

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION IN GEORGIA AND ARMENIA:
EXPLAINING SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF “COLOR REVOLUTION” FROM A
COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

A MASTER’S ESSAY SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
FOR PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

BY

AMALYA SIMONYAN

YEREVAN, ARMENIA

SEPTEMBER 2011

SIGNATURE PAGE

DR KHATCHIK DER GHOUKASSIAN

Faculty Advisor

Date

DR DOUGLAS SHUMAVON

Dean

Date

American University of Armenia

September 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my utmost gratitude to Dr. Khatchik DerGhoukassian whose encouragement, guidance and support from the initial to the final stage helped me in all the time of research and writing of this policy paper.

I am also sincerely grateful to the Dean of the Graduate School of Political Science and International Affairs Dr. Douglas Shumavon who generously contributed to the development of all the theoretical and practical knowledge and skills that enabled me to write this policy paper.

Finally, I would like to heartily acknowledge the entire faculty of the Department of Political Science and International Affairs for their great contribution to the development of future Masters in the field of Political Science and International Affairs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<u>Introduction.....</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Literature Review and Methodology</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Presidential Succession in Georgia</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Key Causing Factors of Rose Revolution.....</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Consequences of Rose Revolution in Georgia</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>Presidential Succession in Armenia</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>The Main Causes of the Failure of Revolution in Armenia.....</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>Comparison of Georgian and Armenian Cases.....</u>	<u>49</u>
<u>Conclusion.....</u>	<u>52</u>

Abstract

This master's essay compares the peaceful and conflictive aspects of presidential elections in Armenia and Georgia. Two post-Soviet successor states – Armenia and Georgia, are taken as subject cases for comparing regime developments over time. These two countries are of interest for two main reasons. First, they have the same geopolitical location. Second, they have shared common history by being a comprising state in USSR and gaining independence in 1991.

The research aims to come up with key similarities and differences which resulted in different outcomes in Georgia (Color Revolution, 2003) and Armenia (Bloody Confrontation, 2008)

Introduction

Massive protests in Serbia (2000), Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004-2005) and Kyrgyzstan (2005) provoked the fall of post-Communist regimes accused of authoritarianism, corruption and perpetuation in power, whereas they have failed in Armenia (2004 and 2008) and Belarus (2006). This has led to the development of an extensive body of scholarship on what factors and circumstances are most influential in determining why post-communist regimes collapse or survive (Hess, S. 2009).

In this master thesis two post-Soviet successor states – Armenia and Georgia, are taken as subject cases for comparing regime developments over time. These two countries are of interest for two main reasons. First, they have the same geopolitical location. Second, they have shared common history by being a comprising state in USSR and gaining independence in 1991.

Since independence Armenia and Georgia have run 5 presidential elections, most of which were accompanied with post-electoral gatherings and protests. The first presidential elections in Georgia were held on 26 May 1991. The result was a victory for Zviad Gamsakhurdia with 87.6% of the vote. In August 1991, following a national referendum on independence, the Georgian government of nationalist President Z. Gamsakhurdia secured a parliamentary declaration affirming Georgia's secession from the Soviet Union (Giragosian, R. 2004). Gamsakhurdia served as a president for about seven months, before being removed from power. He was the only Georgian President to have died while still formally in office. The second president to come into office was Eduard Shevarnadze who ruled the country until 2003, when his government claimed it had won a parliamentary election, sparking mass street protests headed by Mikhail Saakashvili. For three weeks, the demonstrations grew bigger and bigger as thousands of people, fed up with the corruption, poverty and political stagnation of

Shevardnadze's regime demanded his resignation. Then on November 23, leading the crowd and holding a long-stemmed rose in his hand, Saakashvili burst into the parliament. Shevardnadze, surrounded by his bodyguards fled the building, and the power. The popular protest that ousted Shevardnadze became known as the Rose Revolution (Antelava, N. 2004). Georgia's revolution stood as a vivid example of peaceful democratic change without bloodshed or violence.

