THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

PROCESS OF GEORGIA BETWEEN 2003 AND 2011

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Approval of the Graduate of Social Sciences

_____

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık

Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

_____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pınar Akçalı

Head of the Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

_____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ayça Ergun Özbolat

Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Havva Kök Arslan (Hacettepe, IR.)   _____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ayça Ergun Özbolat (METU, SOC.)   _____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Işık Kuşçu Bonnenfant (METU, IR.)   _____

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Name, Last Name: Hazar Ege GÜRSOY

Signature:

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION PROCESS OF GEORGIA BETWEEN 2003 AND 2011

Gürsoy, Hazar Ege
M. Sc., Department of Eurasian Studies
Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Ayça ERGUN ÖZBOLAT
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The aim of this thesis is to analyze the last phrase of democratization process in Georgia that refers to democratic consolidation period, while focusing on the role of civil society organizations. The main focus area will be post-Rose Revolution period hence, the Rose Revolution that occurred in 2003 is considered as an example of democratic transition and as a nature of successful democratization development, the transition period must be followed by the democratic consolidation process. In order to examine the consolidation of democracy in Georgia, the study sheds light on the development of civil society, the aims of activities of civil societal actors and their relations with state, society, international actors and media. This thesis argues that in order to consolidate democracy, the civil society's interaction with state and society must be effectual however, the Georgian civil society organizations are unable to mediate the relations with state and society, especially after the Rose Revolution. As a result of the problematic relations, Georgian democratic consolidation process is failing. This thesis is based on the qualitative data which is collected during a fieldwork in Georgia.

Key Words: Georgia, Democratic Consolidation, Civil Society, NGOs, Democratization.

ÖZ

2003-2011 YILLARI ARASI GÜRCİSTAN DEMOKRATİK PEKİŞTİRME SÜRECİNDE SİVİL TOPLUM ÖRGÜTLERİNİN ROLÜ

GÜRSOY, Hazar Ege
Yüksek Lisans, Avrasya Çalışmaları Bölümü
Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Ayça ERGUN ÖZBOLAT
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Bu tezin amacı, demokratikleşme sürecinin son evresi olan demokratik pekiştirme dönemini, Gürcistan'daki sivil toplum örgütlerinin rolü üzerine odaklanarak anlatmaktır. Esas odak noktası, Gül Devrimi sonrası Gürcistan'dır zira 2003 yılında Gürcistan'da gerçekleşen Gül Devrimi demokratik geçiş sürecinin bir örneği olarak kabul edilmektedir ve başarılı bir demokratikleşme örneğinin doğası gereği, demokratik geçiş süreci, demokratik pekiştirme aşaması tarafından takip edilmelidir. Bu duruma müteakiben, Gürcistan'ın demokratik pekiştirme sürecini analiz etmek için, bu çalışma Gürcistan'daki sivil toplum oluşumuna, sivil toplum örgütlerinin çalışma alanlarına, amaçlarına ve sivil toplum örgütlerinin devlet, toplum, uluslararası aktörler ve medya sektörü ile etkileşimine yoğunlaşmaktadır. Bu tezin tartıştığı nokta şu şekilde özetlenebilir; Demokrasiyi pekiştirebilmek için sivil toplumun devlet ve toplum ile ilişkisi etkin olmalıdır ancak özellikle Gül Devrimi'nden sonra Gürcistan sivil toplum örgütleri devlet ve toplum ile ilişkilerindeki arabuluculuk vasfını yerine getirememiştir. Karşılıklı ilişkilerin sorunsal boyutu nedeni ile de demokratik pekiştirme süreci başarıdan uzaklaşmıştır. Bu tez Gürcistan'da toplanan nitel veri üzerine kurulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Demokratik Pekiştirme, Sivil Toplum, STK'lar, Gürcistan, Demokratikleşme.

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To my family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the last phrase of democratization process in Georgia that refers to democratic consolidation period, while focusing on the role of civil society organizations. The main focus area will be post-Rose Revolution. This thesis argues that in order to consolidate democracy, the civil society's interaction with state and society must be effectual however, the Georgian civil society organizations are unable to mediate the relations with state and society, especially after the Rose Revolution. As a result of the problematic relations, Georgian democratic consolidation process is not a successful one. This thesis is based on the qualitative data which is collected during a fieldwork in Georgia.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the newly independent post- Soviet states started to take attraction of the scholars and area specialists that the transition to democracy periods of these states became a core study area in social sciences. In order to integrate the newly independent former Soviet republics to this field, the study of democratization became one of the most ascendant literatures in comparative politics that the terms of democratic transition and democratic consolidation, are suitable to analyze in various aspects. The research subjects are debated according to the theoretical, methodological and empirical data or

the interaction of all these segments. However, classification and generalization of democratic movements are extremely difficult. In this essence, in order to create a framework, scholars generally prefer to examine the field of study by focusing on one specific perspective. The scholarly works generally focus on the political transformation of these post-Soviet states and the term of democratization is mostly analyzed within the perspective of elite behavior in these countries. As a result the democratization approaches so far are established on the political transformation rather than the civil society formation. There is an obvious scarcity in the analysis of civil society formation as an indicator of post-Soviet transition period and the post-Soviet South Caucasus is one of the least analyzed regions; although civil society is one of the most vibrant actors on democratization process and the civil society of Georgia is one of the most developed and active one in the all post-Soviet space. Civil society plays an important role on all three phrases of democratization process; regime breakdown, transition process and democratic consolidation. However, the limited researches in the literature for civil society's role on democratization mostly major on the last phrase of democratization which is called the consolidation period.

Georgia neither enjoys long-established independency nor is a key financial nation with rich natural sources. It has only been 20 years since the disintegration from the Soviet Union and Georgia experienced many major events in this short period of time such as coup in 1992, ethnic conflicts and a civil war in 1995, problematic structure of territorial integrity, economic

vulnerability, high ratio of corruption, mass demonstrations against all three governments and a war with Russia in 2008. Yet, Georgia is a very fertile prototype country for analyzing various research subjects such as democratization, democracy promotion, political transformation and civil society formation. Especially, the Rose Revolution is a turning point for Georgia in order to trigger democratization process within the country, and it also affected the post-Soviet space countries with similar color revolutions such as Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. Rose Revolution is a success of not only the opposition leaders but also the civil society development and media support. However, the civil society development of Georgia goes way back from the Rose Revolution.

The notion of national independency has a vital role of the Georgian civil society development. Historically, in the last decade of Soviet Union, Gorbachev had two major policies; *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring). His aim was to obviate the economic vulnerability and public unrest but the consequences of these two policies reached far beyond his expectations. The Soviet society had chance for the first time to criticize the government and there is a domino effect occurred in the satellite countries of Soviet Union to seek and fight for their independencies. The first national independency struggle started in Baltics then spread to the other nations. Georgia is one of these nations. The intellectuals of the Georgian society were the one who gathered society for Georgian independence. Before turning to a political power, these intellectuals formed a more civil societal structured formation, which was called Ilya Chavchavadze Society. As a result of the intellectual effort and the public

support to these intellectuals, Georgia gained its independency in 1991. These intellectual movements transformed into the political bodies.

The power of civil society decreased in the first president Gamsakhurdia's regime and did not develop until the period of Shevardnadze, the second president of Georgia. In the middle of 1990s, Shevardnadze welcomed the foreign actors to Georgia and it was the second turning point for the civil society formation of Georgia. The international actors have a crucial role for the institutionalization of the Georgian civil society. The NGOs started to register in this period of time with the direct financial support of international actors. Within ten years the Georgian NGOs strengthened and they had high credibility among the society. They contributed to the governmental decision-making process and their criticism for the ruling elite negatively affected the Shevardnadze's regime. Shevardnadze was a successful politician who was coming from the Soviet *nomenklatura* and was the foreign minister of Soviet Union. Georgian people had high expectations for Shevardnadze to emendate all problematic issues that occurred in the period of Gamsakhurdia. However, he could not manage to stabilize the economy and suppress the ethnic conflict, the high level of corruption and he could not meet the public expectations. As a result, with the support of civil society and media to the new political elites who are western educated and western-oriented, effectuated a non-violent revolution in 2003 that caused Shevardnadze to resign. The political leadership shifted to a young western educated politician Saakashvili and his supporters.

The main role of civil society is to create a bridge between state and society. In problematic times civil society mobilizes society for pushing government in a democratic direction and in addition to that civil society provides limitation of state power to avoid any kind of abuse of power. In the Georgian case, the civil society played its role in regime breakdown and transition to democracy. The Rose Revolution is the most visible example of their effort. Georgian civil society organizations maintained to mobilize society against the Shevardnadze's regime via youth movements and mass demonstrations. The high level of public support to civil society organizations caused Shevardnadze's regime to take into account the civil society recommendations and criticism. Consequently, civil society contributed to the period of regime change, with the promise of democratic transition. As it is mentioned earlier, democratization consists of three phrases; regime breakdown, democratic transition and democratic consolidation. In order to succeed democratization process, these three phrases must be held properly; otherwise one cannot assume the mentioned country as a democratic state.

Many scholars are like-minded that generally problems occur in consolidation process and many countries cannot maintain to consolidate democracy. The possible scenarios for these kinds of countries are rather having partial democracy or having recycling regimes. In partial democracies, accountability to citizens is more or less functioning and non-elected establishments in the state have an impact on elections and the authority of government. The civil society has space to criticize however their actions are monitored by the government

closely. On the other hand, recycling regimes are the ones, which cannot sustain democratic consolidation. As a result there can be shift from democratic structure to authoritarian one, which may be followed by another transition period towards democracy in a recycling nature. Elite commitment and civil society participation are essential for democratic consolidation. In this sense, the relation of state and civil society is crucial. The state must take into consideration the civil society contribution and must not neglect their efforts for checking and balancing the state. And civil society must actively perform monitoring and limiting the state power. In this sense, the Rose Revolution is quite important because against the expectations there are several problems occurred in the civil society formation in Georgia and the relations of government and civil society relatively worsened after the revolution.

The thesis is organized in six parts, following the Introduction; Chapter 2 will examine the literature review of democratization by focusing on the democratization definitions, approaches and finally the three dimensions of democratization. In Chapter 3, the literature review of civil society will be emphasized by focusing on the post-Soviet civil society formation and also the role of civil society on democratic consolidation will be analyzed. Chapter 4 will consist of the historical background of Georgia by focusing on different periods of time, from glasnost and perestroika to the 26 May 2011 demonstrations that affected the civil society development within the country. Chapter 5 will be based on the qualitative data which is collected during a fieldwork in Georgia. This chapter will be consist of several parts that shed light

on the peculiarities of Georgian NGOs and the relations of civil society actors with several groups such as; political society, international actors, public and media. Last chapter will conclude with an overview of democratic consolidation process of Georgia and the role of Georgian civil society actors on this particular issue.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW OF DEMOCRATIZATION

The very exact aim of this chapter is to create a general framework on the notions of democratization. In that sense, the first part of this chapter will be focused on the democratization definitions, the key actors of democratization and several approaches of democratization which will be useful on explaining the Post-Soviet Georgia's transition period. The second part will consist of the structure of democratization that will explain the three main processes; breakdown, transition and democratic consolidation.

2.1 Conceptualizing Democratization

Before defining the term of democratization one must understand what democracy is. Parrott defines *democracy* as a "political system in which the formal and actual leaders of the government are chosen within regular intervals through elections based on a comprehensive adult franchise with equal weighted voting, multiple candidacies, and secret balloting ..."[1] by way of addition Dawisha also mentions the importance of civil liberties, freedom of expression

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[1] David Potter, "Explaining Democratization", in Democratization, ed. by David Potter, David Goldblatt, Margaret Kiloh, Paul Lewis, (Polity Press in association with The Open University Press, Cambridge, 1997), p.4.

and access to multiple and competing sources of information.[2] By briefly conceptualizing democracy, it will be clearer to analyze the democratization term.

Democratization is a change in political regime that moving in a democratic direction.[3] Grugel defines democratization as "a transformation of the political system from non-democracy towards accountable and representative government."[4] Dawisha on the other hand expand the definition of democratization as; it begins with set of free and fair elections for nation-wide level. The free and fair elections must be accompanied by civil liberties and political rights and it must be established of both state institutions and intermediate civil society organizations that mediate between the state and citizens.[5]

Potter sets democratization on seven concepts as: first he categorizes five regime types, liberal democracy, partial democracy, authoritarianism, direct democracy and participatory democracy, then the other two concepts are state and civil society. [6] The reason of giving the concept of state and civil society is that they

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[2]Karen Dawisha, "Democratization and Political Participation: research concepts and methodologies" in Democratic Changes and Authoritarian Reactions in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, ed. by Karen Dawisha, Bruce Parrot, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997), p.41.

[3] Potter, p.5.

[4] Grugel, Jean, Democratization, A Critical Introduction, (Palgrave Press, Hampshire, 2002), p.3.

[5] Dawisha, p.42.

[6] Potter, p.5.

are the locomotives of the democratization process as well as they are the main actors of the following political regimes. In order to clarify the categorization of Potters, it will be useful to give brief definitions of these concepts.

A state: is characterized by an ensemble of institutional patterns and political organizations-coercive ,administrative, legal- distinguished from other organizations in society by having capacity to monopolize the legitimate use of violence within a given territory… and promotes a sense of national identity and common citizenship.

Civil society: the space of uncoerced human association and also the set of relational networks formed for the sake of family, faith interests and ideology

The aim of Potter to categorize the political regimes into five is to determine the levels of democracies in the states which are analyzed for the process of democratization. Therefor with a change of political regime and transformation from one to another shows us the direction of transition for is it a democratization process or not.

1- *Liberal Democracy:* is a type of political regime in which binding rules and policy decisions are made by representatives that are accountable to community by free, fair and competitive elections. In a liberal democracy, citizens have right to criticize all levels of political bodies and have right to create independent associations

2- *Authoritarianism*: is a political regime that is shaped by the state leaders who is not accountable to its citizens. The competitive elections are not a characteristic of this type of regimes. The civil society in this kind of regime is not independent and criticizing the governmental bodies has possibility to be punished.

3- *Partial Democracy*: Accountability to citizens more or less qualified in this kind of regime and non-elected establishments in the state like military and such have an impact on elections and the authority of government. The civil society has right to criticize however their actions are monitored by the government closely.

4- *Participatory Democracy*: Similar to liberal democracies, in that kind of political regime citizens have right to participate the decision-making process. More than the liberal democracies, in these kinds of democracies the participation on the citizens are not limited just with voting. Democratic accountability expends beyond government. It is also important to mention that there has not (yet) an example of such democracy.

5- *Direct Democracy*: In particular periods, citizens have right to participate on law making processes, conflict resolutions, and choose representatives in any kind of representative bodies including the local authorities. This kind of democracy was seen in the Ancient Greek and there is no such example in the contemporary world.[7]

Democratization is an ongoing process. Dawisha highlights the process as "to a certain extent, all states, even those that call themselves, and are recognized by

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[7] Dağ, A.,E., International Relations and Diplomacy Dictionary, (Anka Press, 2004), p.151.

others as, democratic are still evolving, either towards or away from more democracy."[8] Hence, by giving these concepts of democratic regimes, we can have a clearer view on the process of democratization. In today's world only three regimes of the five are having examples and these are liberal democracy, partial democracy and authoritarianism. As it is mentioned in the beginning of this part, the democratization is a progression which is a process of transition from one regime to a democratic or a more democratic one.

Various scholars are accepting the process as moving directly to liberal democracy model, but it is controversial and authoritarian regime can also shift to a partial democracy or in the case of a "jump"[9] as Potter claims, from authoritarian regime to directly liberal democracy, the process can be problematic because, rather than not passing from the partial democracy to jump directly to liberal democracy can cause a reaction of reverse. It means there can be a possibility to jump back to authoritarian regime, occurs.

The process of democratization and transition to a democratic structure involves three steps. Gill, conceptualizes the steps as; regime breakdown, democratic transition and democratic consolidation.[10] A successful democratic transition must comprehend all steps and must gain stability and durability at the end. However, these three dimensions of transition will be analyzed in the following parts of this chapter. Hence, the third dimension 'democratic consolidation' is

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[8] Dawisha, p.42.

[9] Potter, p. 6.

[10] Graeme Gill, The Dynamics of Democratization, Elites, Civil Society and the Transition Process, (Macmilan Press, London, 2000), p.8.

the concept of this thesis. The role of civil society on democratization is more vivid and important in democratic consolidation process. As the definitions of democratization controversial, the approaches to democratization also vary. In order to widen our perspective on democratization it will be helpful to determine main approaches of democratization. There are four major approaches (modernization theory, path-dependency, structural approach, and transition theory) that are examining democratization.

Modernization Theory: describes "a process of social mobilization in which democracy follows economic development, wealth accumulation, and functional differentiation"[11]. Basically, this theory emphasizes that democracy is a natural consequence of socio-economic development of a state. Potter claims that modernization approach is associated with the liberal democracies or it is a necessity for a successful democratization.[12] Examining civil society via modernization theory is not a very useful method. When we consider that the main initiative of the theory is liberal economy and socio-economic development, civil society is only guarantor of check-balance system for controlling the government.

Path-dependencyApproach: "The political culture of the former authoritarian regime is institutionally 'embedded' in the political leadership, civil society and population of the respective republics".[13] Lane states that the transition period is

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[11] Schmitz, H. P. (2004), Domestic and Transnational Perspectives on Democratization. International Studies Review, 6: 403–426, p.407.

[12] Potter, p.10.

almost impossible with a fresh start.[14] In the example of Post-Soviet transitions the legacy of communist party is undeniable. The society, which used to the driving force of the ruling elite, let the politic elite to accumulate power. This situation brings us to next approach.

The Structural Approach: "Focuses on long-term process of historical change."[15] Structuralism identifies the factors that are distinctive to particular cases. It also emphasizes the power structures which are relative class power, state power and external power. State is analyzed by the class relations and the role of external actor (the transnational relations with democratic states and such) is important on democratization process.

Transition Approach: Democratic transition is held by "conscious, committed actors, providing that they possess a degree of luck and show of willingness to compromise".[16] According to the scholars like Archie Brown and Ghia Nodia, "the elite commitment to democracy is the key".[17] Rustow ascribes the process through a political struggle on three phrases; liberalization, transition and consolidation.[18] Grugel claims that transition approach highlights the 'micro-

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[13] Tatum, Jesse D. "Democratic Transition in Georgia: Post-Rose Revolution Internal Pressures on Leadership" Caucasian Review of International Affairs, 3 (2), (Spring 2009): 156-171, p.162.

[14] Lane quoted by Tatum, p.162.

[15] Potter, p.18.

[16] Grugel, p.56.

[17] Mcfaul M., "Ten Years After the Soviet Breakup, A Mix Record An Uncertain Future" Journal of Democracy Volume 12, Number 4 October 2001, p.90.

[18] Grugel, p.57.

processes' of regime change, transition and democratic consolidation, yet they also been criticized being elitist, empirical and voluntaristic.[19] To sum up, transition theory is based upon elite behavior.

As it is seen in these four approaches, there is a lack of civil societal role on democratization. The democratization studies concentrated on the role of political transformation and political society. Therefore the role of civil society on democratization will be analyzed in the last phrase of democratization, which is called as democratic consolidation process.

2.2. Three Dimensions of Transition

Democratization is conceptualized by Gill with three main phrases, *breakdown, transition, consolidation.*[20] In order to assume a state that is successful at democratization process has to fulfill all these three phrases. These three phrases have their own characteristics and key factors.

Breakdown: Gill ascribes the regime breakdown as the "deconstruction and possibly disintegration of the old regime".[21] Carothers sees this phrase as a

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[19] Grugel, p.60.

[20] Graeme Gill, The Dynamics of Democratization, Elites, Civil Society and the Transition Process, (Macmilan Press, London, 2000), p.8.

[21] Ibid.

