over the last decade, scholars have debated the real impact of international aid and humanitarianism (Easterly 2005; Sachs 2006), and pointed to harmful effects of international organizations on economic and political development (Moyo 2009). Lastly, influenced by post-colonial studies, scholars have criticized the notion of “global civil society” and pointed to the “western centrisms” of organizations, structures, and strategies that drive the actors of an allegedly “global” civil society (Chandhoke 2002). Whether or not we accept these critics, these post-colonial and post-modernist approaches correctly draw attention to the critical encounters between local and international actors.

This panel uses both historical and contemporary studies to focus on the potentials and limits of global civil society by investigating the complex interactions of local and international actors. The panel aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the development of asymmetries between local priorities and goals, as well as strategies, of global actors. All presenters focus on the critical intersection between transnational and local spheres of action. In so doing, these essays contribute to the larger debate over the role of transnational organizations in facing the challenges of an increasingly complex global community. Likewise, all papers analyze the tensions and difficulties arising from the attempts to mediate between competing cultural and political priorities and interests. In this way, our panel provides a historical and comparative frame of reference for the discussion of the main theme of the ISTR 2014 International Conference, “Civil Society and the Citizen.”

In her contemporary-oriented analysis, Catherine Herrold draws on institutional isomorphism to analyze the interaction between international organizations and local institutions in Egypt. She argues that Egyptian civil society organizations adopted “Western” structures/terminologies as a result of their interaction with global actors/practices. By contrast, Peter Weber and Gregory Witkowski use historical case studies to inform contemporary debates on transnational civil society. Weber investigates the nationalist goals of internationalism and transnational civil society in Europe in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Through the examples of the Gustav Stresemann Memorial Foundation and the New Commonwealth Institute, Weber points to the tensions between nationalist goals and transnational cooperative endeavors and argues that German cultural and political elites used internationalism to reestablish Germany’s status in the international community. Witkowski analyzes transnational civil society through the lenses of the World Council of Churches and its international efforts to fight racial inequality in Apartheid South Africa. Witkowski draws attention to the tensions that emerged between an aggressive action-program that included support to military opposition groups and a notion of civil society grounded in civility and non-violence.

**Conceptualizing Global Civil Society in Interwar Europe: Nationalist goals of Internationalism**

Peter Christian Weber, petweber@iupui.edu; Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
As part of the panel “The National, the Transnational, and the Local: Who is the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly?” this paper uses historical methods to investigate the tensions between national and international factors in attempts to build a transnational civil society. This study thus serves as a case study for a better understanding of the difficulties of building a transnational civil society.

Ernst Jäckh serves as a vantage point for an understanding of the paradoxes of interwar internationalism, and hence of the intrinsic limits of transnational civil society. Through the example of Jäckh and two of the organizations he established (Stresemann Memorial Foundation and New Commonwealth Institute), I argue that transnational civil society and internationalism have been used to support nationalist goals and thus have undermined the roots of transnational civil society in the years leading to the Second World War. Surprisingly, historians have not paid much attention to Jäckh, the Stresemann Memorial Foundation, and the New Commonwealth Institute. Scholars have analyzed Jäckh only as part of broader investigations of the German School of Politics. To my knowledge, no studies at all exist on the Stresemann Memorial Foundation and the New Commonwealth Institute. Jäckh and these organizations offer a more nuanced picture of the nationalism of Germany’s cultural and scientific elites, and detail another side of what one scholar has aptly defined “Olympic internationalism.” From this perspective, this study expands the existing literature on internationalism and cultural diplomacy beyond its original focus on U.S. philanthropic foundations.