The first presidential elections in Armenia since independence were held for the first time on 17 October 1991. The result was a victory for Levon Ter-Petrossian with 83% of the vote. The first presidential elections were logical continuation of national referendum on independence with 94 percent voting to secede from the Soviet Union (Giragosian, R. 2004). On September 22, 1996 Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrossian was reelected to a second term as president, although the election was marred by allegations of electoral irregularities. His popularity waned further as the opposition started blaming him for the economic quagmire that Armenia's post-Soviet economy was in. L. Ter-Petrossian was forced to resign by members of his own administration who disagreed with his acceptance of the September 1997 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) proposal on the resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. He was succeeded by Prime Minister Robert Kocharian in a special election in late March, 1998 (Giragosian, R. 2004). Robert Kocharyan became the second president of Armenia, serving for two terms 1998-2003 and 2003-2008. On 19 February 2008 the incumbent president Kocharyan, who was ineligible for a third consecutive term, backed the candidacy of Prime Minister of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan. Following the election result, protests were organized by supporters of unsuccessful candidate Levon Ter-Petrossian. Thus, the most “outstanding” (in a negative sense) presidential elections are considered to have passed in 2008. Because of disputed elections, continuous protests were immediately established with daily rallies and an overnight encampment on a city center square. As a result, police and protestors

clashed in Armenia's capital Yerevan on March 1, 2008, by causing death to at least ten people's—eight protestors and two police officers— injuries to more than 130 people were and arrests to 100 protestors (Gogia, G. Bouckaert, P. et. al, 2009).

Why did Rose Revolution succeed in Georgia? What were internal and external factors affecting revolution in Georgia? Why did the attempt of a similar revolution in Armenia fail? What were the causes of failure? All these questions have to be discussed, elaborated and answered in this master thesis.

The analysis is divided into three parts. In the first part we talk about Georgian case only. We begin by presenting a short overview of all presidential elections in Georgia since independence by highlighting peaceful and conflicting aspects of presidential changes. Then we discuss in more details 2004 presidential elections as a consequence of Rose Revolution. Afterwards, the internal and external factors of Rose Revolution are depicted and analyzed. The second part of thesis is devoted to the description of Armenian case - overview of all presidential elections, events of 2008 presidential elections, its causes and results. The third part includes comparison of Georgian and Armenian cases, analyzes of factors leading to success and failure, as well as recommendations for future studies on colored revolutions

Literature Review

Armenia along with Georgia were annexed by Russia and were incorporated into the Soviet Union as part of the Transcaucasian SFSR (TSFSR) on 4 March 1922. For about seventy years under Soviet rule Armenian SSR and Georgian SSR enjoyed relative stability. On 23 August 1990, Armenia declared independence, becoming the first non-Baltic republic to secede from the Soviet Union. When, in 1991, the Soviet Union was dissolved, Armenia's independence

was officially recognized. Georgia declared independence on April 9, 1991, under Zviad Gamsakhurdia. However, this was again unrecognized by the Soviet government and Georgia remained part of the USSR until its collapse in December 1991.

There is no distinctive ideology of post-communism as there is for with communism; there are only assumptions and premises and it is partly because post-communism is still crystallizing. Post-communism can be defined as something that follows a communism system. “It is the product of the anti-communist, double-rejective revolutions of 1989-91.” (Holmes 1997, p.14) After the collapse of communism people tended to assume what was needed was the opposite of what communism had involved; monolithic societies were changed into pluralistic ones, state-owned economy was reoriented towards the marketized one, if communist power meant an all-powerful state then in post-communism the state capacity was weakened.

Thus “post-communism is a multi-faceted, heterogeneous phenomenon shot through with paradoxes while at the same time revealing the underlying paradigmatic shifts, not only in theory but also in reality.” (Sakwa 1999, p. 7)

There are number of factors that are unique to post-communist states. They are: assertion of independence and the rise of nationalism, absence of a culture of compromise, high expectation of leaders, mistrust of political institutions, a widespread sense of insecurity, an ideological vacuum- there is no widely accepted ideology and set of ground rules in most post-communist societies, moral confusion- people were unable to relate closely to religion which was one of the factors of the increasing crime rate, in addition to the moral and ideological vacuum, in most post-communist states there is also no consensus on such issues as political arrangement or pace of economic change, and what is more important, there is an uncertainty in many parts of the post-communist world about frontiers (Holmes,1997).