"crack in the ruling dictatorial regime".[22]A similar approach is coming from Schmitter and Schneider that they are calling this process as "political liberalization of authority".[23] Ekiert describes the first stage of democratization as following;

> "The first stage of democratization is characterized by the rapid disintegration of existing political institutions, the further aggravation of economic dislocations, the proliferation of various political movements breaking into the political arena and the establishment of transitory power arrangements in which opposition forces acquired varying degrees of access to the official political process and institutions."[24]

As it is seen in the definition of Ekiert there are several indicators that affect the process of regime breakdown process. Gill also mentions these components. He categorizes these components into four subtitles as, economic crises, political mobilization, international pressure and regime disunity. The countries that experienced the regime breakdown generally have economic crises. These economic difficulties have often affected the two segments of the state which are

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[22] Carothers, Thomas. ""*The End of the Transition Paradigm"*." Journal of Democracy 13:1 (2002). The Johns Hopkins University Press and the National Endowment for Democracy. Reprinted with the permission of The Johns Hopkins University Press, p.7.

[23] Schneider, Carsten Q. and Schmitter, Phillipe C (2004). 'Liberalization, Transition, and Consolidation. Measuring the Components of Democratization', Democratization, Vol. 11, No. 5 (special issure), pp. 59-90, p.60.

[24] Ekiert, Grzgorz. 1991. 'Democratization Processes in East Central Europe: A Theoretical Reconsideration.' British Journal of Political Science. 21(3): pp. 285–313, p. 287.

the political elite and the regime itself[25]. In that sense the Soviet Union's economic vulnerability can be shown as an example. In the last decade of Soviet Union, the union had experienced the economical inefficiency that Gorbachev found the solution of creating new state policies glasnost and perestroika which had a catastrophic effect on the breakdown. This process will be examined in the next chapter. The second component is political mobilization which refers to incapability of the regime to control the popular mobilization in such times like economic crises.

The general attitude of the authoritarian regimes to the population is trying to control their mobilization by making them depoliticize. The regime seeks to control the population by governmentally managed institutions such as trade unions, sport associations, women groups and such. However in times of economic suffrage, the regime has very limited chance to control society, as a conclusion the political mobilization of the society is inevitable. In the example of Soviet disintegration, regime could not maintain to stop public mobilization toward politics. The third component is the role of international actors and their pressure among the regime. Gill states that rather than the existence of international actors, the important thing is their mediated role with domestic institutions.[26] Whether their interaction with a war or their influence with international non-governmental organizations; the international actors have significant role on regime breakdown scenarios. An important reason of such

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[25] Gill, pp. 10-13.

[26] Gill, pp.18-25.

interferes is the economic concerns. The different regime types with different economic habituations are generally tried to be controlled by the other actors of the international arena. Also these kinds of interferes to the regime which has probability to breakdown are generally done via the promotions of democracy and human rights concepts. The fourth and the last component of the regime breakdown is regime disunity, which refers to disunity of political elites of the current regime. This kind of disunity generally occurs in the times, when a personal dictator or a charismatic leader does not found.[27] In such a scenario, the regime is controlled by a group of elite who comes mostly from different institutions and different levels of the governmental body. This institutional difference eventually causes of cracking the ruling authority.

The Transition Phrase: The second phrase of democratization is the transition process. Stradiotto and Guo are explaining the transition process by taking consideration of Linz, O'Donnell, Schmitter and Cortona as such: "A democratic transition is therefore the interval between an authoritarian polity and a democratic one. In defining democratic transition, the 'transfer of power' is usually identified as the key element which by definition equals democratization.[28] They also emphasize that transition is consist of two major actors: the ruling elite and the society that votes for it. One of the key point of transition is the successor of the authoritarian regime that wants to be considered as the democratic one should definitely protect the rights of opposition, human

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[27] Gill, p.25.
[28] Stradiotto G. A., Guo S., *"Transitional Modes of Democratization and Democratic Outcomes",* International Journal on World Peace, Vol. XXVII no. 4, December 2010, p.10

rights, civic rights, freedom of speech, free access to information and also they must support free and fair elections in a multi-party system. According to Stradiotto and Guo, a transition can happen in two versions; violence-based and non-violence-based. The first one can conclude with a possibility of war but the second kind, because of its negotiated structure avoids violence.[29] However, in a scenario of a coalition of the political elites has the possibility competing structure on the new political institutions. Hence, if the relations of new government and opposition tighten, democratic consolidation process would be harmed because of the struggle or worse the new political elite can choose the path of autocracy once again.

One must understand that, as Carothers determines the states that are "in transition to democracy has often been inaccurate and misleading. Some of these countries have hardly democratized at all".[30] Carothers generalizes this kind of countries position as "gray zone". Gray zone term refers to countries that are "neither dictatorial nor clearly headed toward democracy".[31] Hale carries this assumption even further and states that, although the scholars are analyzing the transition process both toward and away from, there is also a possibility of regime cycling.[32] The states that are unable to have transition and consolidation

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Carothers, p.14.

[31] Carothers, p.9.

[32] Henry E. Hale, "Regime Cycles - Democracy, Autocracy, and Revolution in Post-Soviet Eurasia", World Politics 58, October 2005, pp. 133–65., pp.133-134.

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phrases improperly can have recycling regimes which consist of democratic transition to authoritarianism and as a result, revolution comes following.

Democratic Consolidation: Democratic consolidation is a necessity to call a state successful at democratization. Before giving the definition it is important to mention in what kind of situations we examine democratic consolidation. As it is mentioned earlier, democratic consolidation is the third phrase of democratization. The phrase "the only game in town"[33] refers the importance of democracy. It means, democracy becomes the only game in town when, even in the face of severe political and economic crises, the overwhelming majority must use parameters of democratic procedures in any further political change.[34] This is the necessity of consolidation in the perspective of what "Rustow calls 'habituation' in which the norms, procedures and expectations of democracy become internalized"[35] by government, organizations and society in a state. The habituation of democratic norms must be internalized in five dimensions in a state. Linz and Stepan gives these five dimensions as "political society, rule of law, state bureaucracy, institutionalized economic society and finally civil society".[36] Linz and Stepan underline 'two surmountable obstacles' that are threatening the consolidation process as ethnic conflict in multinational states and economic unrest of the population.

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[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Diamond, Larry, Developing Democracy, Toward Consolidation, (The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1999), p.65.

[36] Linz, Juan J., Stepan, Alfred, p.17.

Schedler gives the definition of consolidation as "the challenge of preventing authoritarian regressions and securing the survival of the new democracies"[37]. However, while he is giving this description he adds that the definition above is impressively unclear. He suggests that in a broad and detailed definition creation, the term would be analyzed within different perspectives. Democratic consolidation hence, has several indicators and each scholar has different perspectives about consolidation of democracy. Hanson emphasizes the role of political culture and/or civil society need to support democratic institutions for democratic consolidation.[38] In that sense Diamond gives a broad explanation to democratic consolidation as;

> "The process by which democracy becomes so broadly and profoundly legitimate among its citizens that is very unlikely to break down. It involves behavioral and institutional changes that normalize democratic politics and narrow its uncertainty. The normalization requires the expansion of citizen access, development of democratic citizenship and culture, broadening of leadership recruitment and training, and other functions that civil society performs".[39]

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[37] Andreas Schedler. "How Should We Study Democratic Consolidation?" Democratization 5.4 (1998), pp.1-19.

[38] Stephan H., "Defining Democratic Consolidation, Post-communism and the Theory of Democracy", p.129.

[39] Diamond, L., "Toward Democratic Consolidation", Journal of Democracy - Volume 5, Number 3, July 1994, pp. 4-17

As Rustow, Linz and Stepan; Diamond also emphasizes the importance of habituation of democracy for establishment of consolidation. He gives the importance of norms and behavior on three dimensions (elite, organizations and mass public) of a state. Diamond categorizes the role of norms and behavior on three dimensions as fallowing;

Norms and Beliefs: In order to have a functional democratic consolidation process, the elite of the state which consists of leaders of government, business and social organizations must believe the legitimacy of democracy. And their beliefs must be manifested by their public rhetoric and ideology. In the level of organizations, all political parties, social movements and interest groups must certify in their charters the legitimacy of democracy and the rule of law or in the minimum level do not reject. In the third level which is mass public, at least the 70 percent of the society must believe democracy and at most 15 percent of it prefers an authoritarian governmental body.

Behavior: The elite of the state must act according to rule of law and must accept the norms of democracy. Furthermore the political elites must definitely not use the military power in order to gain political advantage. In the organizational level, they must avoid violent, unconstitutional and anti-democratic methods as to pursuit their political goals. In the mass public level,

the mass movements, parties and organizations must promote illegal and unconstitutional methods to express themselves. [40]

To sum up this chapter was specifically about the democratization concept. I mainly focused on the definitions of democratization and the approaches to democratization. Finally, I briefly give information about the three phrases of democratization, the breakdown, transition and consolidation. As it is seen in this chapter, democratization mainly, focuses on the political transformation of the states and the civil society seems to be part of the democratization process as a subtitle and supporting factor. Especially, the transition period is less likely analyzing with civil society and the approaches to democratization. In this sense, it is very difficult to analyze civil society with a democratization approach. The general attitude to civil society in democratization concept is mainly major on the process of democratic consolidation phrase, by scholars of democratization studies. Hence, the framework of this thesis will be shaped on the role of civil society of Georgia on democratic consolidation rather than examining Georgian civil society with a specific democratization approach. Subsequently, the next chapter will be about the civil society and its role on democratic consolidation.

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[40] Diamond, (1999), p.69.

CHAPTER 3

CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

In the previous chapter, I focus on the definition of democratization and the three dimension of democratization as regime breakdown, democratic transition and democratic consolidation. After giving a brief informational background in the previous chapter, this chapter will specifically consist of the term 'civil society' and the role of civil society on democratic consolidation, so as to examine the Georgian case of democratization and civil society formation with the given literature review. In order to understand the Georgian case, it is important to shed light on what civil is society and what is not. And finally the importance of civil society will be analyzed by its effects on democratic consolidation.

3.1 The Term of Civil Society

The term of civil society is a problematic issue in order to determine it. The scholars have different perspectives and different definitions for civil society.

Especially in democratization studies, the definitions are evolving parallel with Western-oriented approaches. The problem of explaining civil society is defined by Boussard with the quotation from Fowlar as a '*maze'*.

 "A maze is a place where people end up going round in circles or reach dead ends. Unless care is taken, analysing civil society feels like this because it is an abstract political concept whose explanation is part and parcel of the theory being applied, hence any definition becomes tautological".[41]

The problem generally occurs as a result of the blurriness of the definition. The boundaries of civil society for where it starts and where it ends, is changing from scholar to scholar. In order to understand this situation, it is useful to examine the civil society definitions. According to Mudde, a civil society 'commonly defined as a set of organizations that operate between the state and the family and economic product'[42]. This definition shows us that, Muddle excludes state, individual and economic society from civil society. However this definition is not clear enough. A broader explanation is given by Boussard that she sees civil society as "all the voluntarily formed non-profit collectivities that seek to promote or to protect an interest and that are part neither of the state nor of the family sphere. Thus, civil society includes many different kinds organized

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[41] Fowlar quoted by Boussard C., "Crafting democracy: civil society in post-transition Honduras", Dept. of Political Science, Lund University, 2003, p.80.

[42] Muddle Cas, "*Civil Society"*, Developments in Central and East European Politics 4, Duke University Press, Durham 2007, pp.213-214.

activities.[43] Boussard highlights the importance of collective and voluntary act. There are also other definitions of civil society that are shaped according to its role in a country. Uhlin mentions the importance civil society by its role on developing identities and articulating interests.[44] As I mentioned before, the role of being a bridge between the state and individual is one of the main cores of civil society. Habermas ascribes the role of civil society as 'it has the dual function of ensuring that those who exercise power do not abuse it and of transforming the system to regenerate more democratic practices… A vibrant civil society is essential for democracy.'[45]

Diamond also gives a broad civil society definition as such; "civil society is the realm of organized social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or set of rules."[46] Diamond's definition focuses on the structure of civil society and he emphasizes what is not civil society. His approach to particular issue is that if we put civil society between states and individual, the economic society must be excluded, because the economic society is a product of profit-making business firms that are run by individual interests. Diamond also excludes parochial society groups which consist of recreation, entertainment, spirituality

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[43] Boussard, p.81.

[44] Uhlin, Anders, Post-Soviet Civil Society, Democratization in Russia and the Baltic States, (Routledge Press, New York, 2005), p.24.

[45] Fleming, T. (2000). Habermas, democracy and civil society: Unearthing the social in transformative learning. In C. Wiessner, S. Meyer & D. Fuller (Eds.), "*Challenges of practice: Transformative learning in action",* (pp. 303-308). New York: Columbia University, p.306.

[46] Diamond, (1999), p.221.

and religious activities because this branch of life is also conduct directly to individuals. In addition to the exclusion, the political parties must also be omitted, because the aims of politic society (political parties, the campaign organizations, etc.) are to maintain power in the governmental body and control the state power.[47] Therefore, there is a division between civil society and political society. Uhlin states that civil society groups are often political but they do not claim any position in the government and they do not seek governmental power. A civil society group can cooperate with government on policy making process and they can actively work with or against government in order to create a democratic environment. Uhlin sees civil society as partially autonomous from state. [48] In addition Boussard questioning being autonomous from states as following;

> "There is a constant interaction between civil society and political society, and this raises the question of civil society autonomy. An active civil society that seeks to influence policy is unlikely to be totally autonomous from the state. Civil society organizations sometimes receive funding from the government and sometimes assist state agencies in the implementation of policies. For example, development NGOs often cooperate with state departments such as the health department to implement water and sanitation projects or other types of development-related projects."[49]

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[47] Ibid.

[48] Uhlin, p.24.

[49] Boussard , p.82.

Therefore rather than considering civil society with a total autonomous structure, it would be appropriate to consider civil society in a partial autonomy. While defining the civil society, I mentioned about the distinction of economic society and political society from civil society earlier. In addition to that Diamond's put a set of rules to distinguish civil society from other groups in society. He reifies the differences into five as such;

- A civil society seeks public ends rather than private ends

- Civil society can have political agenda but that does not mean seeking to win control or position within the state

- Civil society encompasses pluralism and diversity

- Civil society does not seek to represent whole set of interest of a person or a community, the interests must be represented by different groups who are aimed to that issue specifically.

- Civil society should be distinguished from more clearly democracy enhancing phenomenon of civic community. [50]

The fifth section is needed to be clarified. Diamond gives information about what civic community is by the reference of Putnam. Putnam suggests that a civic community is broader in the sense of including any kind of associations within a state but also has a narrow term by its structure of being established on trust, mutual interests and cooperation. In that sense, an organization can be

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[50] Diamond, (1999), pp.223-225.

'uncivic' if it is not functioning with a collectivity and trust of members to each other. A civic organization which is established on autocracy within itself and shaped around the leader of the organization can be considered as uncivic organization.[51]

In order to have civic and democratic values within the civil society organizations, Diamond gives several factors to be maintained by the organizations themselves. Firstly, a civil society organization has to be democratic in its internal affairs, decision-making process and leadership selections. Secondly, especially the associations must have goals and methods which are not maximalist but for certain issues. Thirdly, the institutionalization of the organizations is extremely important. A functional civil society organization must have a functional institutionalization. The fourth feature of a democratic civil society is pluralism. No organization must claim that they are representing all kinds of interests of all kind of its members. Pluralism within the organization and pluralism in the civil society by establishment of different civil society organizations is quite important. In a situation of mismanagement or abuse of rights in and out of the organization, because of pluralistic structure of civil society organization, a new organization can have its position if it is extinct or dissolve. The final feature of a democratic civil society is density. The density of the organizations helps the society to involve what they find is the closest. In

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[51] Diamond, (1999), p.226.

that sense, in a dense civil society, participation, awareness, societal activities increase and help the civil society to be more active.[52]

Another important thing to analyze is the categorization of the civil society organizations. There are different kinds of civil society formations and organizations. Diamond clarifies them into six segments as; *economic associations*, *cultural organizations* (religious, ethnic, communual), *informational and educational,interest-based* (Trade-unions, professional groups), *developmental*, *issue-oriented* and finally *civic groups*(mass movements and demonstrations rather than participantry acts). He also adds "the ideological marketplace" that the definition of Thomas Metzger to define independent mass media, think tanks, universities, publishing houses and such. On the other hand, Uhlin takes two important actors from civil society for defining democratization. These two actors are *social movements (SMs)* and *non-governmental organizations (NGOs)*. What Uhlin defines social movements is similar to Diamonds civic groups. And NGOs are defined by Uhlin as "formal, self-governing, voluntary, non-profit organizations."[53] Uhlin differentiates social movements and NGOs as[54];

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[52] Diamond, (1999), pp. 227-233.

[53] Uhlin, p.26.

[54]Ibid.

	NGOs	SMs
Goals	Limited	Far reaching
Means	Moderate	Confrontational
Structure	Formal/Institutionalized	Diffuse
Activists	Few, Professional	Mass base

In order to analyze the civil society development in Georgia for its democratization process, I will mainly focus on the social movements and NGOs. By referring to NGOs, I will primarily use the interest-based, issue-oriented and ideological marketplace groups.

3.2 The Role of Civil Society on Democratic Consolidation

According to Ergun, "many studies of democratization view civil society as a later development in the process of political transformation."[55] In order to analyze the concept of civil society in democratization process, the scholars prefers to major on democratic consolidation. Disregarding the role of civil society is criticized by Boussard. She states that, the transitologists are examining these two phrases of democratization by only focusing on the elite behavior. However, there is an interaction between with those elites and civil society. During the breakdown and transition phrases, the cultural and

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[55] Ergun, A., Non-Traditional Security Threats and Regional Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus, "*Democratization and Civil Society in the Post-Soviet South Caucasus*", (IOS Press: 2011), p.49.

intellectual elites (artists, poets, musicians, and writers)[56] of the state are the ones who are mobilizing society and the mobilization eventually creates social movement. Rise of the society, against the authoritarian regime can have several whys and wherefores. According to Bunce, in the post-communist context, the mass mobilizations and demonstrations with the leadership of intellectual elites were because of the nationalistic causes. The breakdown and transition by the cause of nationalistic movements created a double edged situation in post-communist countries; national independency and democratic transition. Bunce also adds that in these countries if there is an ethnic diversity, the democratization process would be problematic.

According to O'Donnell& Schmitter, once the regime broke down, these social movements are shifting to the more institutionalized models such as human rights associations, professional non-governmental organizations and etc.[57] Uhlin also adapts this view to the post-communist context as "the post-Soviet societies have experienced a development of civil society from a 'movement society' under *glasnost*and *perestroika* to an 'NGO-society' in the post-transition period."[58]

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[56] Boussard, p. 98.
[57] O'Donnell, G. and P. Schmitter. 1986. Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp.50-52.

[58] Uhlin, p.27.

Once these civil society groups shift to more institutionalized structures with the new period of democratic consolidation, their aims and goals also become more professional. The roles of these professionalized organizations on democratic consolidation process are categorized by Diamond. Diamond lists thirteen functions of civil society on a democratic consolidation process as follows;

1- Checking and limiting function: The first and main democratic function of civil society is to control the power of state that it is exercising on society. After the transition process to democratization, this function of civil society includes checking, monitoring and restraining the state power and also controls it and encourages it to be accountable to the law and public expectations.

2- Democracy building function: This second function helps civil society to supplement the political parties in increasing the political participation and political efficiency and also the skills of democratic citizens.

3- Civil Society as an Educator: Starting with the international democracy promotions, the local civil societies are vital to implement democratic values to citizens.

4- Structuring multiple channels: This function serves to help and include especially the excluded groups of society such as, women, racial or ethnic minorities, to access power that has been denied them in the upper governmental decision-making process and bodies

5- The function of deepening the democracy: In order to survive from the authoritarian heritages, it is important to minimize the national chains of patron-client relations.

6- The function as a rich and pluralistic structure: A rich and pluralistic civil society with a relatively developed economy can minimize the politic conflict from different views and orientations of the society. With the arise of the issue-oriented organizations people from different religions, ethnic groups or etc., the new democratic agendas occur and the historical cleavages start to be discuss in a more liberal environment.

7- Recruiting and training new political leaders: Mostly, with the support of international foundations, a specific group of civil society organizations in the newly democratic states; train local or state elected officials and candidates with normative standards of public accountability and transparency besides technical and administrative skills.