Jäckh was an energetic “organizer” and the Rockefeller Foundation considered him its representative in Berlin. In 1930, he founded the Stresemann Memorial Foundation, which aimed to balance “international tensions and to form among the nations mutual understanding for foreign nature and interests.” This noteworthy organization was, however, grounded in a peculiar understanding of internationalism. In line with current conceptualization of global civil society, Jäckh argued that a broad set of economic and political problems transcended regional as well and national borders. Accordingly, he suggested that the fate of Europe was interconnected with Germany’s destiny. These international entanglements, however, served clear nationalist goals. In fact, Jäckh concluded that only by solving Germany’s problems, that is, the Treaty of Versailles, Europe’s problems could be solved. After the Nazi seizure of power, Jäckh moved to London but maintained personal contacts with important personalities of the Nazi regime. In England he founded with Lord David Davies the New Commonwealth Institute, which investigated international issues by working with an international network of cultural as well as political elites. Jäckh viewed internationalism as a tool to re-insert Germany in the international community and, in so doing, hoped to force the Nazi leadership to take political responsibility in the international arena. Paradoxically, Germany’s new political leadership adopted Jäckh’s past strategy and viewed international connections as part of cultural diplomacy. Soon the German branch of the New Commonwealth movement, which had aimed to “clearly state Germany’s viewpoint on all international problems,” clashed against the approach of the British section of the New Commonwealth Society. On June 30, 1938, the German Committee ended its activities.

This study relies on traditional historical methodology grounded in archival research and textual analysis, and on five months of archival research at the Rockefeller Archive Center (Tarrytown, New York), the Secret State Archives Prussian Cultural Heritage (Berlin, Germany), and the Federal Archives (Germany, Berlin). For the analysis of the organizations at the center of this study, I use records of German state and federal agencies, as well as files from philanthropic institutions. In addition, I complement these sources with private papers of the founders, as well as rivals, to study the purposes and motives of those who established these organizations. This study draws attention to the national interests of actors participating in international as well as transnational cooperative efforts. In addition, the emphasis on education and research of both the Stresemann Memorial Foundation and the New Commonwealth Institute points to the ambivalent role of cooperative educational programs, as evidenced by the recent debates over the decision of prestigious U.S. universities to establish campuses in more or less authoritarian states.

**Giving Until it Hurts? Philanthropy, Violence and Global Civil Society**

Gregory Witkowski, gwitkows@iupui.edu; Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
This paper examines the concept of civil society in the global context by examining an aggressive program of action instituted by the World Council of Churches (WCC) to right racial inequality. The WCC, formally founded in 1948, emerged out of a number of ecumenical conferences before the Second World War. Representatives of 147 Christian churches found the WCC after the war in this spirit of international humanitarianism. They would continue to hold conferences every 6-8 years and coordinate policy among member nations. The WCC launched its most controversial policy, the Program to Combat Racism in 1969. Arguing that for too long the churches had been complicit supporters of the status quo and therefore of racial injustice the WCC called for member churches to begin applying economic sanctions against corporations and institutions that practiced racism, lobbying of governments to promote justice through sanctions, encourage "reparations" to those in the global south to try to create more economic equality, to educate Christians about racial injustice, especially the Apartheid system in South Africa and to support resistance movements (van der Bent 1980).

To achieve these goals, the WCC collected money from parishioners in member churches throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Ultimately, the WCC viewed the program as a success in that Apartheid was overcome but along the way, the program became controversial as the WCC supported military action by these groups. While the WCC justified these actions as necessary in the face of the extreme oppression of Apartheid, a lively debate took place among church members from different ideological bends (Welch 2001). This work examines the humanitarian reasons to start the Program to Combat Racism and the controversies it raised. I concentrate in my work on the responses to the Program in the Federal Republic of Germany, where a history of colonialism and of racial oppression made the program appealing to some as a principled stand against injustice whereas others rejected the use of violence in the name of Christianity (Meyers-Herwartz 1979). As such, my work outlines the limits of philanthropic action, born of a desire to aid international development by ending racial based economic exploitation and injustice.

Global civil society is a much contested term but at its basis, it relies upon the development of non-state actors creating structures of dialogue that stretches across state boundaries. It is a dynamic network of interaction that is predicated on the use of civility (Keane 2001). This work examines the limits of civility within this global civil society, expressly examining philanthropic giving that unites people through violent collective action. This paper is based on archival research at the archive of the WCC in Geneva and on published sources. It will be based upon a close reading of documentary evidence using source triangulation in order to verify sources. I will draw upon my work on philanthropic aid from East Germany for the developing world to give further context.