Transition from a one-party system to a pluralistic democracy meant first and foremost holding elections. Democratic elections have a number of requirements. First, there should be universal suffrage. That is all free citizens should have the right to vote. Each citizen should have the right for one vote. Balloting should be secret. Elections should be free, equal, fair and direct. Most of the post-communist states chose direct presidential elections, while in some post-communist states president was elected by parliament. Out of 29 Eastern European countries belonging to Communist Bloc, in 22 countries (Bulgaria, Slovenia, Slovakia) presidents were elected directly by people. The reason for indirect elections was that the president would have more power if he was popularly elected. However, the actual voting systems differ across post-communist world. In early post-communism it would be unrealistic to expect all parties to understand the basic principles of democracy and free and fair elections. It is also worth to mention that the referendum was used more frequently in the post-communist world. Citizens have taken part in the discussions of new constitutions, economic and other policies (Holmes, 1997).

According to Taras Kuzio (2008) the democratic breakthroughs and revolutions of 1998-2004 in some post-communist countries such as Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine are considered to be a second stage of their transformation as post-communist states. All five countries had experienced different national revolutions that had prevented the simultaneous pursuit of nation-state building and democracy immediately after the collapse of communism.

Ten factors have been important to the success of democratic breakthroughs and revolutions in post-communist states. These include a competitive (i.e. semi) authoritarian state facilitating space for the democratic opposition, 'return to Europe' civic nationalism that assists in civil society's mobilization, a preceding political crisis that weakened the regime's legitimacy, a pro-democratic capitol city, unpopular ruling elites, a charismatic candidate, a united

opposition, mobilized youth, regionalism and foreign intervention (Russia or the EU). The latter two can be both hindrances and supportive factors, depending on the country in question and the foreign actor. This discussion of ten factors builds on McFaul who listed seven factors that include a semi-authoritarian regime, an unpopular leader and regime, a united opposition, a perception of a falsified election, some degree of independent media, ability of the opposition to mobilize and divisions in the security forces (Kuzio 2008).

The epochal social changes that occurred in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1980s and 1990s opened a path for millions of Europeans to live a dignified life in liberty and democracy after decades under communism. The main and primary agenda of all newly formed democratic governments were free elections, human rights, civic liberties, the rule of law, as well as economic transformation and an independent foreign policy (Havel 2007).

However, if the formal establishment of democracy occurred mainly within days, weeks or, at most, months, real democracy did not emerge easily. It is, indeed, an ongoing process, one that has not been completed even now. New generations, without the hard experience of life under totalitarianism, are only now emerging into adulthood. These new generations are only gradually moving into positions in the decision making process in their countries (Havel 2007).

The sequence of events that has swept through Central and Eastern Europe in recent years is outstanding. What might have initially seemed to be individual incidents of democratic re-adjustment in Slovakia and Croatia stretched out into a number of impressive political transformations in countries as diverse as Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine. A pattern emerged that has been variously labeled “color revolutions”, “transitions from post communism” or “electoral breakthroughs”. Some observers have gone further and have framed these developments as a “fourth wave of democracy” (McFaul 2002). And, while observers may differ in the terminology they employ, the details of their analyses and in their overall assessments of the events, they

agree on a number of characteristics typical for these recent democratic changes and the situations in the countries where they took place (Forbrig and Demeš 2007).