8- Explicit democracy-building purposes: Non-partisan election-monitoring civil society organizations are essential in order to maintain democratic consolidation for their role on blocking electoral fraud.

9- The role of disseminating information to society: This function of democratic civil society helps citizens to empower them in the collective pursuit and defense of interests and values. Independent civil society organizations spread information via printed media, handouts and especially web-sites.

10-The function as mobilization of new information and understanding to achieve economic reforms: The civil society organizations inform society on economic reforms for democracy and also work with government and sometimes consult for new economic policies.

11-The function of working on mediation and resolution: is another role of civil society for consolidating democracy.

12- Without political concerns and political agendas a vigorous civil society can strengthen the social foundations of democracy. The civil society in that sense can work with different concerns such as, fighting with poverty, strengthening the farming, livestock rising etc.

13- The final function of civil society comes with the success of all twelve above. "By enhancing the accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, effectiveness and hence legitimacy of the political system, a vigorous civil society gives citizens respect for state and positive engagement with it."[59]

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[59] Diamond , (1999), p.249.

In order to maintain democratic consolidation, civil society is a key factor. The role of civil society and its functions to sustain democratic consolidation is vital. As I mentioned above, the categorizations of Diamond briefly clarifies the roles and functions of civil society. This thesis is aiming to examine the Georgian case with the given literature.

CHAPTER 4

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF GEORGIAN CIVIL SOCIETY FORMATION

"Both democracy and the nation-state are elements of the modern Western political blueprint, and both elements faced the same obstacle--Soviet totalitarianism. In principle, being democratic meant being pro-Western. In practice, democracy meant a chance to work for the cause of independence."[60]

National independency has a vital role on Georgian civil society. As it is mentioned in the previous chapter, Bunce is also sees the democratic transition of post-Soviet states as a consequence of nationalistic causes. The national awakening of the Georgian society as well can be considered as the first civil society solidarity and the first step of Georgian civil society formation. The first signs of civil society formation occurred with the nationalist movements in Georgia, with a driving force of the intellectual elites who started with a more civil societal structure than shifted to political society. Hence, in order to understand the national awakening and the democratic transition in Georgia, we have to analyze the triggering effect of the glasnost and perestroika policies of Gorbachev, which let the dissolution of Soviet Union and the establishment of newly independent states, including Georgia.

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[60]Nodia, G. O, "Georgia's Identity Crisis", Journal of Democracy 6.1 (1995), pp.104-116.

4.1 The Role of Glastnost and Perestroika

According to Mawdsley and White, Mikhail Gorbachev has been peculiarly insistent upon the decisive importance of individual Leadership.[61] Gorbachev wanted to hold renewal on the political leadership of the Soviet system. In one of Gorbachev's speech, he said that; "democratism is not simply a slogan but the essence of perestroika"[62] That was showing his determination on electoral reform with secret ballots and choice of candidate. In 1990, only he and Eduard Shevardnadze had places in both Politburo and Secretariat.[63] The most of the elite had replaced by new political actors in the government. The need for renewal and change was because of several indicators. The most important reason was the bankruptcy of the Soviet economy. In July 1989, one of the most serious industrial unrest happened since 1920s.[64]

The unrest of public and economical vulnerability caused Gorbachev to take the steps of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring) in the fields of domestic, international and economic policies. The main aim of Gorbachev was to create a new vision for the Soviet Union rather than a revision in the inefficient spheres of the system. With the new policies of Gorbachev, he had

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[61] Mawdsley E, and White S., *"Renewal and Dead Souls: The Changing Soviet Central Committee",* p.537.

[62] Gooding J., "Perestroika as Revolution from within: An Interpretation" Russian Review, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Jan., 1992), pp. 36-57, p.49.

[63] Gooding J., p.48.

[64] Ariel Cohen, "Shevardnadze's Journey", Policy Review; Apr/May 2004; 124; ABI/INFORM Global, p.79.

expected to create a social democracy and took support of the population. His strategy became a catastrophe for the Soviet Union. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Gill foresees, economic crises as one of the four reasons of regime breakdown. The society, which Gorbachev expected to be supported with enthusiasm, for the first time had chance to criticize the issues, which were considered as taboo. For example, the media was able to broadcast the news about police forces. "Between 1986 and 1988, twenty-five hundred vivid revelations of police brutality, violations of individual rights, and endemic corruption appeared in the Soviet press."[65] But, most importantly, these policies created a fragmentation in the republics of Soviet Union. Perestroika initiated to reduce the role of center on decision making and increased the role of market economy. On the other hand, glasnost created pluralism in the political arena.[66] However, Peter Zwick foresaw the upcoming results of glasnost and perestroika in 1989 and interprets the situation as;

"After four years in power, Gorbachev is beginning to face the ideological, political, and economic inconsistencies and contradictions of perestroika, glasnost, and new thinking. It is now clear, for example, that perestroika of the economy will not result from bureaucratic restructuring but must include a fundamental change in the role of the market in pricing, allocation, and production decisions. Glasnost too has unleashed forces, such as minority and Russian

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[65] Shelley L. I.,"Policing Soviet Society: The Evolution of State Control, Law & Social Inquiry, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Summer, 1990), p.516.

[66] Mason D.S., "Glasnost, Perestroika and Eastern Europe", International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 64, No. 3 (Summer, 1988), p.432.

nationalism, which cannot be resolved by appeals to party unity or social harmony."[67]

Not being able to create a social democratic perspective, the Soviet Union faced with the extremist movements and revolutions of the minor nationalities. Starting from the Baltic Region, Moldova and eventually Caucuses republics established their Popular Fronts and declared their independencies by referendums.[68] Especially, the establishment of the Popular Fronts in the Baltic region created a triggering effect and inspired other Soviet Republics. Georgia was one of these countries. According to a mid-1989 publication of the Latvian Front's Information Centre,

> "The Belorussians and the Georgians have requested the assistance of our lawyers in formulating their documents. The Belorussian Popular Front hopes that the PFL [Popular Front of Latvia] will be able to assist in the issue of their statutes and programme. Various movements often turn to the PFL for advice and assistance, and it is not denied to them".[69]

Georgian Popular Front, which was influenced by the Baltic models, was established by the dissident intellectuals and the elites in 1998. This was the first

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[67] Zwick P., "New Thinking and New Foreign Policy under Gorbachev", Political Science and Politics, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Jun., 1989), p.216.

[68] Gooding J., p.56.

[69] Muiznieks N. R. "The Influence of the Baltic Popular Movements on the Process of Soviet Disintegration" Europe-Asia Studies, Vol. 47, No. 1 (1995), p.6.

step towards to the independency of Georgia. Gorbachev's perestroika policy broke the strong center control on the satellite republics. As a result, the idea of independence started to become realistic. In this essence, Georgia started to create its own elite. However, there was fragmentation between the elite groups, which was occurred by the diversity on the notion of democracy and national independence. Within the borders of Georgia there were separatist regions, which support the secessionist movement demanding that integrating to Russian territory, such as Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as Ajara. Therefore, the understanding and prospect of democracy were changing between the intellectuals of Georgia. One group was aiming democracy as a main goal which must be established in the first place. On the other hand, the other group was seeing democracy as a luxury that must be sought after the gain of independence.[70] Consequently, with the following events that occurred in Georgia; gathered nation and the majority of the elites in a nationalist front.

4.2 Zviad Gamsakhurdia Presidency and The First Attempts on Civil Society Formation

> "The Popular Front played a merely peripheral role; the Georgian Communist Party, lacking legitimacy in the eyes of the people, was irreversibly weakened; Gamsakhurdia, the leader with most charisma and populist appeal, emerged as the dominant leader, and in November 1990 his group assumed political power."[71]

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[70] Miller, Eric, "Smelling the Roses: Eduard Shevardnadze's End and Georgia's Future" Problems of Post-Communism 51.2 (2004), p.17.

[71] Wheatley, Jonathan. *Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution*, p. 31,45. Ashgate Publishing, 2005, ISBN 0754645037

Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who was arrested in 1976 for nationalist activist and being a threat to the Soviet Union, became the most predominant name of the Georgian nationalism.[72] In 1988, Gamsakhurdia and his supporters established the Georgia's Popular Front by the modeling the Baltic Region. The Popular Fronts which were established with the influence and courage of glasnost and perestroika, led by group of liberal intelligentsia within the dissident regions in Soviet Union. Georgian Popular Front, which was affected from the Baltic Region Popular Fronts, had also similarities with them. Their main goal was defending perestroika and gaining their independence.[73]

Gamsakhurdia was also the co-founder of Georgian Helsinki group with Merab Kostava, who became another important leader of the Georgian nationalist movement.[74] Then Gamsakhurdia and Kostava formed the Society of St. Ilya the Righteous which then renamed as Ilya Chavchavadze Society, later on divided into two groups; the National Democratic Party and National Independence Party.[75] This was the first visible attempt to create civil society in Georgia.

Linz and Stepan underline 'two surmountable obstacles' that are threatening the consolidation process as ethnic conflict in multinational states and economic unrest of the population. The rising of the nationalist front in Georgia, triggered

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[72]Cohen A., p.77.

[73]Wheatley, Jonathan. *Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution*, p. 31,45. Ashgate Publishing, 2005, ISBN 0754645037.

[74] Bora A., The South Ossetian-Georgian Conflict:1990-2008, Thesis, p.18.

[75]Kuzu M, Elit-Led Democratization in Georgia, Thesis, p.45.

the nationalistic attitude against the ethnic minorities in the region. The uneasiness of the minorities first showed its outcome on 19 March 1989, almost 30.000 Abkhaz wanted SSR status for Abkhazia.[76] The request of the Abkhaz criticized by the Georgian nationalist and eventually the conflicts were started. The Georgian demonstrators protested the request of Abkhazians and the policies of Communist Party. Soon, the protests turned into massive demonstrations for Georgian independence. As a result, Soviet troops intervened to the demonstrators. 19 people were killed in Tbilisi. This caused the Georgian movement even more radicalized. In October 1989, Kostava was killed in a car accident, which led Gamsakhurdia to become the major figure in Georgia.

In that period, the role of Popular Front lessened. And the Round Table-coalition, which was founded by Gamsakhurdia started to gather all the political elites that are against the Communist party and the existing electoral system. As a result, the first multi-party parliamentary elections held in 28 October 1990; Gamsakhurdia's Round Table became the first party of elections and Communist party lost its support.[77] Gamsakhurdia was elected as the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Georgia. However, in every term he rejected the Soviet policies. He started to disintegrate from Soviet Union, economically and politically. The isolation was completed in 1991. Gamsakhurdia refused participation to the referendum that Soviet Union held to decide the future of the Union. He made his own referendum on the second anniversary of the April

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[76] Kızılbuğa E., Russian Involvement in the Abkhaz-Georgian Conflict, Thesis, p.38.

[77] Suny G., "*The Making of the Georgian Nation*", p. 325.

Event. Hence, Georgia declared its independence in 9 April 1991. And Gamsakhurdia became the first president of independent Georgia.[78]

In a short period of time, the attitude of the new leader of independent Georgia became hardliner than before. The suspicious manner to the minorities, "stirred the fears of the minorities, and helped to provoke an armed conflict in South Ossetia, which tried to secede from the Georgian Republic. Gamsakhurdia covertly encouraged the expulsion of Ossetians from certain locales within Georgia."[79] He started to be accepted as a "dictator and fascist".[80] Also, he became intolerant to any kind of opposition, "his paranoia led him to accuse any kind of opposition as agent of KGB"[81]. He started to jail the opposition leaders for a reason of blockading the Georgia's progress towards independency. After a year, demonstrations started in any spheres of the society for his resign.

During the leadership of Gamsakhurdia, the population came face to face with economic and political instability. The secessionist conflict created unrest among all spheres of the society. As a result for the period of Gamsakhurdia, the civil society formation did not flourish. The only civil societal acts were arisen in the first period of independency. Also the lessened statute of Popular Front

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[78] Bora A., The South Ossetian-Georgian Conflict:1990-2008, Thesis, p.21.
[79] Nodia, G. O,*Georgia's Identity Crisis* ,
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v006/6.1**nodia**.html

[80]Ibid.

[81] Suny G., Ronald, Kulik, Pshizova (Ed.), Political Parties in Post-Soviet Space, p.157.

and shifting of the intellectuals to the political bodies postponed the institutionalization of civil society till Shevardnadze's period.

4.3Shevardnadze's Era

The era of Shevardnadze must be considered as the beginning of the transition phrase of democratization while, Gamsakhurdia's term was an example of breakdown process of democratization. As it is mentioned in the second chapter, transition period of democratization is considered as an elite driven process, and the role of civil society is very limited, while the state building is getting important. In that sense this part, will be focused on the elite behavior of Shevardnadze. But it is also important to highlight that, the period of Shevardnadze is also the first time of civil society to be institutionalized. Eduard Shevardnadze, who was coming from the Soviet nomenklatura, became the first secretary of Georgian Communist Party in 1972 to 1985.[82] His policies on anti-corruption campaigns and his politic skills, was named him as 'white fox'.[83] When Gorbachev came to the head of the Union, he invited Shevardnadze to be the new foreign minister of the Soviet Republic in 1985. In 1990, Shevardnadze resigned from his position and also as well as from communist party.[84]

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[82] Europe Report No151, *"Georgia What Now?",* http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2424&l=1

[83] Bora A., The South Ossetian-Georgian Conflict:1990-2008, Thesis, p.41.

[84] Cohen A., p.82.

In the beginning of the 1990s, Georgia was struggling with the secessionist movements as well as the Zviadist uprising in the western Georgia. The morality of the society was very low. The country was tearing apart.[85] Shevardnadze was invited by Kitovani and Ioseliani to the country. He was seen as a potential savior. For the communist nomenklatura, he was representing the golden age of Brezhnev era, for the democratic powers he was the leader that had a major role on collapse of Berlin Wall, and for the ethnic minorities he was accepted as an alternative for the radical nationalism of Gamsakhurdia regime.[86] In this sense, Shevardnadze was welcomed to the country with high expectations. The society was expecting him to end the secessionist movements, ensure the territorial integrity, gain the political authority and fix the economical vulnerability. Also the intellectuals of Georgia look forward to the creation of a democratic environment within the country.

In1992, he attended to the elections of Georgia as an independent candidate and he was elected as the chairman of the state council, on 31 August.[87] After gaining power, he started to create a political landscape. He wanted to generate a political diversity in terms of appointing political elites from different fractions. His main purpose was to gain the support of elites in the country and at the same time, accumulate the power in his presidency with in such diversity. Nodia states

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[85] Europe Report No151, *"Georgia What Now?",* http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2424&l=1

[86] Ağacan K., Gürcistan'da "Örtülü Devrim", http://www.asam.org.tr/tr/yazigoster.asp?ID=1044&kat1=42&kat2=

[87] Bora A., The South Ossetian-Georgian Conflict:1990-2008, Thesis, p.42.

that "Shevardnadze created a hybrid political regime that allowed a certain space for civic and political freedoms but few conditions for genuine political competition and participation. Real power was concentrated in a fairly narrow elite power."[88]

In 1993, he created his party the Citizen's Union of Georgia (CUG), which gained the majority of the new parliament in a coalition of independent MPs. The tiny opposition of the Union of Revival and the National Democrat Party was also able to participate in the parliament.[89] After two years of independence, Georgia finally gathered a relative stability in its borders. And also he was able to create a relative functional economic system, yet this functional system was not meeting the society's expectations.

Nevertheless, these relative stabilities on political sphere, ethno-conflict struggle and economy, were the initiator of new formations such as first signs of civil society establishment. The democracy promotion started around 1994-1995 and legalized and were defined with the constitution of Georgia in 1995.[90] There were several important NGOs (non-governmental organizations) established in these years such as founding organizations as the Open Society Georgia

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[88] Nodia, G., p.13.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Mushkhelishvili M., Jorjoliani G., *"Georgia's ongoing struggle for a better future continued: democracy promotion through civil society development",* Democratization Vol. 16, No. 4, August 2009, p.686.

Foundation (OSGF), the Eurasia Foundation (Epfound) and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Funding for NGO development was also allocated by the United States embassy, the European Union (EU), and other local and international donors.[91] The donor organizations OSGF and Epfound started to distribute grants for civic activities. The economical struggle within the country pushed a group of Georgian society to step into this sector. "By the summer of 1997, more than 3000 NGOs were registered. Only a few hundred of those were active."[92]

Besides the economic concerns of the NGO people, the development of civil society organizations in Georgia was promising. However, the economic and political dysfunctional dynamics and high level of bureaucratic corruption of the country started to threaten Shevardnadze's presidency. It is important to mention that the economical dependency to the international actors of the country was also one of the main problems of the Shevardnadze's presidency. Broers states the situation as "Georgia's lack of economic choices as a donor-dependent state, is also dictated by the weighing of its political system towards the presidency."[93] "The country had been the region's major beneficiary of U.S. aid, receiving $778 million between 1992 and 2000".[94] Jakopovich also mentions the effect of economic vulnerability on society, as "although the GDP had been steadily growing since 1995 and inflation had been lowered, large

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[91] Ibid.

[92] "*Civil Society Development in Georgia- Dynamics and Trends of Development*", Georgian Civil Society Survey, 2011

[93] Broers L., "*After the 'Revolution': civil society and the challenges of consolidating democracy in Georgia",* Central Asian Survey (September 2005) 24(3), p.336.

[94] Danacı M., The Role of EU in the Process of Democratization in Georgia, Thesis, p.67.

budget deficits continued to stifle the country's hopes."[95] Nevertheless, the fraction of the Shevardnadze's government was mainly because of the high corruption within the governmental branches and the interest groups.

According to Rasizade, a small amount of people believed that Shevardnazde was corrupting, however during his presidency his close relatives and government officials profited from the privatization of the state assets.[96] The corruption as a Soviet legacy was not able to stop by Shevardnadze. While he was integrated the different political personas, he created a heterogeneous political class, which was composed by "old Soviet cultural elite, industrial managers, new entrepreneurs and intellectual minded modernizers"[97]. A great amount of these new elites benefited from corruption and maximized their interests. Georgia became one of the most corrupted countries in the sense of administrative corruption. The most corrupted sectors of Georgia were "energy sector, higher education, law enforcement agencies, particularly the transport and traffic police, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs."[98]

Shevardnadze's family members appointed and worked in the most vital sectors in Georgia, which caused mistrust to his presidency by the society and the

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[95] Jakopovich Dan, The 2003 ""Rose Revolution" in Georgia: A Case Study in High Politics and Rank and File Execution", Debate, Volume 15, Number 2, August 2007, p.2.

[96] Rasizade A., *"Georgia Meets the Test of its Independence"*, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2242/is_1658_284/ai_n6106078/

[97] Chiaberashvili Z. Tevzadze G., Cole E., Fluri P., (Ed.), "*From Revolution toReforms: Georgia's Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform,"* http://www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/10_wg11_cover_10.pdf

[98] Broers L., p.334.

international environment. The father-in-law Shevardnadze's son Guram Akhvlediani became the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, which provided him to control on the business interests in mineral oil and aircraft. Shevardnadze's son-in-law Gia Jokhtaberidze became the leader of telecommunication. His nephew, Nugzar Shevardnadze had force on the import of consumer goods. His other son-in-law Merab Tkeshelashvili became the major of Rustavi that provide him to control the enterprises in Rustavi. And his nephew Avto Baramashvili was controlling the motor transport, while his brother Temur Baramashvili held a high position in traffic police.[99]

Although Shevardnadze was able to stop the secessionist movement in the militarial base, he could not manage to provide a total integrity in the country. Central Government was never able to sustain the control in these regions. Also, these regions were economically departed from the center that the significance of Russian investment was much visible than the rest of Georgia.[100] Consequently, Georgia had a lack of pluralism in the period of Shevardnadze. The local patronages in Abkhazia,Osethia and Adjaria, which had the Soviet-style paternalism, were effecting the political structure of the state.