Foundations of Democracy? Egyptian philanthropic foundations and the limits of the transnational diffusion of institutional logics

Catherine E Herrold, cherrold@iupui.edu; Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

Egypt’s January 25, 2011 revolution that overthrew Hosni Mubarak seemed to provide an unprecedented political opportunity to the country’s approximately 30,000 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and philanthropic foundations. After decades of state repression, many Egyptian NGOs deemed themselves free to play a leading role in what they hoped would be Egypt’s transition to democracy. While Egypt’s draconian Law of Associations formally remained in place, countless NGOs crossed former “red lines” and, bolstered by popular support, took on projects related to voter education, elections monitoring, constitutional reform, human rights, and civic participation. These programs placed NGOs at the front lines of Egypt’s political transition.

In order to expand these efforts, Egypt’s NGOs would require increased financial and technical support. International donors flocked to Egypt, eager to have a hand in the country’s transition. Their grants were considered tainted, however, as feelings of nationalism and xenophobia ran high in post-revolution euphoria. But Egypt was home to a cadre of local philanthropic foundations that had proliferated in recent decades. These foundations seemed well positioned to support Egyptian NGOs’ political reform efforts. While locally born and bred, these Egyptian
private and community foundations bore striking resemblances to the Western foundations that have been credited with contributing to democratic pluralism and vibrancy (Fleishman 2007). Through an apparent process of institutional isomorphism, Egypt’s foundations adopted structures that replicated the private and community foundations that became fixtures in Western civil societies and took on discourses of “innovation,” “effectiveness,” and “civic empowerment” that fill the pages of Western foundations’ annual reports. These local Egyptian foundations could have provided much-needed support to Egypt’s NGOs that strove to advance a democratic transition.

Instead of jumping on to the revolutionary bandwagon, Egypt’s foundations held back. Private foundations strictly maintained their focus on socioeconomic development projects. Egypt’s two community foundations subtly wove political advocacy efforts into their grantmaking strategies but were careful to remain supporters, rather than overt drivers, of community-based reform initiatives.

This seemingly lackluster response of Egyptian foundations to the January 25 revolution presents a puzzle. Existing theories of the roles of philanthropic foundations see a major role for foundations in democratic governance. By virtue of their dual independence from political and market forces, foundations are hypothesized to be free to take risks and thus uniquely positioned to be policy innovators (Anheier and Daly 2007, Hammack and Anheier 2010). Through their support for a variety of NGOs, foundations are thought to stimulate political pluralism and ensure that marginalized voices are brought to bear on policy-making processes (Fleishman 2007). And in transitions to democracy, foundation-funded NGOs have been found to provide safe spaces to opposition groups that ultimately led the social movements that toppled dictators (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986). Theories of institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) would suggest that the Egyptian foundations that have adopted the structures and discourses of Western foundations, on which existing theories of foundations are based, would play leading roles in Egypt’s political transition. Yet they did not. Why?

In addressing this question, the proposed paper analyzes data from 75 semi-structured interviews with Egyptian foundation and NGO staff, staff of international aid organizations operating in Egypt, and expert observers of Arab foundations. The study also draws upon Egyptian foundations’ published materials, histories of Egyptian philanthropy, and the proceedings of Arab philanthropy conferences.

This paper’s analysis of Egyptian foundations’ responses to the January 25 revolution reveals the limits of a transnational diffusion of institutional logics. While Egyptian private and community foundations adopted the institutional forms of their Western counterparts, the political roles that they could legitimately adopt were constrained both by state policies toward civil society and by cultural norms. An examination of Egyptian foundations’ origins suggests that these organizations were conceived as part of a state strategy of controlled liberalism intended not to promote an independent civil society but rather to allow the autocratic Mubarak regime to consolidate its grip on power (Brumberg 2002). From their inception, Egypt’s foundations were intended to bolster support for Mubarak-era policies, not challenge them. Furthermore, cultural traditions of charity in Egypt curbed foundations’ capacities to embrace political reform initiatives. Local understandings of the legitimacy of NGOs and foundations saw no role for grantmakers in political or policy processes.

As democratic forms of governance increasingly take hold throughout the world, NGOs and their philanthropic foundation donors have a theoretically important role to play in political transformations. The results of this study, however, suggest caution in assuming that indigenous civil society organizations will necessarily have the capacity or legitimacy to take on leading political roles. The global diffusion of institutional logics has proven pervasive, as indigenous philanthropic foundations have multiplied throughout the world (Hammack and Heydemann 2009). Their contributions to democratic development, however, will likely be circumscribed by local political, cultural, and economic realities.