First and foremost, all these countries underwent initial democratic reform in the early 1990s. Once communism had collapsed, they founded the basic institutions of democracy and held competitive elections. Constitutions were drafted, preserving fundamental civil and political liberties, and first moves were made towards the development of the rule of law and an independent judiciary. With the emergence of Political parties, social pluralism and differing views were provided. Market principles were introduced and privatization started to transform the economy. Thus, embarking on multiple political, economic and social transitions, hopes were high that Georgia and Armenia, along with their other neighbors in Central and Eastern Europe, would quickly come to resemble western liberal democracies and integrate with European and international structures (Forbrig and Demeš 2007).

These expectations were soon frustrated, however. War broke out between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Georgia went into civil war as a result of which Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia broke away. Over time, executive pressure was steadily broadened to affect any sphere that could ensure democratic checks and balances, such as political opponents, parties and institutions, independent media and civil society organizations (Forbrig and Demeš 2007).

Within a few years, democracy had become a veil for political regimes that were progressively more authoritarian in nature. Elections were systematically held in the Georgia and Armenia in order to draw legitimacy from within and international acceptance from without, and even regularly confirmed the support base within society for the “strong leadership” approach (Forbrig and Demeš 2007).

According to Silitski, V. (2007) the sequence of democratic breakthroughs in post communist Eurasia, referred to as color revolutions, has radically restructured the political

landscape in the region and has raised expectations that a contagious spread of democratic impulses will give rise to further democratic growth. Unlike the revolutions of 1989 that brought liberal democracy to the Western rim of the former communist world, this new wave of democratic transitions has spread to far more culturally and geographically diverse polities from, Slovakia in Central Europe to Croatia and Serbia in the Balkans, from Georgia in the Caucasus to Ukraine in the Western CIS and finally to Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia.

The role of elections was essential in stimulating all these democratic breakthroughs: from Slovakia to Georgia, people did not merely rise up against bad kings; they made and then defended a conscious choice for the sake of democracy. The mixture of self organization, readiness for self-sacrifice and restraint shown by citizens, especially in the context of the more dramatic events that took place in Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine, was admirable. And, even in Kyrgyzstan, where the revolution was chaotic and violent, the situation settled down much faster than critics anticipated (Silitski 2007).

The victory of the political oppositions in securing electoral change, with the support of the nationwide civic movements re-opened avenues for democratic development in some countries. Most post-Soviet states unaffected by the wave of electoral revolutions marked a regression on both political rights and civil liberties in 2005. This deterioration is in many respects a direct consequence of the anxiety of surviving autocrats about the possibility of democratic contagion spreading to their countries and ousting them from power (Silitski 2007).

The methodology of this paper is based on a comparative analysis method. The design of comparative research is simple. The objects are cases which are similar in some respects (otherwise, it would not be meaningful to compare them) but they differ in some respects. These differences become the focus of examination. The goal is to find out why the cases are different:

to reveal the general underlying structure which generates or allows such a variation (Routio 2008).

The methodology relies mainly on secondary data. The sources of secondary data include books, articles, policy papers, official websites, reports, laws etc.

The purpose of the research is mainly descriptive as it plans to reveal the main similarities and differences of presidential elections in Armenia and Georgia by highlighting their peaceful and conflictive aspects.

Coming chapters depict in more details presidential succession in Georgia and Armenia with all their peaceful and conflictive aspects, present the main factors of success and failure of revolution attempts and based on information described, the final chapter compares similarities and differences of Armenian and Georgian cases.

Presidential Succession in Georgia

Zviad Gamsakhurdia is considered to be first democratically elected President of the Republic of Georgia in the post-Soviet era. He was a dissident, scientist and writer, as well as the only Georgian president who died while being formally in office. Gamsakhurdia played a key role in organizing mass pro-independence protests in Georgia between 1987-1990. In 1988, he was one of the co-founders of the Society of Saint Ilia the Righteous (SSIR), a combination of a religious society and a political party which later served as a basis for his own political movement. The following year, the severe suppression by Soviet forces of a large peaceful demonstration held in Tbilisi on April 4–9, turned to be a crucial event in discrediting the continuity of Soviet rule in the country. Gamsakhurdia's SSIR party and the Georgian Helsinki Union together with other opposition groups formed a reformist coalition called Round Table —

Free Georgia. The coalition won a persuasive victory, with 64% of the vote. On November 14, 1990, Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected by an overwhelming majority as Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia (Iberia, 2010).