The parliamentary and presidential elections that held in 1999 and 2000, were the start of the end of Shevardnadze's presidency. The international observers

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[99]Chiaberashvili Z. Tevzadze G., Cole E., Fluri P., (Ed.), "*From Revolution toReforms: Georgia's Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform,*" http://www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/10_wg11_cover_10.pdf

[100] Ibid.

reported high violation of widespread electoral fraud. The level of critisizm against Shevardnadze dramatically increased and the support decreased in the same ratio. The elections were the sign of fragmentation. In this sense, Hale's assumption of recycling regime is important to mention again. The scholars are analyzing the transition process both toward and away from, but there is also a possibility of regime cycling.[101] The states that are unable to have transition and consolidation phrases properly can have recycling regimes which consist of democratic transition to authoritarianism and as a result, revolution would take place. The Shevardnadze's era overlaps to this assumption in several ways. As Linz and Stepan underline 'two surmountable obstacles' that are threatening the consolidation process as ethnic conflict in multinational states and economic unrest of the population had occurred during Shevardnadze's presidency in the Georgian case.

Although there is a relative stability occurred on ethnic conflict in Georgia, he could not manage to create a successful territorial integrity. And the economic vulnerability of the society was another dimension of the public unrest. One of the most important achievements that he succeeded was initiator and/or let to the establishment of civil society organizations. Even though these civil society organizations worked on democratization, they had several problems in their inner structure, which will be analyzed in the following chapter.

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[101] Hale, pp.133-134.

4.4 The Process of "Rose Revolution"

The former leader Shevardnadze was accused of being an authoritarian who was not able to prevent high corruption. The Reformist Wing, which was engendered by a group of young intellectual group, was demanding liberal reforms. In 2001, with their leadership of Saakashvili, this group separated from the party of Shevardnadze and established United National Movement which was supported by USA and USA founding. However, the election in 2003 was not as Saakashvili had expected. Although there were high campaign against to Shevardnadze such as the;

> "International Monetary Fund (IMF) suspended aid to Georgia because of non-fulfillment of fiscal requirements and the largest foreign investor in Georgia, the American company AES (American Electric Services), sold its assets to the Russian company United Energy Systems and left the country"[102],

Shevardnadze was the winner of 2003 election. Conversely, the local and the international observers claim that the elections were done improperly. After the results, the international observers and the opposition leaders with the local NGOs had two options. They could confirm and wait for a soft transition or they would they would force Shevardnadze to resign with a revolution. They

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[102] Jones, Stephen, F., *"The Rose Revolution: A Revolution without Revolutionaries?",* Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Vol. 19, No. 1. (March 2006), p.39.

chose the second version and organized in this way. Saakashvili claimed that he was the real winner of the elections. On the other hand, George Soros financed the local NGOs and helped the establishment of Kmara (Enough), which formed as a youth organization.

> "Youth have played an important role in mobilizing support for democratic revolutions during elections that have facilitated regime change. In Serbia (2000), Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004) and in Kyrgyzstan (2005) youth led the way in organizing democratic coalitions among hitherto warring opposition parties that the authorities had successfully divided and ruled over."[103]

As in the other post-communist countries the youth organization had a significant role. The similarities in establishment and functioning are a characteristic of these groups. Otpor (Resistance) in Serbia, Pora (It's Time) in Ukraine, Kelkel (Renaissance and shining of the good) in Kyrgyzstan and finally Kmara (Enough) in Georgia, mobilized a great majority in youth society, in order to demonstrate and throw out the undemocratic governments. The democracy promotion to these post-Soviet states is a fundamental issue in order to create civil society notion and civil society environment. USA, EU and international non-governmental organizations (Ingos) supported local governmental organizations as well as youth activist organizations financially

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[103]Kuzio T., *"Civil society, youth and societal mobilization in democratic revolutions"*, Communist and Post-Communist Studies 39 (2006) , p.365.

with the foundation institutes such as USAID[104], UNDP[105]. There are also National Endowment for Democracy, the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, Freedom House which are mostly financed by George Soros for fastening the transition period, while Kmara gathered society together from all classes and mobilized demonstrations[106],

> "Kmara received a $500,000 grant from Soros, according to Georgian
> press reports. It is likely the money was spent on bussing protesters
> into the capital from the countryside and on a giant TV screen set up
> for demonstrators outside the parliament in Tbilisi."[107]

The movement, which started in Tbilisi, was spread to the other cities. In 22 November 2003, the revolutionists poured into streets. When Shevardnadze dispatched troops to restore order, Kmara female activists gave flowers to the troops deployed around the city days before the revolution and Kmara activists distributed sandwiches.[108]

> "On November 23, protestors stormed the opening session of the new
> parliament. The opposition leader, Mikhail Saakashvili, brandished a

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[104] The United States Agency for International Development

[105] The United Nations Development Program

[106] Oğan, Sinan, Turuncu Devrimler, Birharf Yayınlari, (2006), p.217.

[107] Phillips L*., "Sugar Dadies and Revolutions"*, Newstatesman 8 December 2003 features, p.24.

[108] Jakopovich Dan, The 2003 "Rose Revolution" in Georgia: A Case Study in High Politics and Rank and File Execution, p.216.

red rose at Shevardnadze and demanded his resignation. The president was quickly escorted from the building by his bodyguards. He vowed that he would not resign but within twenty-four hours changed his mind, opting for a peaceful transfer of power."[109]

Shevardnadze resigned not only from the presidency but also from the party leadership. In January 4th, it is decided to re-elect the president of Georgia. Saakashvili was already de-facto leader but it had to be legalized. Saakashvili, without any real opponents went into the presidency elections and finally came to the power with a 96.7%. Although the elections were accepted as proper, only 25% of Ajara region participated to the elections. Also the elections were not done in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. On 25 January 2004, he became officially the president of Georgia. As Hale assumed, the recycling structure of the regime had occurred in Georgian history. Because of several non-functional indicators of Shevardnadze's presidency, Georgian society mobilized with the promotion of local and international civil society organizations. As a result, Georgia had a chance to break this cycle and create its own democratic consolidation process.

4.5 Major Events in Mikhail Saakashvili's Presidency

Saakashvili came to power with great hope and expectation of the Georgian society, the local elites and the international observers. He became the hope of

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[109] Miller, Eric, p.2.

diminishing the bribery and corruption, a better economy, territorial integrity, public rest and consolidation of democracy. As one of the interviewees of a Georgian think tank staff interpreted that "people thought he had a magic stick that would change everything in a second with a single touch."[110] However, there are several negative events occurred during his presidency. In order to understand the current situation of NGO development, it is necessary to examine several processes in Georgian close history during Saakashvili's reign. Between 2003 and 2011, there were very important events occurred for both the future of the country as well as the civil society development; such as the constitutional changes in 2005, the mass demonstrations by the reason of media events in 2007, the early presidential elections in 2008, the 5-Days War in August 2008 and finally the mass demonstration that were held in 26 May 2011.

Besides, ethnic conflicts, nonfunctional governmental bodies, the insufficient economy; corruption was perceived as one of the most problematic issues that created an unrest environment within the society. Society had a common thought on bribery and corruption was spread especially in all three branches of state authority; legislative, executive and judicial. According to Sumbadze,

> "Many respondents admitted that in the previous six months they either volunteered a bribe or were forced to give one. The largest percentage of respondents (10.4%) paid bribes for healthcare, 6.9% to the police, 6.1% to educational institutions, 5.5% to the taxation office and 3% to customs officers. An indication that the population's

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[110] Author from GFSIS, Interview, 22 November 2011

patience was running out was their high expectation that there would

be confrontation with the government (64.3%)."[111]

Nevertheless, Saakashvili had a progress on encounter the bribery and corruption. This thought is shared by the government officers and Saakashvili supporters. The new government worked on the issue visibly that many people in the police department, universities, health sector and other governmental officers who had linked to bribery and corruption were accused for their crimes and most of them were sent to jail. Although, the Georgian people admitted the progress on the situation, they still believe that in the higher positions in the government, the corruption still continues. According to Sumbadze's survey, "More than half of the respondents surveyed believed there was a problem of corruption among higher-ranking officials (51.2%)."[112]

Another important issue on Saakashvili's period is the struggle with the opposition. Diversity and pluralism are the needs for development and consolidation of the democracy. When Saakashvili came to power, he used his might against to his opponents, even if they were pro-Russian intellectuals or the liberal politicians, whom he had cooperated during the revolution. He was supporting the democracy as the fundamental structure of an independent state, which was affected the ratio of his support arisen among the nation. Nonetheless, in a way he became what he was criticizing. One his first action

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[111]Sumbadze , N., *"Saakashvili in the public eye: what public opinion polls tell us"*, Central Asian Survey, Volume 28, Issue 2, (2009), p.187.

[112] Ibid.

was changing the structure of the government institutions.

> "Fairbanks (2004) reports that Saakashvili has effectively replaced ''superpresidential'' institutions with even more highly concentrated ''hyperpresidential'' ones. For example, one reform gave the president the right to name all nine Constitutional Court justices, whereas previous Parliament and the Supreme Court had the right to appoint three each, with the president also appointing three In his 2005 state-of-the-nation address, he even went so far as to suggest that parties opposing his pro-Western stance should be banned ."[113]

In 2004, the people, who did not want Shevardnaze to rule Georgia anymore, were by the side of Saakashvili. The revolution that they made created a new government with the new parliamentarians. In 2005, he suggested the parties, which were not following the pro-Western view should be banned. Also, in 2008, he saw all opposition groups as a threat to his government. In this essence, he also started to impose sanctions on the people, who accompanied him during the revolution process.

Media is one of the other areas that Saakashvili uses non-democratic methods to control his position as well as the opposition groups. Shevardnadze's era was accepted as an autocracy in which there was no free media. In this essence, when Saakashvili came to power, he declared that the media will be free from now on.

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[113] Hale, H., "Democracy or Autocracy on the March? The Colored Revolutions as Normal Dynamics of Patronal Presidentialism", Communist and PostCommunist Studies (2006) Volume: 39, Issue: 3, p.312.

Hence, there were "independent TV channels owned by wealthy private businessmen"[114] which helped Kmara to organize people during the revolution process. "Kmara achieved brand recognition and a high degree of public visibility, catapulting its activists into regular appearances in major mass media, including the major TV channels and the main newspapers."[115] Rustavi 2, which was financially supported by George Soros, became the most significant independent channel in Georgia. On the other hand, the condition of Rustavi 2 and other channels after the revolution shows that Saakashivli's promise of free media was not fully succeeded. The leader, who came with the expression of democracy and independence started to be accused of the continuation of autocracy. The CPJ (Committee to Protect Journalists) criticized Saakashvili for being coercive to the media. Also, the privatization of the media organs is created a monopoly in this sector. The CPJ drew attention to this situation.

> "President Mikhail Saakashvili's administration took an aggressive approach in managing television coverage by pressuring and harassing critical TV reporters. Georgia's largest television company, with holdings that included the influential Rustavi-2 station, changed hands in November amid considerable intrigue. And the hard-hitting independent station 202 went off the air in the fall after getting caught up in an extortion scandal.... Kibar Khalvashi, a Tbilisi businessman who spent three years building television holdings that came to include Rustavi-2 and Mze, suddenly sold his majority shares to a virtually unknown entity

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[114] Jakopovich D., p.216.

[115] Jakopovich D., p.216.

called Geotrans LLC. On the air, Rustavi-2 denied speculation that

the sale was a politically inspired takeover."[116]

In addition, many journalists and personnel were displaced by the new directors of Rustavi 2. "Eka Khoperia, the anchor of Rustavi-2's popular political talk show "Tavisupali Tema" (Free Topic), resigned on the air."[117] Khoperia claimed on the air that the authorities were dictating her about her guest choices and questions. The limitations made her to take this decision. However, she is not the only one, who resigned from their jobs in channel Rustavi 2. Some of employees resigned for protesting the situation and some of them were replaced by new personnel. In this essence, Imedi TV became the most independent news source. Howbeit, the broadcast of Imedi TV was shut down by government, which created unrest among the civil society. As a result, one of the most important events on democratization and on democratic consolidation had happened after the Rose Revolution. The Georgian society, several NGOs and the opposition parties believed that one of the high officials of Saakashvili's government involved in corruption. Consequently, in November 2, 2007 among 50.000 to 100.000 citizens demonstrated against the government of Mikhail Saakashvili.[118] For four days the protests were going peacefully. However, in November 6, 2007, police used heavy-handed tactics, including tear gas and water cannon which turned to a violence scenario.

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[116]CJP, Attacks on the Press 2006: Georgia, http://cpj.org/2007/02/attacks-on-the-press-2006-georgia.php

[117]Ibid.

[118] "Tear gas used on Georgia protest" ,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7082317.stm

The demonstrators were formed by the supporters of ten opposition parties that were financed by the business and media tycoon, Badri Patarkatsishvili, who was the owner of the Imedi TV.[119] On November 7, The Georgian National Communications Commission (GNCC) has suspended Imedi TV's broadcast license for a three month period citing violation of law on broadcasting by the television station.[120]

The demonstrations made Saakashvili to take elections in January, 2008 instead of autumn 2008. In the elections Patarkatsishvili announced that he will be a candidate for presidency but the government of Saakashvili accused him for plotting a Russia-backed coup against Saakashvili. The opposition groups had struggle about their candidate for presidency but finally they showed Gachechiladze as their candidate. After the Rose Revolution, Saakashvili took a 96% success. However the early elections in 2008, the ratio clearly decreased. His real defeat was occurred in Tbilisi by having the half of his previous ratio. According to the total scene of elections, he gained 53% of all votes in Georgia.

The democratic consolidation process of Georgia was shaken with another major event after the second elections in the era of Saakashvili. In order to accumulate his power, he chose the way of using pressure on South Ossetia and Abkhazia

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[119]"Patarkatsishvili Pledges to Finance Protest Rallies",
http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=16119

[120] "Imedi Broadcasting Is Resumed",
http://www.humanrights.ge/index.php?a=main&pid=10055&lang=eng

that tightened the tension between Russia and Georgia. Russian Peace Troops increased their number of soldiers to protect Russian people in the region.[121] As a result of the tension in August 2008, the 5 Days War occurred between Russia and Georgia. Between 1st and 2nd of August, there were small clashes that Georgia accepted to negotiate with Russia as a side. However in 7th August of 2008, Georgia had a military attack which was accepted as surprise. The Russian answer was harsh. Within five days the war was over by the demand of Saakashvili. The war resulted with a consequence of two thousand people death in the region; thirty thousand Ossetians migrated to Russia, while fifty thousand Georgian migrated to the secure places. August War caused many people to immigrate. As a result, IDP (Internally Displaced Persons), situation deepened in Georgia.

> "At the end of 2010, the government reported that there were still about 236,000 IDPs displaced since the 1990s and about 22,000 IDPs displaced since 2008. Around 60 per cent of them were living with relatives or friends or in dwellings that they rented or owned, while 40 per cent were in collective centres in former hospitals, hotels, schools and other buildings offered as temporary housing upon their displacement."[122]

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[121] Kanbolat, H., "*UNOMIG, UAV'lar Üzerine Raporunu Yayınladı*", http://www.asam.org.tr/tr/yazigoster.asp?ID=2224&kat1=42&kat2=

[122] *"IDPs in Georgia still need attention"* http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/georgia

Many Georgian civil society organizations which are specifically carry on the agendas as human rights issues, rule of law, social issues and public services, started to focus on this particular issue as well. Especially the organizations like GYLA and Article 42 are supplying legal consultation to these people without charge. On the other hand many institutions work on social issues such as Civic Development Institute, Child and Environment, IDP Women's Association Consent, Independent Association of Georgian Journalists, Charity Humanitarian Centre "Abkhazeti", Civil Society Institute, are working and servicing on IDP issue.[123]

Five months after the fieldwork of this thesis was conducted, the Georgian society had another important major event in 26 May 2011 that affect Georgian democratic consolidation process negatively. In 21 May, thousands of demonstrators gathered in Freedom Square of Tbilisi and marched towards Georgian Public Broadcaster. The demonstrators were the participants of 'Public Assembly', which is a formation, leaded by Nino Burjanadze an ex-parliamentary speaker and leader of the Democratic Movement-United Georgia party.[124] The main purpose of the demonstrations is to demand the resignation of Mikhail Saakashvili. Meanwhile, another group of demonstrators gathered in Batumi, the head town of autonomous region Adjara.[125] Both demonstration zones in Tbilisi and Batumi were controlled by Special Forces. In May 21, the

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[123] *"Georgian NGO Links"*, http://georgia.idp.arizona.edu/orgs_georgian_ngo.html

[124] *"Protestors March to Public Broadcaster"* , http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=23478

[125] *"Police Briefly Clash with Protesters in Batumi"* http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=23479

police clashed the protestors in Batumi. The government representative told that the police used force because the demonstrators throw stones to the police forces. On the other hand, protestors defended themselves and told that the provocateurs threw the stones.[126]

For the time being, the events in Tbilisi got worsened. A representative of Human Rights Center monitored the situation as;

> "On May 21st, the Special Forces dispersed the protest rallies in front of the building of Public Broadcaster by means of clubs and rubber bullets after the demonstrators damaged the car of police officials by plastic sticks. The incident occurred when the representatives of law-enforcement tried to kidnap one of the demonstrators compelling him to sit in the car. According to the protest rally participants, these people were not wearing police uniform and did not present any identification card. Neither the black car had some kind of indication that it belonged to the police…"[127]

The protests continued for 5 days. The 26th of May is the independence day of Georgia. Hence, the governmental officers demanded from the demonstrators to stop the demonstrations or make the demonstrations in another place but the demonstrators refused this suggestion. Then and there, the governmental

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[126] Ibid.

[127] *"Protest Rally Violently Dispersed in Georgia"*
http://www.humanrights.ge/index.php?a=main&pid=13392&lang=eng

representatives allowed the demonstrators to make their protest until the midnight of May 25. However, after the midnight demonstrators again intended to put on the rally. At 00:15, the Special Forces "moved on the demonstrators using water cannons and teargas to disperse them, beating and detaining many."[128]

> "The police made a siege around the demonstrators from all different sides. They occupied all streets which could be used for leaving the territory. This means that the goal of the operation was not disperse of the action (compelling the demonstrators to leave the territory) but the maximum physical vengeance. After making a siege, the police made no verbal warning towards disperse like it happened in November of 2007. The police units made a direct attack and fired from special gas bomb shells. While inspecting the territory after disperse of the protest rally it was observed that in front of the Tavisupleba Metro Station, approximately 10 people had been made to lie down and were physically and verbally assaulted."[129]

It is the fact that, the demonstrations were held unauthorized. However, according to many respected local civil society organizations such as Georgian Young Lawyers Association, Transparency International Georgia, Human Rights Center and Article 42, which monitored the events, gave statements that "even if the decision about dispersing the rally was legitimate, the scenes disseminated

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[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

by the media evidently demonstrate the signs of excessive use of force by the police that represents a grave violation of Law on Police."[130] According to the official statement, "8 policemen, one journalist and 27 civil citizens were injured. Two people died - a policeman and a civilian. 90 people are placed in the preliminary detainment cells imposed with two-month administrative imprisonment."[131]

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[130] Ibid.

[131] Ibid.

CHAPTER 5

QUALITATIVE DATA OF GEORGIAN NGOs AND THEIR ROLE ON DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION PROCESS

This chapter consists of the collected data gathered during the field research in Georgia in November and December 2010. In the previous chapter, the historical background of the Georgian civil society development has been analyzed. In order to analyze the Georgian civil society development, this chapter contains eight parts, which are analyzing the legal framework of the NGO registration, the nature of Georgian civil society and the relations of NGOs with the other segments such as government, society and international actors. Also, the role of Rose Revolution, contribution of the media sector and the future expectations for Georgian civil society development are highlighted. The data is collected by the interviews with the experts from the various sectors. Most of the interviewees were chosen from the NGO sector; also, there are university members, government representatives, think tank experts and political party members that contributed to this fieldwork.

5.1. The Legal Framework of the Georgian NGOs

NGOs are defined by the Georgian legislation by several terms as public associations, public organizations, charity organizations and non-entrepreneurial legal persons. "Not-for-profit organization" is also used as a general term to call these definitions[132]. In order to understand the legal framework of the Georgian NGOs, I will focus on four legal segments as structure, registration, operation and taxation of not-for-profit organizations.

The Legal Structure of Georgian NGOs: According to the Civil Code of December 2006, there are two legal forms of non-for-profit organizations.[133] "Non-entrepreneurial legal persons may be member-based, dependent on or independent from the members' status."[134] These two organizational legal forms are unions or associations and foundations. The difference of associations or unions from the foundations is, associations and unions are based on membership, however, foundations are based on the union of assets and it is not necessary to have a membership status in foundations.[135] Meanwhile, the code foresees the existence of non-registered association. However, the trade unions, political and religious organizations are regulated by special legislations.[136] On

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[132] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[133] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs",
http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

the other hand, the Constitution of Georgia secures the rights of the individuals to create public associations and become their members.[137]

Registration as a NGO in Georgia: According to the Georgian legislation both the legal capacity and the legal entity can be a founder of NGO. By referring to the legal capacity, the Civil Code of Georgia expresses "the ability of a natural person to acquire and exercise his civil rights and duties in full by his will and action (legal capacity) shall arise upon the attainment of the age eighteen."[138] Also, according to the Georgian legislation, local administrations and municipalities have right to create legal entities. In order to register as an association or a foundation there is no obligation either to have membership requirements or to have financial capital. One person can establish a NGO.[139]

Georgian legislation saves the right of all individuals to apply for a not-for-profit organization. Also, the registration can be made by international bodies. There is no restriction or rule to regulate for an international not-for-profit organization.[140] In the cases of membership-based organization, it depends on the individuals' free will to apply or leave the organization. On the other hand,

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[136] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs", http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

[137] Ibid.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia, http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[140] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia, http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

the Georgian legislation gives the right to associations to dismiss their members from the organization in the framework of their charter that they submit to the authorities. However, the legislation gives right to the dismissed members to appeal to the court.[141]

According to the Georgian Public Law, Registration for a not-for-profit organization is Legal Entity, is made to the National Agency of Public Registry that operates as a branch of the Ministry of Justice.[142] The documents that are needed for application are as following; "application form, charter, document proving the composition of the association management. Also, it is necessary to represent a document proving the obligation of investment of an appropriate property".[143] The civil and tax registrations are also comprised within the registration. After applying for the registration within a working day, the National Agency of Public Registry makes a decision of admission or refusal.[144]

Registration as a not-for-profit organization is acknowledged as simple and accessible; however, there are some legal grounds for rejection. In the case of rejection, the applier can appeal to the court. The registration may be rejected if:

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[141] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[142] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs",
http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

[143] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[144] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs",
http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

1. The goals of a non-entrepreneur (non-commercial) legal entity and a branch (representative office) of a foreign non-entrepreneur (non-commercial) legal entity, applying for registration, contradict the law in force, universally recognized rules of ethics or the constitutional principles of Georgia;

2. Objectives of a non-entrepreneurial legal entity to be registered contradict current legislation, recognized moral norms, or the constitutional-legal principles of Georgia.

3. A non-entrepreneurial legal entity aims at bringing down the constitutional formation of Georgia or changing it through violence, encroaching on the independence of the country, infringing the territorial integrity of the state, or propagating the war, violence, or ethnic, regional, religious, or social hatred.

4. The application for registration is not made commensurate with the requirements of this Code;

5. The application for registration is not supplemented by documents, envisaged by this Code or submitted documents are incomplete;

6. The documents supplementing the application for registration are not executed (certified) commensurate with the procedure, envisaged by Georgian legislation.[145]

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[145] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs", http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

Operation of a Georgian NGO: Georgian NGOs can work on any kind of activity that they intended to carry out. There is no prohibition by the law whether it is in their charter or not. They can carry out economic activity but the economic activity must be supplementary and must help achieving the organization's goal.[146] Also the income may not be distributed to the founders or the members of the organizations.[147] The Georgian legislation also allows the NGOs to register as a commercial company. There are several requirements on the economic activities especially in the taxation framework that will be analyzed in the following part.

The management of the not-for-profit organizations differs from associations to foundations. In the case of association management, the association is obliged to meet at least once a year and according to the Civil Code of Georgia, the meetings are covering the issues such as; "management election, creation of commissions, making of alterations in the charter and changing the organization goals."[148] The results are taken by the majority of the votes. The Civil Code also envisages the members to participate with written form of voting if they cannot able to participate to the meetings.[149] The governing of the foundation is

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[146] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[147] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs",
http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

[148] Ibid.

different from the associational organizations. The governing is carried out by the management and rather than vote-based meetings, the foundation can be supervised by the supervision organs of the foundation, which are invited by the founders. The representatives of the foundations are responsible for the acts that are taken by the organization.[150] According to the Georgian legislation the supervision activity is done by internal organizational mechanism of the association. However, the supervision activity is stricter for the foundation.

The Ministry of Justice can demand any time the information about the foundation and the reports of the activities that the foundation holds or the documents that they have. The curatorial has right to demand the abolition of the management or can cease the management. According to the Salamadze, this situation gives "the Ministry of Justice unlimited power towards foundations".[151]An organization can be liquidated by the court for several reasons such as,

> "of a public association that aims at bringing down the constitutional
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> formation of Georgia or changing it through violence, encroaching on
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> the independence of the country, infringing the territorial integrity of
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> the state, or propagating the war, violence, or ethnic, regional,
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> religious, or social hatred, which establishes or has already established

[149] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[150] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[151] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

armed formation, or which resumes carrying out entrepreneurial activities after its suspension by the court."[152]

In the decision of liquidation of the organization, the organization takes 30 days starting from the disclosure day. Within these 30 days, all activities must be finished and the demands must be satisfied and the rest of the assets must be distributed among the authorized persons, otherwise, the Ministry of Finance has right to distribute these assets to other organizations with the similar goals. If there is no organization like the liquidated one, the assets would be transferred to a charity organization or the state may adopt. [153]

The Taxation Procedure of NGOs: Operating a not-for-profit organization brings several benefits in terms of taxation. The not-for-profit organizations are tax-free status for instance except the economic activities that they carry out, all certain types of incomes are tax-exempt such as; donation, grant, and membership fee. The grants are not taxed by income tax (20%) and also the salaries given from the grants are not taxed by social tax (27%) and employment tax (1%)[154]. According to the Custom Tariffs and Duties article of law, import of goods (work or services), which are financed by grants, are exempt from custom duty. Also these goods, which are financed by grants, are 20% VAT free or

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[152] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs", http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

[153] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia, http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[154] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs", http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

reimbursement after applying to the tax agency.[155] The organization is also land tax free, except if the land is used for economic activity.

Not-for-profit organizations are submitting their financial accountings to the Tax Inspection and the State Fund of Social Insurance, which does not differ from the enterprises.[156] Also, if the organizations carry out economic activity, the income which is coming from this economic activity is taxed by annually 15% taxation.[157] It is also important to mention that the law on grants forbids the state to give grant.[158] However, Georgian government is giving grants in several different names. A very often example is carrying out the contracts. For example, "a coalition of regional organizations won a contract worth $145,000 from the Georgian Social Investment Fund, which supports institutional capacity building for local governance and community development."[159]

During the field research, one of the most vibrant and discussed issue was the new regulation of income tax for the not-for-profit organizations. As it is mentioned above, the grant incomes are exempt-tax. The salaries that are paid

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[155] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[156] Ibid.

[157] Aphkhazava N., "Registration and operation of NGOs and Taxation of NGOs",
http://blacksea.bcnl.org/en/nav/15-georgia.html

[158] Salamadze V., NGO Legislation in Georgia,
http://www.icnl.org/knowledge/ijnl/vol1iss2/art_6.htm

[159] Anjaparidze Z., "NGO Sector in Georgia - Challenges and Perspectives",
http://www.bearr.org/en/information/June_2007/Georgia/NGOs

from these grant incomes are not taxed 20% as the rest of the society, but taxed with a 12%. The government changed the unique status of NGOs and from 2011 they will start to be taxed as the rest of the society with 20%.[160]

5.2. The Nature of Georgian Civil Society and the Peculiarities of NGOs

In this part of the chapter, the nature of civil society of Georgia and the peculiarities of Georgian civil society organizations were asked to the several responders during the field research, who are working as academicians, NGO staffs and think tank experts. Most of the responders directly started to answer from NGOs rather than distinguish the civil society and NGO sector as a part of it. The main reason of their common approach is because the NGOs are the most vibrant and active part of the Georgian society. Nonetheless, how come the Georgian NGOs became the most important part of the civil society and the public base of participation was not able to well-developed? One of the main reasons of this situation is given as the Soviet legacy by the responders.

Georgian civil society started to develop with the same period of gaining the independence and state-building process of the country. As it is mentioned in the previous chapter, the first civic movements were created by the dissident intellectuals for the sake of protection of nationhood, language and culture. A responder from the Tbilisi State University explains the independency from the

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[160] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

Soviet regime and the civil society formation as "civil society is a part of independent country. So it is very difficult to create civil society when you are not independent.[161] Also another responder explains the same process as, "The politic activists have been identified as the main people who had started the struggle with U.S.S.R and started to activities…So when we talk about the civil society we have to take it from the Soviet period which started with the ethnicity reservation and second one was political but based on the dissident activity…in the beginning in the 1990s because the borders were open so the international organizations started to activity and they started to help NGOs."[162] Hence, with the independency of the country, the international organizations were invited to Georgia to help the development of civil society organizations. Another responder from the same university says that, "Soviet heritage is a totalitarian heritage and in soviet heritage there was only one space and it was public space, no private space; so try to implement civil society as a private interest".[163] The reason that he sees the NGOs as a private space is because the effect of international organizations.

All of the responders are like-minded that the reason of the NGO mushrooming (it is assumed that there are more than 2000 registered NGOs in the country)[164] is the foreign donations to this sector. This situation is seen as a problematic of civil society formation in Georgia, because the donations that are coming from

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[161] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 24 November 2011

[162] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 26 November 2010

[163] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

[164] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 9 December 2010

the international actors, are negatively affecting the civil society in two ways. Firstly, the foreign donations makes the NGOs depended to the international funding and it forces the NGOs to carry on the foreign donor's agenda rather than the domestic needs of the society. Secondly, this creates an elitist environment in the NGO sector which seeks economic benefits. In order to deepening the first consequence, a responder from a think tank organization analyzes the situation as "The funding is coming from international sources and in that aspect they have positive effect because otherwise the NGOs cannot find any funding. But on the other hand it has negative effect that you have to depend on what is fashion in western countries and they don't funding what really matters for the local understanding."[165] Also a foreign responder from Ebert Stiftung adds that "They keep depending on donor money but also oriented towards to donor's agenda. It means that the areas the donors do not pay much attention to are also not covered by NGOs."[166] As I mentioned, the second consequence of the international funding is the elitist environment of the NGO sector with economic expectations.

Although there are more than 2000 registered NGOs in Georgia, a few of them are functional and effective and gets the foreign donation. According to an expert from Eurasia Partnership Foundation they have a budget of 1 billion Lari of civil society organizations in the country and only fifty civil society

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[165] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

[166] Author from Ebert Stiftung, Interview, 30 November 2010

organizations are highly developed.[167] Another responder from Ilia State University adds that "there are some strong and stable NGOs which are like big fishes in the ocean. They are controlling the all resources. The international community must consider this situation and must have solutions for this. Because the projects and programs generally goes to the big and old NGOs and the new comers are doomed to lose from the beginning."[168] This argument is also supported by another responder that he is identifies the situation as, "it easy to register as a NGO but hard to survive in the sector because the strong NGOs are taking the financial support from the beginning."[169] The funding system makes the NGOs depended to the international organizations that another responder sees NGOs as "basic contractors of international organizations".[170]

Another important characteristic of Georgian civil society is the lack of voluntarism and lack of public awareness. This problematic structure of Georgian civil society is making NGOs more vibrant because the public participation is not organized and well developed. A responder clarifies the Georgian civil society as 'artificial'.[171] According to her view "Georgian people are not very attached to civil society notion when we compare it with the western countries."[172] Another responder claims that, the Georgian society

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[167] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

[168] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

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[170] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

[171] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 7 December 2010

doesn't want to be in part of politics but wants to influence the process.[173] Generally the social participation base of civil society emerges spontaneously. An important reason of the immobilized structure of social gathering, besides lack of awareness and interest, is not being able to cooperate with NGOs. A responder from the Socialist Youth Movement says that "I think we have strong NGOs but weak public movements. Small amount of people are working on certain issues. It is very difficult without the public contribution. There is no public movement generally. There a lot of ideas they do a lot of things but it is a very small circle… Alone they cannot change anything and cooperation is needed."[174] Another responder supports the approach of lack of cooperation between NGOs and social movements by addressing the social movements as "emerging and disappearing but not organized by NGOs".[175]

An additional important characteristic of Georgian civil society formation is the split of NGOs into three segments. The division of NGOs emerged with the Rose Revolution. The NGOs divided into three, which were all in the opposition of the Shevardnadze regime. As one of the responder analyzes "There are GONGOs, which are friendly with government and offer services the government and advocate the governmental policies. And other organizations are independent and some of them work as watchdogs. The NGO camping was

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[172] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 7 December 2010

[173] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

[174] Author from Socialist Youth Movement, Interview, 1 December 2010

[175] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

started after the Rose Revolution."[176] Another responder supports this opinion as "The division is visible in such organizations. You can find organizations which have close ties with the government, you can find organizations which are always opposing the government and also you can find organizations which stand more moderate."[177] The regime change brought to term of GONGO (Governmental-NGO) that are supporting and are supported by the government. Besides pro-governmental NGOs and watchdog organizations, there are opposition NGOs, may or may not cooperate with the opposition parties. These types of organization generally prefers not to cooperate with opposition parties because don't want to be recognized as the satellites of this political parties. But in certain issues they cooperate with them such as human rights violations, IDPs (internally displaced person) or abuse of power.

Finally, the influence and power of NGOs are asked to the responders and they agreed that the Georgian civil society is strong, not as much as it used to be but still strong. However, they are not effective in influencing the policy making process of the government and also mobilizing the society. For example, a responder says that "The civil society is not effective on decision-making process. The decision making process is state centric. All three governments since the independence had problems on public opinion and also different NGOs."[178] And another responder adds that "during the so-called Rose Revolution those NGOs played some more or less important roles on mobilizing

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[176] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

[177] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[178] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

the people, but anyhow it was not so organized I would say. It was pop-up mostly. So in this case we cannot say we have vibrant and strong civil society."[179] An additional perspective to the influence level of Georgian civil society organizations is that the level of strength did not change, they are still strong as they used to be, however now the government is strong which was not during the Shevardnadze period. A responder explains it as "it was very easy to criticize the Shevardnadze's government because they were old and backward. But this new government is very young and it is difficult to criticize them now. And the new government is aware of the power of civil society and their influence on the public. But the civil society is promising; in a few years I think they will be as they were before the Rose Revolution."[180]

To sum up the nature of civil society and the peculiarities of NGOs, the responders are aware of the fact that the NGOs are not equal to entire civil society of Georgia however they are the main and the most, may be the only part of functioning civil society. The institutionalization of civil society started with support of the international actors. Without the support of international support, Georgian NGOs cannot survive; however, they have several indirect negative effects. They caused NGOs to be more elitists and the society accepts NGOs as a private sector that seeks economic benefits. And the NGOs cannot meet the public needs because they are depended on the agendas of the international actors. This creates mistrust among the society about NGOs. The registration of

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[179] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

[180] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview 22 November 2010

NGOs is quite easy and there are thousands of registered NGOs in Georgia but they are hardly surviving near big NGOs, because they hold the main financial sources. There is a lack of awareness and interest for participating to the civil society for general society and NGOs seems to be unable to mobilize the society. There is a division occurred after the Rose Revolution among the civil society organizations as pro-governmental, anti-governmental and neutral. And finally the NGOs of Georgia accepted as strong, may be not as it used to be before and during the Rose Revolution and they have inefficiency to influence the decision-making process of the government.

5.3. The Role of Rose Revolution in Democratization Process and Civil Society Formation

In this part, the role of Rose Revolution was asked and the responders analyzed the role of Rose Revolution in both democratization process and civil society formation perspectives. Firstly, the role of Rose Revolution on civil society formation in Georgia had several negative and also positive outcomes. According to the most of the responders, the positive effect of the Rose Revolution is to make civil society more institutionalized, structuralized and professionalized. For example, an academic responder says that "with the Rose Revolution, in case of the number of them yes, they increased and they became more professionalized because of the experience. In certain cases now, Georgia has ideas from NGOs, in certain laws, in certain policies, in social construction processes but in Shevardnadze's time it was less, now they are trying to put

government more organized type."[181] A think tank professional adds that "I think every NGO and every civil society organization have their own issues. They specialized in different issues and their nature did not change too much."[182] Another responder sees that NGOs need a long term for strengthening but she adds that the Rose Revolution had a positive effect on the formation of civil society by telling, "It will long time but I am sure it will be reformed. I see last couple of years, the civil society getting stronger and it is structuralized and institutionalized."[183]

Nevertheless, Georgian civil society had a very challenging process right after the Rose Revolution. Besides the limited positive effects of the revolution, the civil society organizations suffered in several terms. The first and leading fact is the role of government after the Rose Revolution. It is the fact that all responders agreed on the same issue that the new government is stronger than it was before. The strength of new government affects the NGOs in several terms. First of all there is an uneven and imbalanced relationship occurs between the government and NGOs. Secondly, one of the important facts that after the Rose Revolution, most of the NGO leaders went to government and occupied in governmental bodies, which created a lack of human resources among the NGOs. Thirdly, the new strong government caused the division of NGOs as GONGOs, opposition NGOs and watchdogs. The problematic entity here is the government's attitude about the NGOs. There are preferable NGOs and there are NGOs, which government does not care and listen. Lastly, after the revolution the international

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[181] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

[182] Author from GFSIS, Interview, 22 November 2011

[183] Author from Human Rights House, Interview, 26 November 2010

financial support shifted to government from the NGOs in a couple of years. All these facts damaged the effectiveness and influential power of NGOs. In order to deepen these facts, it is useful to examine the answers of responders.