Afterwards, Georgia held a referendum on restoring its pre-Soviet independence on March 31, 1991 in which 90.08% of those who voted declared in its favor. The Georgian parliament passed a declaration of independence on April 9, 1991 restoring the 1918–1921 Georgian state. Though a number of foreign powers granted early recognition, it was not recognized by the Soviet Union. Gamsakhurdia was elected President on May 26 with 86.5% per cent of the vote on a turnout of over 83% (Urushadze 2007).

However, from the very beginning Gamsakhurdia faced criticism for his dictatorial behavior, already bothering before his election. Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua and two other senior ministers resigned on August 19 in protest against Gamsakhurdia's policies. The three ministers joined the opposition, accusing him of being a demagogue and totalitarian and complaining about the slow pace of economic reform. In an emotional television broadcast, Gamsakhurdia claimed that his enemies were engaging in sabotage and betrayal within the country and asked his people to keep away from any illegal gathering or conspiracy (Urushadze 2007).

Gamsakhurdia closed an opposition newspaper - *Molodiozh Gruzii*, on the grounds that it had published open calls for a national uprising. Giorgi Chanturia, who was the head of National Democratic Party – one of the most active opposition groups at that time one, was arrested and accused of seeking help from Moscow to overthrow the legal government. It was also reported that Channel 2, a television station, was closed down after employees' participation in rallies against the government (Johnson 1998).

The political dispute turned violent on September 2, when an anti-government demonstration in Tbilisi was dispersed by police. The most threatening development was the breaking of the Georgian National Guard into pro- and anti-government factions, with the latter setting up an armed camp outside the capital. Clashes between the two sides occurred throughout Tbilisi during October and November with occasional fatalities resulting from gunfights (Urushadze 2007).

On December 22, 1991, armed opposition supporters launched a violent coup d'état and attacked a number of official buildings including the Georgian parliament building, where Gamsakhurdia himself was sheltering. Heavy fighting continued in Tbilisi until January 6, 1992, causing death to at least 113 people. On January 6, Gamsakhurdia and members of his government escaped through opposition lines and made their way to Azerbaijan where they were denied asylum. Armenia finally hosted Gamsakhurdia for a short period and rejected Georgian demand to extradite him back to Georgia. In order not to complicate tense relations with Georgia, Armenian authorities allowed Gamsakhurdia to move to the breakaway Russian republic of Chechnya (Post-Communist Georgia 2005)

A Military Council made up of Gamsakhurdia opponents took over the government on an interim basis. One of its first actions was to formally depose him as President. It reconstituted itself as a State Council and appointed Eduard Shevardnadze as chairman in March 1992. The change in power was effected as de facto without any formal referendum or elections until the formal restoration of the presidency in November 1995 (Urushadze 2007).

After his overthrow, Gamsakhurdia continued to present himself as the legitimate president of Georgia and he was still recognized as such by some governments and international organizations. Gamsakhurdia himself refused to accept his dismissal stating that he had been elected to the post with an overwhelming majority of the popular vote in contrast to the

undemocratically appointed Shevardnadze. In November–December 1992, he continued to receive invitations from was invited to Finland and Austria, where he held press conferences and meetings with parliamentarians and government officials (Georgia-Government and Politics 1996).

Clashes between pro- and anti-Gamsakhurdia forces continued throughout 1992 and 1993 with Gamsakhurdia supporters taking several government officials captive and government forces retaliating with reprisal raids. Moreover, one of the most serious incidents occurred in Tbilisi on June 24, 1992, when armed Gamsakhurdia supporters seized the state television center and broadcast a radio message declaring that the legitimate government has been reinstated. However, they were driven out within a few hours by the National Guard. Though they intended to prompt a mass uprising against the Shevardnadze government, this did not manage to materialize (Urushadze 2007).