Most of the responders mentioned that the government got stronger and as a result the civil society weakened. One of the experts from Liberty Institute says that "other sectors of our society of our country are developing on much figure past than the civil society organizations. These organizations that are NGOs have same level of development. So they lose influence now because in that time the state was failed. When the government itself was sort of one of the NGO, because it lacked on legitimate correction and there were other centers of power like mafia and like Russians. That stage, NGOs had advantage because they were smaller and more mobilized but now when we have quite dynamic government. And this government unlike the previous government feels the popular mandate."[184] And an academician from Ilia State University asserts that "increasing of the state and its capacity over the civil society was the main challenge because civil society remains but the government increased so we had an asymmetric relations."[185]

The asymmetric relations of government and NGOs deepened with the division in the NGO sector and the attitude of the government towards these NGOs separately, after the Rose Revolution. As it is mentioned in the previous part, the

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[184] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 30 November 2010

[185] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

NGOs were divided as pro-governmental, anti-governmental and watchdogs. According to the answers of the responders, the government favors a type of NGOs and is willing to cooperate with them. However, if the NGOs work on issues like human rights violations and such, the government doesn't want to cooperate with them and tries to control them directly or indirectly. For example, another expert from Liberty Institute says that "In these terms of course there are changes. In Shevardnadze's time the regime was very sensitive towards criticism and the voices of NGOs they were heard in public and they were not pleasant from the government but seen that must be considered and take an account. After the Rose Revolution we have political regime which has a kind of selective approach to the civil society sector. So there are some NGOs who are somehow more desirable and open to support the government and the government eager to work with them there are some think tanks and some individuals from the NGOs but there is a huge number NGOs which are considered as anti-government.[186] An academician from Tbilisi State University, who resigned from a governmental position and established Women's Party of Georgia, mentions the pressure of the government in financial issues, "government knows what impact can be caused by NGOs so they are trying to control the NGOs. So, government now controls the financial support of NGOs from international organizations. And it is now very difficult for NGOs to have projects from international organizations if the project will especially be done in Georgia. NGOs need to have approval from the government to have the project."[187] The experts from NGOs which are not pro-governmental complain about the government attitude

[186] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 9 December 2010

[187] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 7 December 2010

for their institutions. For instance an expert from ISFED (a monitoring NGO) says that "we had a big role during the Rose Revolution, it was really great thing. And I can say that now government is considering us like somebody said something."[188] Also a NGO member of Human Rights House mentions the governmental pressure for NGO sector and pressure for their organization as "pressure is deepened for human rights organizations, may be not for all civil society organizations like environment organizations or GONGOs but the human rights and law issues are pressured by the government. Sometimes it is indirect but sometimes it is direct pressure. Sometimes people are coming from ministry offices and also our director must go to the Ministry of Security. But once the international organizations sent open letters for their concerns, the government stopped but couple of organizations still suffering especially the human rights defenders."[189]

The Rose Revolution caused another important fact that the shift of the NGOs people to the government helped the government to strengthen and caused to NGOs became weaker. "After the Rose Revolution many of the civil society leaders and actors shifted to the political parties and government so it was an impact for the falling of civil society organizations."[190] An expert from PASOS says that "after the new government came to power many NGOs, either became the government or supporter of the government."[191] Two experts from a social issues oriented NGO told that they were from these NGO people that went to

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[188] Author from ISFED, Interview, 14 December 2010

[189] Author from Human Rights House, Interview, 26 November 2010

[190] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[191] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

government but then returned back to NGO sector again. One of them occupied in Public Defenses Office and the other one worked in Ministry of Education and Science. The expert that worked in the Ministry of Education and Science told that "I quit because the education field was very strange and the strong pressure was coming from the government. It was impossible to work in a constructive way. They change the direction of reforming process and centralized it."[192]

After the end of Rose Revolution, the civil society organization came face to face with financial problems. All of the responders mentioned the same issue during the interviews that the Rose Revolution caused to regime change and in order to support the new regime the international organizations started to financed government rather than NGOs. This new agenda of the international organizations compelled NGOs to survive. "The money that distributed by the international organizations to develop democracy in Georgia started to go to the government, even the Soros's financial support went to government."[193] The international support to the government continued for a few years then they again returned to support the NGOs. This process will be analyzed in details in the part of NGOs and International Actor relations.

The responds for the democratization process after the revolution are varies. The responders mostly agree that the democratization had mixed effects. There are

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[192] Author from Civic Development Institute, Interview, 25 November 2010

[193] Author from Civic Development Institute, Interview, 25 November 2010

several positive outcomes for the benefit of democratization process. One of the responders told that the shift of the NGO people to government was may be not a good thing for NGO formation but was definitely for the benefit of government and democratization process. Because the officers of the previous government were mistrusted by the society and the people who came from NGOs were known by the society. Their shift to government helps to political environment to develop which is a positive thing for democracy development.[194] On the other hand there is one more positive aspect for democratization process. The society, after the Rose Revolution, understood that they can change the ongoing processes and as a result public participation to the political process is relatively increased. For instance a Think Tank expert says that, "Rose Revolution affected other part of the civil society activity not the institutional side but the broad civil society. After the Rose Revolution, the society really started to interest the political life. Many things have changed and this affected almost everybody in the society, in this regard civil society in a way now has more chances to develop rather than before the Rose Revolution."[195] Another responder adds that the perspective of the society had changed. The participation of the society in the political life is different than it was before. She says that "hopefully the things are changing and political parties are trying to change the electoral code and they are not trying to coming streets for demonstration, they are trying to stabilize and consolidate on participation to the elections although, there are still some organizations trying to demonstrate in the streets for the constitutional amendments that is our heritage. So far everybody think now that everything is

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[194] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 9 December 2010

[195] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

clear and obvious and we can see where we are. But the progress must still continue.[196] The positive aspects of the responders for democratization process after the revolution is also taking root from the increase of knowledge amount the society and the decrease of corruption. For instance a responder from OSGF says that "it helped the knowledge, because at least it lessened the corruption. Also it helped people and the process for more democracy is that how Georgia has changed it is position towards Europe and democratic values. So I would say it helped positively."[197]

There are also several negative aspects for democratization process after the Rose Revolution. A think tank expert says that "between 2003-2006, you can see the influence of Rose Revolution to democratization, I was quite optimistic about the process because it had positive aspects for example it brought confidence to Georgian citizens first of all. They decided that they are really able to influence democracy and political development… but at the same time immediately after the revolution there were negative aspects as well. So there were some constitutional changes in 2004 and I can say that this was not conducing for the democratic development and there were many violations against to human rights because the government had confidence."[198] The main reason of the governmental attitude change was because the government prefer to work on state-building rather than consolidating the democracy.

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[196] Author from Human Rights House, Interview, 26 November 2010

[197] Author from Open Society Georgia Foundation, Interview, 1 December 2010

[198] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

Most of the responders agree on the state-building process is effecting the democratic consolidation in Georgia. For example an academician says that "Rose Revolution definitely provide some results in terms of state-building and increasing state capacity, but the path of democratization less tangible."[199] And an expert from Article 42 says that "now they are depended and most of the people are afraid because the state concentrated on state-building. It is very good I agree but they are away from democratic values."[200] However, some of the responders see the situation as natural or see democratization process is not the main problem that Georgia has to achieve. For instance an expert of Liberty Institute says that "I don't think that democratization is the main challenge for Georgia. I don't think that we have democracy deficit. I think the main problem we have is not to be democratic but to have liberal democracy. I think the main challenge we have is the lack of liberalism and not the lack of democracy."[201] And an academician adds that "there are two processes yes, one is state-building and the other is democracy building. Theoretically they are very different. So that is way, because of the shift to state-building in the democratization process, the democracy building is not perfect because, as it was in the history, state building needs authoritarian decisions. So there is force would be."[202]

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[199] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[200] Author from Article 42, Interview, 16 December 2010

[201] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 30 November 2010

[202] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

In order to some up, Rose Revolution had a mixed effect on democratization process and civil society formation in Georgia. After the revolution, the NGOs became more structuralized, institutionalized and they specialized in specific issues, which is a good aspect for civil society formation. But after the revolution, NGOs weakened for several reasons. First of all government got stronger and the NGOs working in specific issues are not favored by government and sometimes they are ignored by government. The most known and powerful faces from NGO sector went to government and for a period of time NGOs suffered because of lack of human resources. And the international actors started to donate government rather than NGOs for the first years of new regime. And NGOs had financial problems. On the other hand, democratization process had positive outcomes like the public awareness and participation increased. The political environment developed, but the government concentrated on state-building rather than democratic consolidation.

5.4. NGO-Political Society Relations

In this part, the responders are asked about the relations of NGOs and government and also the relations of NGOs with the opposition parties. The relations between civil society organizations and the government are seen very problematic by the responders. Most of the responders think that there were relatively better conditions in Shevardnadze period. A part of these responders see that although there was no interaction between NGOs and government, the conditions for NGOs were better. For instance, an academician from Tbilisi

State University says that "In Shevardnadze's period there were two centers. One was government and the other one was non-governmental center. Two different lines and there were no interaction. But at least there were better conditions for development of civil society."[203] And a think tank expert says that "In Shevardnadze's period, he didn't hear, we did whatever we wanted. In Shevardnadze period there was a lot of knowledge and policies, advocacies accumulated within the NGO sector and a lot of critics towards to regime. This was such a freedom without having power to influence something.[204] Another part thinks that although Shevardnadze did not in favor of NGOs, in his last years, he saw the power of NGOs among society and started to listen NGO' proposals unwillingly. An expert of Epfound says that "In both periods government is not very attended to have relations with NGOs. But in the last years of Shevardnadze's government, the government who saw the influence of civil society organizations, started to take some recommendations from the civil society organizations."[205] An Article 42 member adds that "during the Shevardnadze's period they respected to the NGOs because NGOs had very strong influence on general society in Georgia. And they took into account our propositions."[206] A member of Socialist Youth Movement clarifies the time of Shevardnadze as such "It was paradise in terms of democracy and relations with civil society organizations. For example I was working in the youth organization

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[203] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 24 November 2011

[204] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

[205] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

[206] Author from Article 42, Interview, 16 December 2010

but I was also employee in the president administration. I had a clear divisional life because nobody was pressuring me."[207]

According to the many of the observers the Rose Revolution was a success of civil society organizations because with media, they supported the opposition leaders and helped the new government to come to power. And this was a turning point for NGO-government relations. Because during the last period of Shevardnadze, his political party was consist of 70% old *nomenklatura* and 30% new generation with western education and culture.[208] And this young generation attached with the NGO sector and they developed strong relations. As a result after the Revolution most of the NGO leaders went to government and lesser went to other political parties. "After the Rose Revolution people resources and financial resources to get closer to politics and sometimes it was jump from one political party to another. What I see that, people start in NGO activities with a motivation which is more prominent and influential to get closer to politics."[209] As it is examined in the previous part of this chapter, the shift of human resources from NGOs to political bodies created asymmetric relations among NGOs and government.

The new and strong government does not want to take account the suggestions and contribution of civil society organizations, according to almost all of the

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[207] Author from Socialist Youth Movement, Interview, 1 December 2010

[208] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[209] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

responders. Although there are roundtables and meetings with the civil society sector, the last call belongs to government. An academician from Ilia State University says that "NGOs produce quite number of policy recommendations. For example, they organize public discussions and the government is very reluctance to these discussions and their outcomes. Because the government says that they are politically bias or the quality is very low. So the situation is like the government and the NGOs are not conducting and they do not interacting so they are like two highways which are not crossing at all."[210]

Basically, NGO-government relations are based on two main factors; the stance of the NGOs and the issues that are worked by NGOs. The responders are like-minded that the new government does not like to be criticized and as a result they mainly meet and cooperate with the pro-governmental organizations or the organizations which are oriented with the non-political agendas, such as environment NGOs or charity organizations. On the other hand, the organizations which are anti-governmental or working as watchdog are generally refused, oppressed or ignored by government. An academician from Tbilisi State University observes that "some institutions like Liberty Institute are very trusted by the government… They are now government representatives. So, the government still keeps some NGOs as trusted but they do not trust to other NGOs. They trust to pro-governmental NGOs. They do not like critics."[211] Another academician from same university adds that "…there is Freedom

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[210] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[211] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 24 November 2011

Institute which is an initiative to governmental decision-making process. What I want to say is, these kind of NGOs are registered as NGOs but working as a part of the government. For example certain initiations are coming from the government representatives but behind these initiations, there are these kinds of NGOs."[212] Hence the government attitude towards NGOs is depending on the stance of NGOs as it is seen in the observations. A member of Socialist Youth Movement gives an example about how government refuses to cooperate with them; "For example there is process of adaption the state youth policies and there was a discussion but the discussion was with the youth organization that was in the government's side. We together with the international NGO, Netherland Institute for Multi-party Democracy, asked to join this discussion and they refused because they thought that we will criticize, you know they want to have these kinds of roundtables where they feel comfortable."[213]

The second problematic for the loophole of relations between government and civil society organizations is the issues that are carried out by the organizations. The issues like IDPs, Political Prisoners, human rights violations and democracy building are not favored by government and the government has very negative attitude for the institutions that work on these specific issues. An expert from Human Rights House analyzes the situation as;

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[212] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 26 November 2010

[213] Author from Socialist Youth Movement, Interview, 1 December 2010

"I can identify different kinds of approaches and different kinds of relations which are depended on the issues that are covering. For example, I was coming from a meeting that is a progress conference; there were NGOs, international organizations and the government. Two issues are the best ones to cooperate with government and they allow you to involve to the process and there is pressure from international organizations when the research are demand and recommendation they put money for the government and civil society to involve. But as for the other sensitive issues such as media freedom or political prisoners or rule of law or freedom of justice, these are the issues government doesn't want to cooperate because there are plenty of criticisms are coming from NGOs."[214]

Also a responder from Human Rights Center says that "We are not opposition. But we sort of work on human rights issues popularly and government doesn't like it. So, we are not politically related with government anyhow. We don't have political relations with them. But still for government it is important NGOs to be quite and we are not quite. So there is no kind of cooperative relations."[215] Another member from Article 42 that works on law issues gives example about the government attitude for their invitation as "if there are some conferences we want the participation of the minister of Justice. Even they participate they listen and go. On the issues like human rights violation they unfortunately refuse to cooperate. We have one project is about on education of prosecutors, judges and

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[214] Author from Human Rights House, Interview, 26 November 2010

[215] Author from Human Rights Center, Interview, 24 November 2010

lawyers. But they don't want to participate even if this is about education that we have workshops or educational seminar."[216]

The NGOs which are disposed because of the government attitude towards them are generally works as watchdogs, pro-oppositional or they work on certain issues like human rights protection and democracy building. The responders from the governmental bodies and pro-governmental organizations are approaching the situation differently. An expert from GFSIS contributes the discussion from a perspective of pro-governmental organization as "It depends on the three types of working NGOs. Watchdogs, government hate them. There are monitoring NGOs and there also like us, who don't liked by the watch-dog NGOs. They hate us because they say 'you are pro-governmental'. But the difference of us from watch-dog NGOs, we discuss with the government on any issues rather than shouting on the streets."[217] On the other hand, from governmental perspective, they are trying to improve relations with NGOs. A representative of government says that,

> "After the revolution the NGO environment weakened very much because the many NGO people went into the government. So it created a different sort of situation and different forms of relations, objectively these relations somehow weakened. But we have lots of concerns about it for example in my field that I am responsible on European integration, we try to have relations with certain NGOs

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[216] Author from Article 42, Interview, 16 December 2010
[217] Author from GFSIS, Interview, 22 November 2011

which are working in the same cause, we invite them to the
parliament commissions and activities, we try to implement our
work side and again Europe itself in this respect the European
partnership in eastern partnership initiatives, they also have more
interaction with some certain NGOs. We are gathering together in
regular phases and Georgian representatives and also other
representatives from other countries come together. So either
international or locally there are lots of channels to interaction."[218]

The problematic relationship of government and civil society organizations
seems to be evolved in recent years. The main reason of the improvement is the
interaction of international actors as mediators. For instance a responder says
that "In many cases the international organizations try to gather together NGOs
with government by funding certain projects. Now these are the areas NGOs
work with the government."[219] A responder from Epfound analyzes the situation
as "Now civil society organizations are in a very tough position because
government takes their recommendation less. But especially these two years the
situation changed relatively. The government started to take recommendations
from the civil society organizations. I think the main reason of that is the
influence of western organizations. The western organizations expect from
Saakashvili's government to be more democratic."[220] The interaction of
international organizations is also admitted by governmental representatives. A
responder from governmental body says that "Even we do not like the donor

[218] Author-Parliamentary Representative, Interview, 27 November 2010

[219] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

[220] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

participation, yet we try to have good relations with these NGOs that are cooperating with international donor actors, we just imperative not only either interstate or intrastate international relations."[221]

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The relationship of NGOs and political parties exist in Georgia, yet it is very limited. According to several responders, it is natural for NGOs to have such kind of relation with political parties. A think tank expert says that "This is typical dynamics for civil society, from grassroots to politics. Globally civil movements all develop in this way from grassroots, then organization, then advocacy, then politics and then political leadership."[222] Another responder says that these kinds of relations are natural and it is ok, "there are some NGOs that are very oppositional minded and are very close with opposition parties. I think this is a welcoming situation for the political parties to take feedback from the civil society organizations and bias support also. And if you have organization that have policy references, that is ok. It is not desirable is that if all civil society was owned by the government all, but that is not the case."[223]After the Rose Revolution, as it is analyzed earlier went mostly to governmental bodies and there are several cases for transferring the oppositional parties. And a responder adds that there are some political party leaders, who are not able to go to parliament, chose to establish NGO that works for their political interests.[224]

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[221] Author-Parliamentary Representative, Interview, 27 November 2010

[222] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

[223]Author from The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, Interview, 2 December 2011

The relations of civil society organizations and political parties, on the other hand are very limited. In certain issues some organization may have relations with opposition parties but according to the most of the responders, this kind of relationships has very low level of ratio. There are several reasons for the lack of interaction. First of all, political parties cooperate with NGOs on issue base. The same thing is applicable for NGOs. In the perspective of political parties a Liberty Institute member says that "there are not many relations. First of all we need to understand the parties in here are underdeveloped and NGOs are mostly are just sort of alternative of employment and these organizations are just representing themselves. So parties are not so quite interested I mean they are interested in the relations of any kind of voter because, these organizations are not representing the large segments of the society. They are not very valuable for political parties. They might be useful time to time but that is all."[225] A representative of Democratic Movement- United Georgia Party says that they cooperated with several NGOs for "the idea the 'Public Assembly'. The political parties and NGOs come together on this idea. The Public Assembly is a creation of a group of people for example famous lecturers, writers and etc. and there are groups like defenders of the prisoners' rights."[226] From the civil society point of view, they don't want to be named as satellite of any kind of political institutions so besides several certain issues, they don't want to cooperate with political parties. As a responder says that "some are critical to government may be

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[224] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

[225] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 30 November 2010

[226] Author from Democratic Movement- United Georgia Party, 30 November 2010

sympathize to political parties but not supporting one or another of the political parties."[227] Also another responder explains the relations as such; "They also cooperate with the opposition parties very carefully because they avoid to be seen as in a part of strong political institution. They are saying to these opposition parties, yes we are following your initiatives but we stay parallel to politics like the initiatives for transition to democracy, freedom of speech and human rights but we will not act as an alliance to your political party and your political struggle."[228]

The attitude of political parties to NGOs which are gathering social data or work on monitoring is also affecting the relations with each other. For instance, if the data that is collected by NGOs shows the high level of public support for Saakashvili, they criticize the research and don't accept the results. And academician from Tbilisi State University says that "Opposition parties are hard to talk when it is coming to statistic. If you work on a statistic or an analysis, identification of the number is always questioned by the opposition… After the results, if Saakashvili has huge support on this statistics, they don't accept the statistic."[229]

The relations of civil society and political society are very limited according to the responders in both governmental level and oppositional level. In order to

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[227] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

[228] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

[229] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 26 November 2010

sum up the views of responders; there is an asymmetric level for the relations of strong government and weakened NGO sector, and government mostly doesn't want to take account the contribution of NGOs. There are two basic reasons. First, if the issues that are carried out by the NGOs are problematic such as IDPs, human right violations, media freedom or political prisoners, government doesn't want to cooperate and refuses the suggestion of NGOs. On the other hand, after the Rose Revolution, the division among the NGOs affected the relationship level with the government. Government is likely to be in favor of pro-governmental NGOs and avoids watchdog and pro-oppositional organizations. Recently, international actors are mediating the NGO-government meetings and encourage both sides to cooperate.

The relations of political parties and civil society organizations are depended on several reasons. The political parties are not accepting the research of NGOs and they deny the collected data if it is positive for government's sake. Also, the NGOs don't want to be seen as satellite of political bodies so they only cooperate in certain issues. In addition to the approach of NGOs, political parties also cooperate with NGOs, if it is beneficial for them and if their cooperation helps them to criticize the ruling party.

5.5 The Relations of NGOs with International Actors

The involvement of international actors to the civil society formation of Georgia is undeniable and crucial for the survival of Georgian NGOs. The international actors came to the Georgia right after the independency period and with the first half of 1990s; they contributed to the institutionalization of the civil society sector. From 28 interviewees, only one responded that they have no effect on Georgian civil society development and said that "Sometimes they can contribute to negative publicity, sometimes they can offer valuable advice, which can be obtained from other sources like academic sources, as well not just NGOs or some journalist, and foreign journalist can have some negative opinions or positive. I don't think they have a specific role on NGOs."[230] The rest of the responders think that either they have very important role or their contribution is limited but still exists. In order to the view of responders there are some positive and negative aspects on the relationship of NGOs with international actors. The positive aspects are as such; first of all the international organizations are financing the NGO sector of Georgia, which is crucial for NGO sector to survive, because the only financial resource for NGOs is the international donor funding; local businesses or local institutions are not funding the NGO sector. Their financial support generally goes to charity organizations. For instance, a responder says that "International organizations started to invest money to the civil society organization in here, in order to promote democracy. Most of the NGOs taking money from these international organizations,

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[230] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 30 November 2010

otherwise they can't keep their stance. Because without foreign support these NGOs cannot survive, the private sector doesn't help the NGOs in Georgia."[231] And the responders agree that the international organizations are essential for future development of civil society, for example a representative of Socialist Youth Movement says that "they are financing the civil society sector. It is very useful for us to develop civil society and it provides future development for us."[232] And another responder, who is an expert in think tank organization CRRC, adds that the situation is natural and in any country it is the fact that there is dependence to grandees for civil society development.[233] The international donor organizations are supporting the local NGOs in two ways as direct funding or project base support. The second way is more common that there are competitions are held by these donors and the employees of NGOs are generally hired for the certain projects.