Shevardnadze's government, in its turn, imposed a harshly repressive regime throughout Georgia to suppress "Zviadism", by carrying out widespread arrests and harassment of Gamsakhurdia supporters. Although Georgia's poor human rights record was strongly criticized by the international community, Shevardnadze's personal reputation appears to have convinced them to swallow their doubts and grant the country formal recognition (Matveeva 2002).

Government troops moved into Abkhazia in September 1992 in an effort to root out Gamsakhurdia's supporters among the Georgian population of the region, but well-publicized human rights abuses succeeded only in worsening already poor ethnic relations. Gamsakhurdia soon took up the apparent opportunity to bring down Shevardnadze. He returned to Georgia on September 24, 1993 and announced that he would continue his struggle against an illegal military rule and concentrated on building an anti-Shevardnadze coalition. He also built up a

substantial military force that was able to operate relatively freely in the face of the weak state security forces (The History of Georgia 2004).

After initially demanding immediate elections, Gamsakhurdia took chance of the Georgian army's route to seize large quantities of weapons abandoned by the retreating government forces. A civil war overwhelmed western Georgia in October 1993 as Gamsakhurdia's forces succeeded in seizing several crucial towns and transport hubs. However, Gamsakhurdia's capture of the economically vital Georgian Black Sea port of Poti threatened the interests of Russia, Armenia, which was totally landlocked and dependent on Georgia's ports, and Azerbaijan. In the end, all three countries expressed their support for Shevardnadze's government. While the support from Armenia and Azerbaijan was purely political, Russia quickly mobilized troops to aid the Georgian government by sending around 2,000 Russian troops to protect Georgian railroads and provide logistical support and weapons to the poorly armed government forces. The uprising western Georgia was ended by Russian intervention on Shevardnadze's side and the death of ex-President Gamsakhurdia on 31 December 1993 (Urushadze 2007).

Shevardnadze acted as a chairman of the Georgian state council till March 1992. When the Presidency was restored in November 1995, he was elected with 70% of the vote. He secured a second term in April 2000 in an election that was marred by widespread claims of vote-rigging. Three assassination attempts were mounted against Shevardnadze while he was a chairman of the Georgian state council and president. He escaped an assassination attempt in Abkhazia in 1992, when Russian military carried out an attack on Shevardnadze's life. Then in August 1995 and February 1998 assassination attempts were made for which his government blamed on remnants of Gamsakhurdia's party. The 1995 attack had seen his motorcade attacked with anti-tank rockets and small arms fire in Tbilisi under cover of night. The most serious one occurred in

February 1998, which left two bodyguards dead. In October 1998, supporters of Gamasakurdia again tried to remove him from power. In April 1999, Shevardnadze stated publicly that he knew about new plans to assassinate him. While the supporters of the late Gamasakurdia have been implicated in the assassination attempts, there have been various speculations about who is really behind the attacks (Georgia 1998).

Georgia held a parliamentary election on 2 November, 2003 which was denounced as unfair by international election observers, as well as by the U.N. and the U.S. government. The outcome sparked anger among many Georgians, as the regime had accumulated years of popular discontent against it, aimed at corruption and the state's inability to deliver basic social services, such as steady supplies of electricity, to the population. All these led to mass demonstrations in the capital Tbilisi and elsewhere. Protesters finally broke into Parliament on 21 November as the first session of the new Parliament was beginning, forcing President Shevardnadze to escape with his bodyguards. Furthermore, Shevardnadze declared a state of emergency and insisted that would not resign (Welt 2005).

Despite growing tension and clashes of interests, both sides publicly stated their wish and readiness to avoid any violence - a particular concern given Georgia's fragile post-Soviet history. The speaker of the Georgian parliament - Nino Burjanadze stated that she would act as president as long as the situation was resolved. The leader of the opposition Mikhail Saakashvili in his turn announced that he would guarantee Shevardnadze's safety (Political Turmoil Grips Georgia, 2003).