The second way of international organizations to contribute civil society development in Georgia is training these NGOs via seminars and conferences. Most of the responders mention the importance of training for the constructive involvement of international organizations. For example, a representative of government draws attention to the role of international organizations as "international non-governmental organizations have very helpful for Georgian colleagues to show them how to work and maintain in NGO environment and

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[231] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

[232] Author from Socialist Youth Movement, Interview, 1 December 2010

[233] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

also with workshops and such they teach the local NGOs, give instructions on democratization services."[234] A representative UNM (United National Movement – the ruling party) also mentions the importance of international actors and says that "they help almost in every sphere like EU, USID, and American embassy and for like political party formation, NDI and such organizations are helping on training and capacity developing and also UN, UNICEF, and UNDP they are all involving. There are many other organizations and embassies they also not only helping us with financial support but also with their experiences. We learn from them and they provide us their recommendation."[235] On the other hand a representative of a civil society organization adds the importance of international actors from the perspective of civil society sector and says that "they also contribute in human resources level because we time to time have experts from different organizations to expertise our projects and works, because we don't have financial funding from government. So their support is important and their partnership is also important because we have possibility to share our experiences."[236]

The third contribution of international actors to the civil society sector of Georgia is to supply data and to help data flow. A responder says that "They interested in how things are going in Georgia. For their role specifically on human rights issues, they are definitely interested. They want to get as much

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[234]Author-Parliamentary Representative, Interview, 27 November 2010

[235] Author from United National Movement (Ruling Party), Interview, 9 December 2010

[236] Author from Article 42, Interview, 16 December 2010

information as possible."[237] And also besides gathering information from local NGOs, they supply information and research data for both government and NGO sector. The flow of information seems to be a problematic issue in Georgia. As it is mentioned in the previous part of this chapter the opposition parties are not paying attention on the researches that are done by the local NGOs and they deny any kinds of result which are positive for the sake of the government. So, in order to obviate the criticism of the opposition, government prefers to work with international organizations for data gathering. The responder who is a representative of ruling party says that "they think these surveys are pro-governmental and not objective. To avoid any kind of accusation, we work with an American company so no one can suspect to be subjective because they work in lots of country so it is ridiculous for them to falls the data. Now we always book these surveys to Greenburg also NDI and IRI."[238] On the other hand, from the perspective of NGOs, it is very difficult to access and get data from government. Hence, the local NGOs take the cooperation of international actors to access the collected data and researches. A responder says that "we cannot get the information we want from the government and these international actors are searching and sharing their data with us."[239]

The forth way of contribution to the civil society development for the international actors is to mediate the relations of NGOs and government. As it is

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[237] Author from Human Rights Center, Interview, 24 November 2010

[238] Author from United National Movement (Ruling Party), Interview, 9 December 2010

[239] Author from Socialist Youth Movement, Interview, 1 December 2010

mentioned in the previous part that the government is not in favor of international actors to participate the relations with NGOs; as a government representative says that "Even we do not like the donor participation, yet we try to have good relations with these NGOs that are cooperating with international donor actors, we just imperative not only either interstate or intrastate international relations."[240] The main reason of government to accept the participation of international actors is because they are interested in how international actors observe them. For instance a responder says that "the government pays attention what international non-governmental organizations say about Georgia. So they are interested in the better assessments and better indexes."[241] Hence, the government pays attention more to the NGO sector if there is an involvement of international actors. In order to clarify the situation an academician from Tbilisi State University gives an example as "…here in Georgia it was very huge coalition build about gender issue… There were EU official participated to the process. This initiation was not adopted from the coalition. But still as the consensus or the compromise parliament accepted to accept the amendment for gender-based violence. Georgian government wanted to show that they are trying to follow the EU standards."[242] And a responder from Human Rights House adds that "…it is the best way to cooperate with the government when there are international organizations involved as third party… It depends on the topic of course but most of the issues better have their involvement. So, in some topics it is even more crucial to have international

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[240] Author-Parliamentary Representative, Interview, 27 November 2010

[241] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[242] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 26 November 2010

organizations like peace building. When you want to help in some joint project in the region you should have international support otherwise it is not realistic to implement this project."[243]

International actors have impact on international actors, as it is mentioned above. However, either indirectly or directly, there are several negative aspects occurring with their participation. Most of the responders highlight the problematic structure of fundraising system. There was a struggling time right after the Rose Revolution and the international actors slowed down their financial support for NGOs and started to support government instead. As a result between 2004 and 2007, a number of the NGOs stopped their activities. And after 2007, the funding started again to the local NGOs. A responder says that "they saw the problems when they shifted the donating system so they started to donate again to organizations."[244] The fundraising contains two complications. Firstly, the international organizations have main local NGOs that they finance constantly and it is difficult for small and young NGOs to establish new networks and find financial support. A university member examines the situation as "this networking is monopolized. We have some certain non-governmental organizations, the international ones are not looking for new partners and they are past-dependent. So it causes elitism in the non-governmental organizations. The personal networks and private personal contacts are very important, so the new non-governmental organizations have

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[243] Author from Human Rights House, Interview, 26 November 2010

[244] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

difficulties to find these kinds of networks."[245] The responders from NGO sector adds that "It was very difficult for the NGOs which started to establish after the Rose Revolution because there were already big NGOs."[246] And "they have generally certain NGOs, they are their folks but it is understandable."[247] Second problematic issue about donation system is the huge amount of donation budget. The money that is distributed by international actors' causes the sector to be considered as a business sector rather than civil society. For instance a responder from Liberty Institute says that "NGOs are mostly are just sort of alternative of employment and these organizations are just representing themselves."[248] On the other hand, an expert from CSSR analyzes the situation as such; "if you have more or less okay project then you can get funding… you can get money easily without not much effort… these organizations always competing with each other, they are doing the same things but they have different titles. It continues like that for last 20 years. There are lots of efforts on local democracy development. Millions of dollars spent on that no one is thinking what is feasible in here. The civil society is like business sector."[249]

The issues that are promoted and financed by international organizations are another complication according to the most of the responders. The general view

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[245] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[246] Author from Civic Development Institute, Interview, 25 November 2010

[247] Author from GFSIS, Interview, 22 November 2011

[248] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 30 November 2010

[249] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

for the situation is the projects and researches are not covering the real needs of public good. And they cannot understand the peculiarities of Georgian society and needs. A responder says that "They are generally more involved and more interested on the governmental decision-making process."[250] The international actors generally are donating the issues such as democracy promotion, democratic consolidation, human rights, peace building. And the issues that are based on the socio-economic development of society are not highly covered by international actors. A responder from governmental body says that "not every Ingo people can really understand the peculiarities of the Georgian civil society, what is achievable or not, which is not helpful of course."[251] On the other hand a representative of an Ingo says that "the main purpose of the NGOs became finding funding from international organizations and they are not looking for the most important issues of the country to develop. They are looking for what international organizations are working for. That is very problematic."[252] The condition is exemplified by a think tank expert as such,

> "…any sociological study during last 15 years, which asked responders what, is your problem; it revealed that the most important problems of the Georgian society are unemployment, and poverty. So, if you are international organization and if you promote Georgian civil society you should put support to these issues. But what finance are the human rights, freedom of speech and liberal

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[250] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 26 November 2010

[251] Author-Parliamentary Representative, Interview, 27 November 2010

[252] Author from Ebert Stiftung, Interview, 30 November 2010

issues. However the problem of the society is economic entity, socially and agenda of international community is liberal. And this is a gap. It is not because they are bad guys, it is because they believe so but this is not the reality and this is a gap between the society and funding… You need money to change things but the given money is for something else to do."[253]

In order to sum up the relations of international organizations and Georgian NGOs, the international actors are supporting the Georgian civil society in four dimensions such as; financial support, training, data supplying and work as a third part in mediating the relations of NGOs and government. The Georgian NGOs has no other financial support but international donation so without their fundraising Georgian NGOs are unable to survive. But the dependency on fundraising also creates dependency to the agenda of the international donor organization, hence there is a loophole occurs for the support on real public needs. Another problematic aspect is that the funding that is distributed among the civil society sector is imbalanced and international actors have cooperation with certain local and big NGOs, as a result it is difficult for new comers and small organizations to find networks and funding. Finally, there is consumption occurs that the amount of funding is enormous and it is seen as easy money that transforms the civil society to a business sector.

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[253] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

5.6. NGO- Public Relations

In this part of the chapter the responders are asked about the relations of civil society organizations and general society and also the public view of Georgian NGOs. All of the responders are like-minded that there are very limited relations between the society and civil society actors. There are several indicators for the lack of interaction. As it is mentioned previously in the second part of this chapter, the civil society is professionalized and institutionalized in Georgia. The most vibrant part of the civil society is consisting of NGOs that are staff-based structure. The membership-based associations are very limited.

The organizations are unable to strength their ties with society and the society do not choose to cooperate with civil society organizations. The responders have several approaches for the incapacitated relations. First of all, only a part of the civil society sector is trusted by the society. Generally this part of civil society consists of human rights organizations and the organizations that work on social issues. For instance an expert from Human Rights House explains the relations with the society by their perspective. The organization is an umbrella organization and there are five partner organizations function under it. One of the partner organizations is Article 42 that is working on specifically human rights issues and rule of law. The participants of the organization are largely lawyers and they are helping the people who are in need of legal consultation. Hence, the expert from Human Rights House says that "last couple of years we didn't spread out any advertisement about our legal service but the people are

coming because they know us, one victim tell the other and the information of our work spread like that. It means that people still believe in civil society… Sometimes people are asking for how much does it cost for our legal consultation or help and we say nothing. These people, who have relatives of the political prisoners… and when we help these people then they see that yes there are some organizations that they are doing real issues."[254] Also another responder tells how they helped a family to buy a house after they lost everything in a fire incident.[255] However, these kinds of examples are very limited because the funding is also limited for these issues. A responder says that "We had a project financed by European Union they were funding just four three days but we still working on the project for a year."[256] Hence, few organizations are covering the public needs and as it is mentioned in the previous part, the donor organizations are not funding enough these kinds of works. A responder from OSGF adds that "Because what NGOs are doing is to work on projects, when the project ends, the channels are closed and they don't work with the social groups. And of course the broader society feels that NGOs do something which is not for them."[257]

The second problematic aspect is the public view for the most of the NGO sector that the general society sees NGOs as a business sector. They have famous phrases for NGOs such as GONGOs, DONGOs and 'grand eaters'. A responder

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[254] Author from Human Rights House, Interview, 26 November 2010

[255] Author from Civic Development Institute, Interview, 25 November 2010

[256] Author from Civic Development Institute, Interview, 25 November 2010

[257] Author from OSGF, Interview, 10 December 2010

confesses the public view for the NGO sector as "terribly. So when we asked people for most least-trusted institution, last year it was the court system and then NGOs… And why people don't trust are we had to go back to starting of these NGOs, we are also part of that sector; I consider it as because we don't attach to society. We are asking donors for money. People say that NGOs are grand eaters and they make their lives more comfortable and do nothing important to society. That is how regular people think. It is not like people love us."[258] A pro-governmental NGO representative blames the NGOs for the lack of interaction by giving an example; "Five years ago, it started to create school boards and public could go to these board on discuss and decide on certain issues. It wasn't a big thing but it was an opportunity for the ordinary citizens to participate on decision-making process. And how many civil society organizations went there, may be five out of five thousand."[259] According to another responder society's negative view for civil society sector is a natural outcome of NGOs' attitude towards the general society. For instance, the responder says that;

> "There is a difference for the fighting for freedom of speech for all
> and fighting for freedom of speech for yourself because you are so
> good and progressive and democratic, leader etc… and start to surpass
> the people at the back, you are saying right and the others not as much
> as you. So society thinks that this people are not representing us…
> And now the trust towards civil society is individual base. There are
> NGOs which are trusted and which are not trusted. It depends on their

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[258] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

[259] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 9 December 2010

position, their leader and what they are doing, what they produce. It became more specific issue."[260]

The third problematic aspect of the uncooperative relationship is the lack of voluntarism mentality of the society. A part of the responders foresee the reason of this mentality is because of the Soviet legacy. A responder clarifies this approach as "there was a notion that the Soviet society was a collectivist society and the western countries are individualistic countries. This was a misleading opinion. Now society is not able to organize to have collective actions and to establish organizational structure."[261]

During the Soviet period, the society was expecting any activity from the state and they were thinking that the state owes them. If the state doesn't do anything for the benefit of society, the society doesn't take any initiatives.[262] A responder says that "People don't believe in initiatives that is coming from themselves and they don't trust themselves may be that is why NGOs were established in that structure."[263] The cooperation of general society in the broader framework does not exist. According to the responders the people of Georgia for other individuals if they are from the inner circle like family, relatives of close neighbors. "They solve their problems in their neighborhood not with

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[260] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

[261] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

[262] Author from OSGF, Interview, 10 December 2010

[263] Author from OSGF, Interview, 10 December 2010

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government or else."[264] Another important fact the Georgian people think that they should be paid for their effort. A representative of Article 42 says that "The civil activism is not high level. We sometimes call volunteers for our organization but it is sometimes difficult. After a time these volunteers want to find job in the organization. It is a kind of social problem."[265] And a representative of ISFED supports this approach. ISFED is a monitoring organization, especially during the Rose Revolution and the elections that held in Georgia, they actively participated the monitoring process with the participations of volunteers; however it is still a problematic issue according to the responder. She says that "it is a problem, because people are generally thinking that if they are working in your project or act, they think that they should be paid because it is about mentality. There is lack in that mentality."[266] In a sense, this problematic is caused of individual decisions. For instance a responder from Ebert Stiftung says that "I cannot blame this situation. If I was a student of political sciences and If I was graduated from Tbilisi State University before rather getting unemployed, I would look for an NGO and try to get money from international donor organization. So this individual decision making is very understandable."[267]

The problematic structure of the NGO-society interaction is examined above. However, in order to clarify the situation, one must observe that the lack of

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[264] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 26 November 2010

[265] Author from Article 42, Interview, 16 December 2010

[266] Author from ISFED, Interview, 14 December 2010

[267] Author from Ebert Stiftung, Interview, 30 November 2010

voluntarism mentality in Georgia does not mean there is no voluntary activity. The young population of Georgia is considered as they close the gap between civil society and general public, by the responders. A responder says that "the voluntarily membership is mainly in the youth social movements. They are kind of NGOs because they are registered as NGOs. And in those organizations you can find young students who are not requiring any financing or some benefits I would say. These NGOs are generally focuses on public issues; they are not like think tanks."[268] Another responder from GYLA adds that "they work for their ambitions and they are voluntarily participating but not professional base organizations. So we have youth to close the gap."[269] However the youth contribution is more likely organizes in the capital rather than regions. A responder from Tbilisi State University says that "Mostly, country side is covered by the governmental institutions, there are some private works but there are no organized formations. But in the cities and especially capital Tbilisi, they are more influential, especially students. The youngsters are more civically active."[270]

In summary, the Georgian NGOs are unable to be a bridge between government and public. And the public view for NGOs is depending on the NGOs' activities. The general perspective is they are not trusted by the society, however if the NGOs are working on social issues and human rights defense, and if they are

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[268] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

[269] Author from GYLA, Interview, 16 December 2010

[270] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

providing public service, then these kind of organizations are respected by the society. The NGOs that are unrelated with the public interests are considered as grand eaters by the society. Also, there voluntarism mentality in Georgian society is underdeveloped. Especially the generation that comes from Soviet period expects state service and if the state does not meet their needs, then they don't take any initiatives to change the situation. The trust of individuals is limited with their close environment like family, relatives and neighborhood; and they don't trust the rest of the society. Because of this mentality, the evolvement of civil society occurred as staff-based NGOs rather than membership-based associations. In addition to that, the Georgian people are expecting to be paid for their effort and this also is because of the lack of voluntarism mentality. The voluntarily activism is supplied mainly by the youngsters of Georgia, however the activity of youth is mainly held in Tbilisi and the regional level is very limited.

5.7. The Role of Media as an Initiative of Georgian Civil Society

In the third chapter, the role of media as an initiative of civil society is mentioned that according to the Thomas Metzger, "the ideological marketplace" which includes independent mass media, think tanks, universities, publishing houses and such, can be considered as a part of civil society. It is the fact that media has a major role on democracy, democracy development and democratic consolidation in terms of freedom of information access and freedom of expression. Most of the responders agree that the media was more influential for

democracy formation before and during the Rose Revolution. A responder says that "In many areas there was much more freedom before the Rose Revolution as freedom of expression, freedom of media, and freedom of national ranged TV channels. It has worsened. Obviously, I think one of the reasons that Rose Revolution itself had happened was because of this freedom."[271] Also another responder mentions the difference of the nature of media before and after the Rose Revolution. According to her observation, in Shevardnadze's time there was a triangle which consist of government, media owners and journalists. In that time the media owners and journalists opposed the government and worked together. However, after the revolution the triangle transformed and government and media owners started to cooperate and oppress the journalists because "Just before the rose revolution the owners were freer but their interest had changed now."[272]

The media in Georgia is composed of four segments. First and most accessible part is electronic media which means the TV channels; the others are radio stations, printed media and social media (internet). Most of the responders are like-minded that the media sector is oppressed and controlled by the government. A responder says that "Media was much freer during the Shevardnadze's period. Nowadays this government came to power with the huge influence of media. So, this government knows the strength of media and as a result they want to control the media."[273] Another responder mentions the

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[271] Author from Human Rights Center, Interview, 24 November 2010

[272] Author from Civic Development Institute, Interview, 25 November 2010

[273] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 7 December 2010

importance of media for government as a tool of manipulation. This think tank
expert says that;

> "Countries like Georgia are may be described as manipulated
> democracy. You have quite a lot freedom on the level of society. It is
> not authoritarian country in terms of it is not dictatorship; dictate on
> some political prisoners and some restrictions on some level but not
> dictatorship. On the other side, a government controls the tools of
> manipulation, what are the tools of manipulation? It is TV. Internet,
> newspapers, radio station relatively and some small TV channels are
> freer but the big nationwide TV channels are controlled by
> government and they sit together to set agenda."[274]

TV channels are the most accessible media organs for society. A responder says
that according to a research that they made 95% of the society uses TV channels
to get information.[275] There is only one nation-wide broadcasting TV channel
which is called Georgian Public Broadcasting (1st channel). According to the
responders this TV channel is controlled by the government. There is one more
national TV channel which is concentrated on political issues yet it is only
broadcasting in Tbilisi. The Rustavi 2 and Imedi are also other most known TV
channels. "Rustavi 2 tries to be mediator and Imedi now is neutral."[276] And there
are a few private TV channels and they are mostly pro-oppositional such as

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[274] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

[275] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

[276] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

Maestro and Kavkasia however these channels are also broadcast in Tbilisi.[277] Many responders think that the 1st channel is pro-governmental and because of being the only channel that broadcast nation-wide, it has influence on society, especially the people in regions. Because the other channels are mainly broadcast in Tbilisi hence the society is unable to compare and contrast. A responder says that "it is a very alarming situation. Everybody knows that there is a government control. And especially 90 percent of regional media is under government control." [278] For instance another responder adds that;

> "Rustavi and Imedi are broadcasting at the end of news may be one minute they show the demonstrations from the worst position. Nothing is taken like the amount of the people or the reasons of the demand... I don't support the demonstration… but anyway I want to have free access to information. I have to check the internet or the cable TV that are relatively free but many of the population cannot access to these tools even the people in Tbilisi. An in regions they don't have the cable TVs. So the media is so much controlled. You can note one or two nationwide TVs; they are even copying the words on the news on politically sensitive issues. They use the same texts."[279]

A government representative on the other hand, blames the other TV channels and says that government cannot represent itself in these TV channels. And they

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[277] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

[278] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

[279] Author from Human Rights House, Interview, 26 November 2010

give chance to the opposition parties to represent themselves in 2nd channel. For instance she says that "They are family owned TV channels and they are oppositional and there is always opposition leaders are going and talking. And sometimes people from the ruling party are also invited to go there but when they go there is no balance of journalism. They don't let these people express their references."[280] Also a representative of Liberty Institute which is pro-governmental organization says that "2nd channel is devoted primarily to political issues and twenty four our seven days a week. Nothing is left uncovered everybody was happy before the elections… it is a good opportunity for smaller parties and those who are not have representation in the parliament but not many of them are using."[281] It is important to mention that according to a group of responders besides the national channels are controlled by government, the small and private TV channels are directly or indirectly controlled by the government. For instance a responder says that "Media is totally controlled. There are two TV stations in opposition but very small, they are small because the advertisements that are given to channels are reduced. And the other pro-governmental channels are supported by the businesses that have close ties with the government."[282] The problem for the Georgian media is either pro-governmental or pro-oppositional; these TV channels are not independent because in each way they are choosing a side and this effects the most important nature of media; neutralism. "There are two bigger TV stations who are supporting the opposition Caucasia and Maestro, others are directly or indirectly are influenced by the government. So none of them are independent either the pro-oppositional ones or the pro-governmental

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[280] Author from United National Movement (Ruling Party), Interview, 9 December 2010

[281] Author from Liberty Institute, Interview, 9 December 2010

[282] Author from Socialist Youth Movement, Interview, 1 December 2010

ones. So in that sense, their influence is strong but they are themselves are influenced by the governmental policies."[283]

The other segments of media, which are newspapers and radio stations, are less controlled. A responder says that "no one bothers to control them"[284] because they are less preferable and accessible by the society. The same responder explains it by saying "We asked in our survey that what is your main resource to get information and newspapers were at the end of the statics."[285] Another responder says that "relatively free media organs are newspapers but these newspapers but they are not reaching all segments of the society. If you go to region only 5 or 6 newspapers from Tbilisi goes there and they are not accessible for everyone."[286] In addition an expert from PASOS adds that "although there are a few are close printed media organs to government like *Dabula* is running by the wife of deputy of ministers. Then the newspapers are quite independent but small amount of population are getting newspapers."[287] The same expert adds the situation of radio stations by saying "There are other media organs like radio stations but they are not as influential as TV. Only the shepherds in the rural areas or the intellectuals in Tbilisi are listening radio."[288]

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[283] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

[284] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

[285] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

[286] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 7 December 2010

[287] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

[288] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

The last media organ is internet, which is seen as an alternative to other media organs and according to the most of the responders they are freer than any other media organs. For instance, civil society organizations are also linked to these media sources. The Human Rights Center is a very good example of that because they created a web-site that is called www.humanrights.ge, which is followed by the Georgian internet users. Also another important web-site is www.civil.ge which is founded by the UN Association of Georgia, a Georgian non-governmental organization in 2001. Civil.ge is currently supported by Eurasia Partnership Foundation and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung."[289] A responder says that "I am checking civil.ge for may be five times a day. And it is my reference for you that they are creditable and non-bias. So I think that they make important work."[290] Another expert says that "more and more society is going to internet which is free and not controlled by the government."[291] However, it again is about the social level of the society. A responder says that "internet base media outlets are free and they are not in partial but no one controls them, they can express what they want but the problem is again TVs are the most influential and it is in advantage for the government."[292] A responder from Ebert Stiftung

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[289] "About civil.ge", http://www.civil.ge/eng/category.php?id=84

[290] Author from The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, Interview, 2 December 2011

[291] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

[292] Author from CRRC, Interview, 30 November 2011

mentions the accessibility of internet media and says that "look at the statistic how many people can access to the internet. And judge yourself."[293]

The final important issue about the Georgian media is the media ownership. Many NGOs work on this issue and they try to cooperate with government, with the support of international actors. As it is mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the major events during the Saakashvili period was the 7 November 2007 protests. During the period the a small private pro-oppositional TV channel Kavkasia and also Imedi TV, which was owned by Badri Patarkatsishvili, shut down for three months by the government. A responder says that "the Imedi issue was a huge disaster for the independence of media. And the Special Forces entered to the TV Station and it was on live, the journalist was announcing now they are coming, they are coming and then the broadcasting switched off."[294] After the TV station was shut down, the owner of Imedi went to London and died in there. The problems started in that point that although the family of Patarkatsishvili opposed the process; the ownership has transferred to somebody else. A responder says that "the ownership process was not transparent and we don't know who sold their share to whom. No one knows how this process happened."[295] It is mentioned by a responder that "the owners of the many TV channels are offshore zones and we don't know officially who these people

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[293] Author from Ebert Stiftung, Interview, 30 November 2010

[294] Author from GYLA, Interview, 16 December 2010

[295] Author from OSGF, Interview, 10 December 2010

are."[296] The struggle for the Georgian media is that the ownership rights are under the protection of law so the owner may not announce who he/she. [297] The NGOs are working this particular issue and try to change the law. It seems that NGO-Ingo cooperation has certain outcomes for instance a responder gives the latest improvements about this issue as;

"Recently media press associates wanted from government to explain the owners of the TV channels and media organs because there are some TV channels we don't know who is the owner. They are owned in offshored zones and the NGOs wanted them to be explained by the government and also the international organizations are supporting this act of NGOs. So this act which is submitted by the NGOs to forbid the offshore zone ownership of the media organs, tried to be implemented. Previously, government wanted to leave this 10 percent for them to compromise the registered in offshores. So ten percent can be hold by offshore zones. But NGOs and international organizations insisted to forbid all offshore ownership. And now there is compromise that the offshores zones cannot hold any shares. It is very important amendments because this allows the government which is control the regions keep the owners in secret because the ownership is controlled by laws. Let's see what will happen."[298]

In order to sum up, the media organs are divided into four main parts in Georgia that TV channels, radio stations, printed media and internet. The radio and

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[296] Author from ISFED, Interview, 14 December 2010

[297] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

[298] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

newspapers are relatively independent but they are not easily accessible and preferable by the society. The most influential media organs are the TV channels and according to the responders this sector is very oppressed and controlled by the government. There is one national nation-wide broadcasting TV channel and it is directly controlled by the government. Many other TV channels are private and small, they are mostly pro-oppositional but they are broadcasting only in Tbilisi, hence they cannot reach the whole society, especially the regions of Georgia. Civil society organizations are actively working on media issue in Georgia in two dimensions. One of their works is to create web-portals, which are started to be followed by the society; they are not bias and very neutral. The second issue that they are concentrating on is the media ownership issue. Many TV channels in Georgia are owned by offshore zones and society doesn't know who the owners are. This damages the transparency of media so NGOs are cooperating with international organizations and give drafts to government to change the laws about the ownership.

5.8. The Future of Georgian NGOs; the Potential Successes and Possible Challenges

In this part, the responders are asked about the future of Georgian civil society development. Less of the responders are thinking the NGO situation will not change any more and more of the responders think that the civil society will go in a positive direction but time is needed. For instance for the approach of unchanging history a responder says that "I don't think there won't be any great

changes. And again it depends on the time perspective. In short term there won't be change unless something important issue to occur like war that like we had in 2008."[299] Another responder from the same point of view says that "I don't expect something like miracle happens in the Georgian civil society and it will remain the same."[300] However, the rest of the responders are optimistic for the future of Georgian civil society development, although there are challenges. The first challenge is the social mentality of the society. A responder mentions the importance to overcome the Soviet heritage; "In countries like Georgia, civil society organizations are extremely important. We need NGOs to overcome the Soviet past, to overcome the Soviet mentality, to overcome the Soviet heritage and governance culture; the post-Soviet states require civil society."[301] Another responder adds the importance of young generation. According to this responder "The young generation will be decisive because they come from a different generation. I don't know how much years will it take but it is promising. The civil culture is coming from experience and with they have more experience it will go in a good direction."[302]

An academician from Tbilisi State University gives attention to the social responsibility and says that ", in order to have a successful democratization process, the role of NGO formation is decisive because, none of the country can become democratic if they don't have functioning civil society and the

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[299] Author from PASOS, Interview, 13 December 2010

[300] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[301] Author from GFSIS, Interview, 22 November 2011

[302] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 10 December 2010

democratic mentality of its society. And I think Georgia need to work on that direction much more because nowadays the mentality of the society is not like the Soviet mentality but there is still lack of social responsibilities and social activities."[303] Besides social participation and social responsibility, it is also important that the Georgian NGOs must more focus on social issues and they must defend more the public interests. This brings us the second future challenge for civil society. As it is mentioned earlier, the Georgian NGOs are highly depended to the foreign donor and Georgian NGOs mostly don't work on social issue unless the donors finance them.[304] A responder asks what if the donors decide not to finance NGOs anymore. He thinks that in a scenario like this only a few NGOs would survive.[305] Another expert from ISFED thinks that "I don't think that any NGOs will establish anymore. I think it is like five or maximum ten years there will be not NGO registration anymore… It is all about donors. If they don't fund us we can't work and they are not interested anymore. May be they are more interested in Middle East countries but not Georgia anymore."[306]

The third challenge for the civil society sector is the government attitude towards NGOs, according to the responders. The responders think that NGOs are not effective in decision-making process because the government is controlling them. A responder says that "the government is trying to control our activity and

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[303] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 7 December 2010

[304] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview, 19 November 2010

[305] Author from Ilia Chavchavadze University, Interview 22 November 2010

[306] Author from ISFED, Interview, 14 December 2010

fund which is coming from the international actors not from the government."[307] And she adds the new tax regulation for NGOs which is mentioned earlier that the income tax will increase from %12 to %20. Another responder says that "Charismatic leader issue is very influential in our society and we had charismatic leaders since the independence. So we can talk about achievements, we force government to chance constitution change by elections. On the other hand the government is not eager to develop the political system that is why, civil society is important to develop the process."[308] A responder from Ebert Stiftung agrees on this approach that he says "the civil society sector will develop but they will hardly take part in the decision making process with the government. So in the long term in order to sum up the role of civil society will be limited."[309]

A part of the responders think that the role of international organizations are crucial for the development of civil society not only for the financial support but also being a pushing factor for government. A responder says that "I am positive about the future but the international organizations must be more active in here to put pressure on the government, in terms of, giving opportunity to our civil society groups."[310] An expert from Epfound adds that "Unfortunately we are still behind the standards. But hopefully, I hope that with the pushing effect of international organizations and more public involvement this can change the

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[307] Author from Human Rights House, Interview, 26 November 2010

[308] Author from Civic Development Institute, Interview, 25 November 2010

[309] Author from Ebert Stiftung, Interview, 30 November 2010

[310] Author from Tbilisi State University, Interview, 24 November 2011

momentum."[311] Another expert from OSGF thinks that the government is also as much depended as NGOs to the international actors and he says that "I think elite is also too much depended to western donation and they are identify themselves with the western world. So what I think is the regime will not be harsher."[312]

The Georgian NGOs have challenges for development but it is the fact that they are the most vibrant and functioning part of the Georgian civil society. A responder thinks that they are even more influential than the Georgian political parties. He says that "undoubtedly, they will be stronger because it is quicker reforming in itself than the political parties and they have fewer restrictions and they have better networks with international organizations than the political parties so they are one step further than the political parties. And I think they will increase their capacity and influence."[313] And in comparison to the other South Caucasus countries Georgian civil society is well-developed. A responder from CSS says that "I think within this region Georgia is quite leading in this regard comparing it with Armenia, Azerbaijan even with Russia, we have more or less vibrant civil society. In general I would say society much better than the government. I am more or less optimistic."[314]

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[311] Author from Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Interview, 10 December 2010

[312] Author from OSGF, Interview, 10 December 2010

[313] Author from The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, Interview, 2 December 2011

[314] Author from Center for Social Sciences, 2 December 2010

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Georgian civil society formation started with in the same period of gaining the independency because the notion of national independency was carried out by the intellectual elites that formed the first example of civil society with Ilya Chavchavadze Society. Their ambition for national independency was followed by the general society and these intellectual elites were able to mobilize the society for their cause. Nevertheless, after gaining the independence, the intellectual elites shifted to the political bodies and the development of Georgian civil society stopped till the middle of 1990s.

Shevardnadze welcomed the international organizations to Georgia and with their support in various aspects such as donations, trainings and data sharing, the Georgian civil society was able to institutionalize. Shevardnadze, who indirectly helped to civil society development, was forced to resign by the pressure of them. Also NGOs supported the new political elites consequently, with the Rose Revolution in 2003, the civil society became of the most effective actors on democratic transition process. However Rose Revolution, which is accepted as the most vigorous outcome of the democratization attempt of Georgian civil society, caused civil society to lose blood and deterioration of the democratic consolidation. In order to understand the failure of democratic consolidation in

Georgia, one must analyze the process in different perspectives such as civil society, state, international actors, society and media.

Before the Rose Revolution, Shevardnadze was not in favor of the civil society organizations yet he was aware of the credibility of the NGOs among the society. In the last years of his presidency he started to take recommendations of civil society actors and he incorporated NGOs to the decision-making process. After the Rose Revolution, the new leader Saakashvili chose many NGO leaders that were well-known and trusted by the society to join his government. This was the first struggle for Georgian NGOs because many of the NGO leaders shifted to the government and that caused a lack of human resources in the civil society sector. The second struggle for the NGO sector was the shift of the international actors' interest to government. As it is mentioned in the previous chapter, Georgian NGOs are highly depended to the international donations and without financial support; it is not likely for NGOs to survive. After the Rose Revolution, international organizations started to donate government rather than NGOs and consequently, many NGOs stopped their activities and only big NGOs managed to survive. Although within two to three years international organization returned to support NGOs back, the damage was done because within this short period of time the gap within the NGO sector widened and the elitism occurred in NGO sector. Another struggle for NGO development and democratic consolidation that occurred after the Rose Revolution is the division in the NGO sector that NGOs divided into three segments as watchdogs, pro-oppositional NGOs and pro-governmental NGOs, however in order to accept a

country as a successful at democratization process, civil society must be neutral within the country. The division in the NGO sector was not only because of the choices of NGOs but also because of the government attitude towards these NGOs. The new government is only in favor of a small group of NGOs and incorporates them to the decision-making process.

After the Rose Revolution the general expectation for the new government of Saakashvili was to work on both democratization and state building together but contrary to expectations, the new government chose to focus on state-building. Before the revolution it was easy for Georgian NGOs to contribute to the process because the government was weaker than the NGO sector, however with the Rose Revolution, the new government accumulated power and as a result NGO contribution to the decision-making process visibly declined. According to the most of the responders in the fieldwork, the government is not eager anymore to cooperate with NGOs and ignore their recommendations if the recommendations are given for the problematic and important issues such as human rights violations, political prisoners, IDPs and the violation of law. In order to consolidate democracy, the civil society has to check and limit the power of state that is exercising on the society and also encourages it to be accountable to the law and public expectations. However according to Uhlin, it is unlikely in post-Soviet states to accomplish this task because the leaders of the newly independent states are not interested in being checked.[315] The Georgian case is

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[315] Uhlin, p.161.

also reflecting this argument. Although the NGOs are monitoring the governmental body, they are not influential in limiting the political influence.

Another struggle for civil society development and democratic consolidation is the dependency to the international actors. Many responders are like-minded that the international actors have very positive impact on Georgian civil society and they are contributing the civil society development of Georgia via donations, training, data gathering and moderating the relations with government. Although their existence in Georgia is crucial for NGO sector to survive, they are also indirectly affecting the process negatively. The main role of civil society is to create a bridge between government and society. However the dependency to international actors causes NGOs to depend also the donor agendas and they are mostly not relevant for the needs society. As a result, the dependency to the donor agenda widens the gap between society and civil society. And it is difficult to talk about democratic consolidation if there is such a loophole between society and NGOs.

It is also important to mention the positive contribution of international organization on moderating the relations of state and civil society. As it is mentioned earlier, the relations of NGOs with government can be considered as asymmetric and the new government is not willing to have contribution of NGOs to the decision-making process. Hence, the NGOs are strengthening their position on decision-making process by taking the assistance of international actors. The responders are from NGO sector, which have problems about this issue, examining the situation that if the international actors participate to the

negotiations, the government is eventually listens the NGOs. So as a consequence, in order to mediate the relations between the state and society, the civil society sector first needs the international actors to mediate their relations with government.

In order to consolidate democracy, another problematic situation that must be overcome is the relations of civil society sector with society. The Rose Revolution was a success of civil society in terms of being able to mobilize the society. However, after the revolution the responders are like-minded that the society lost their interest for the process. And the civil society lost its influence on the society. There are several reasons for this occasion. First of all, with the division among the civil society sector as GONGOs, watchdogs and pro-oppositional NGOs, the general society started to mistrust the NGO sector. There is only a small part of NGOs, which are working on social issues, are trusted by the society and the rest is considered as *grand eaters*. According to the society, the NGO sector doesn't meet the public interest and they are simply a business sector that seeks its own interests. Another reason for the problematic relations is the lack of social participation mentality of the society. Many responders think that Georgian people are not valuing the social participation and voluntarism because of the Soviet mentality. The generation which grew in the Soviet time expects any kinds of contribution and work from the state, and they think that the state owes them. And if the state doesn't meet their expectations, the society doesn't take any initiatives to change the situation. As it is mentioned in the previous chapter, because of this attitude of society the

associations which are based on membership are very limited in Georgia and also because of this situation staff-based NGOs are the most vibrant part of civil society. The voluntarily act is very limited and it is only maintained by the young generation in Tbilisi and in the regions generally the most active parts are the local municipalities.

Media formation, which is a successful tool to monitor the state policies, is an important indicator on the process of democratic consolidation; however in the Georgian case the media failed its role as an indicator to consolidate the democracy. The media played a significant role during the Rose Revolution. The media has a vital role to monitor the government and it must be neutral. However after the revolution media became one of the most problematic area in Georgia that many NGOs are cooperating with international actors to overcome the situation. According to the most of the responders the new government directly and indirectly controls the electronic media because the TV is the most followed media organ by the society. Georgia has only one national broadcasting TV channel that reaches the regions. And to control the society, government controls the TV channels, according to the responders.

As it is mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the responders defines the democracy of Georgia as a manipulated democracy because of the governmental control on media. There are also several private TV channels that are broadcasting only in Tbilisi, and responders think that they are not also independent because they are pro-oppositional. Another problematic issue about

media occurred with the 2007 events as it is mentioned in the Chapter 4 that the government shut down two private TV channels and the owner of Imedi TV fled to London and died in there. Besides the events that occurred in 2007, the problem continued afterwards. The ownership of Imedi TV transferred to an offshore shareholder. The Georgian NGOs work on this issue with international organizations because the ownership rights are protected by the law of Georgia and the owners can hide their identities with the protection of law. The NGOs are also working on the social media to supply information to the society which is not bias. However, the internet access is very limited among society and TV channels are still the most followed media organs.

In order to sum up, Georgia is a very fertile prototype country for analyzing various subjects such as democratization, democracy promotion, political transformation and civil society formation. Yet, the scholarly works on Georgia and the role of civil society formation on democratization process are very limited. Georgia can be considered as a partial democratic country that it supplies the general norms and values of democracy to its citizens. However, contrary to expectations Georgia relatively failed to consolidate democracy after the Rose Revolution. A major reason for the failure is the decline of effectiveness of civil society actors on limiting the government power. Besides the problems that occurred during the democratic consolidation process in Georgia, one must also consider that the Georgia has the most vibrant and effective civil society formation not only in Caucasus but also in the post-Soviet space and according to the responders Georgia is a promising country for a more

functioning civil society development, yet it is not likely to happen in a short period of time.

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