On November 9 Shevardnadze met with the opposition leaders Mikheil Saakashvili and Zurab Zhvania to discuss the current situation. Their brief talks produced no tangible results, and the president commented pointedly that he did not intend to resign at the demand of individual politicians and a few dozen young people waving flags. Within just a few days, national petitions

contained 1 million signatures demanding Shevardnadze's resignation and calling for the election results to be overturned. On November 23 demonstrators began entering parliament from the rear in the middle of Shevardnadze's speech. His guards promptly removed him from the podium and evacuated him. After escaping, Shevardnadze announced a state of emergency in Georgia and ordered the use of force to stop the protests. But the loyalty of the troops went increasingly to Nino Burjanadze, who had declared herself acting president. The order for violent repression was never carried out. Bereft of all other options, Eduard Shevardnadze resigned the evening of November 23 (Kandelaki 2006).

Key Causing Factors of Rose Revolution

Regime change in Georgia was seen as an inevitable conclusion to the struggle against injustice and inequality. The regime had accumulated years of popular discontent against it, aimed at corruption and the state's inability to deliver basic social services, such as steady supplies of electricity, to the population. By 2003, however, the regime was also unpopular, fragmented, and faced opponents that could offer assurances to the population that stable political change was possible.

There are a number of key elements that led to the Rose Revolution. These include

1. The Regime: Unpopular and Tolerant
2. The Electoral Process: Transparent Fraud
3. Opposition Leaders: Credible, (Eventually) United, and Decisive
4. External Pressures
5. Successful International Experience
6. The Passivity of Security Forces

Now let's look in more details each of these factors.

1. The Regime: Unpopular and Tolerant

Unpopular

Many regimes that hope to stay in power by fixing elections are unpopular. The fact that Georgia's ruling party, the Citizen's Union of Georgia (CUG), had the support of less than 15 percent of the population, according to public opinion polls conducted in the weeks before the November 2003 parliamentary elections by itself did not make for a successful opposition movement. This unpopularity, however, combined with an unusual tolerance for the motions of democracy and a visible lack of regime strength, assured that there was at least *a chance* opposition parties would be able to declare victory on election day (Welt 2005).

Tolerant of the Democratic Process

In Georgia, the regime was firmly committed to the basic structure of democracy—it allowed a number of political parties to function freely (together with a diverse media), campaign extensively, and openly criticize the government.

In a message broadcast on state television four days before elections, Shevardnadze stated that the possibility of opposition forces winning the majority of seats in parliament could not be ruled out, if the voters' conscience told them that the majority of seats should go to opposition forces, then he would be ready to cooperate with everyone who was guided by Georgia's interests. Moreover, he added that every person had a free choice and every citizen should vote as their conscience dictated (Welt 2005).

This was not the sort of message the president ought to have delivered if his intention (or that of others in his ruling circle) was to thwart the final vote.

2. The Electoral Process: Transparent Fraud

The ruling party tended to look as tolerant towards democratic process as possible by providing an opportunity to opposition parties to make up more than one-fourth of the seats

(four of fifteen) on election committees at all levels: central, district, and precinct (Welt C, 2005).

The opposition's ability to demonstrate election fraud was reinforced by the regime's acceptance of NGO-organized parallel vote tabulation (PVT) for parliamentary elections. While there may be several problems associated with relying on exit polls to demonstrate fraud, a properly administered PVT, which relies on a parallel count of the official vote in a statistically significant number of precincts, increases the certainty that late-stage fraud will be detected. It provided composite hard data with which to compare the official results later aggregated at the district and, ultimately, central levels. According to the PVT, the results of which were released the day after the election, Mikheil Saakashvili's National Movement received 27 percent of votes, making it the leading party to fill the 150 (out of 235) parliamentary seats reserved for party lists. With the PVT, they were able to make a convincing case that it was really their parties that had won (Welt 2005).

Bargaining over Fraud

The regime itself, through an impressive display of weakness, further contributed to the transparency of fraud in the days after the election. Rather than close ranks and insist on victory, the regime and its allies were divided regarding how to deal with opposition protests. Later, reports circulated that a number of top officials were in favor of promoting a clean election entirely (Welt 2005).

With such admissions of fraud by the regime, it was up to the people to decide what to do: remain indifferent to casual hypocrisy and manipulation, or take to the streets in support of opposition figures that refused to accept the status quo.

3. Opposition Leaders: Credible, Eventually United and decisive

A key element for channeling popular indignation into action is to persuade followers that *political change is possible*. The opposition's ability to persuade followers of this stemmed in part from the actions of the regime, which was doing a thorough job demonstrating weakness on its own (Welt 2005).

Credibility

At the same time, opposition leaders projected their own strength. The opposition leadership did not consist of untested politicians, known for constant defeat in electoral politics rather than their professional experience. Saakashvili, Zhvania, and Burjanadze were experienced administrators, who had already established a track record of governing the country.

Eventual Unity

The unity of the National Movement and Democrats is another factor often credited with bringing about their mobilizing success. This argument, however, must be carefully assessed. These two parties were not united coming into the election. They were, in fact, rivals for many of the same votes. Already two days after the election, however, the National Movement and the Democrats were openly pledging unity to resist fraudulent electoral results. Publicly, however—and this is what matters for the purposes of explaining mass support—they presented a unified front. The Democrats did not have to support the National Movement; they could have accepted their seats in the new parliament just as the New Rights Party and the Labor Party were prepared to do. If they had not joined the National Movement, it is hard to imagine how that party—which even according to the PVT received only 26.6 percent of the vote (compared to a cumulative 35.4 percent for the other three opposition parties)—could have wrested away enough supporters from the “accommodationist” opposition to overturn the results (Welt 2005).

Media Support

Another important factor is that the opposition had a key ally in the mass media—the independent television channel Rustavi 2. An open critic of the regime for years, Rustavi-2 was the focus of a scandal in the fall of 2001, when tax police raided its offices in what was interpreted as an act of intimidation to deter the station from airing investigative reports on state corruption. During the November 2003 election crisis, the channel embraced an activist platform, openly siding with the opposition and encouraging public involvement in protests. Moreover, other media channels, including the independent Imedi and Mze, also provided regular coverage of the demonstrations, ensuring that images of the protests were transmitted to as broad an audience as possible. Even state television provided footage of the demonstrations (Welt 2005).

4. External Pressure

Democracy Promotion: Assistance and Diplomacy

Democracy promoters, official and otherwise, pursued a number of policies that improved the chances a democratic election would occur and which, in the end, contributed to regime change. High-level U.S. diplomacy in support of a clean election (including a pre-election visit of former Secretary of State James Baker, who urged the regime to accept the PVT and reform of electoral commissions); USAID funding for voter list reform, PVT training and implementation, and the cultivation of local election monitoring NGOs; and Soros Foundation-funded training for the youth organization *Kmara* are all credibly cited as factors that increased pressure on the government to hold a reasonably democratic election, while increasing the likelihood that fraud would be detected (Welt 2005).

International Pressures

In addition, prior to elections, the regime found itself facing a number of international pressures that may have increased perceptions among Georgian citizens that the regime was exceedingly fragile, devoid of foreign (in particular, U.S.) support.

A month before elections, the global NGO Transparency International ranked Georgia as one of the three most corrupt countries in the CIS, listing only five out of 133 countries in a worse position internationally (Global Corruption Report, 2008). Unable to get the Georgians to implement their recommendations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) declared it was suspending assistance to Georgia. The United States also announced a reduction in foreign aid.

5. Successful International Pressure

Georgian opposition modeled its campaign on the previous electoral revolutions in the region. Indeed, in the view of most participants and local analysts, the key international contributions were, first, the precedent set by successful electoral revolutions in Serbia and Slovakia, and, second, the strategic insights offered by “graduates” of these earlier electoral revolutions. Due to the Open Society Foundation, there was close collaboration between Georgians and graduates of the Serbian and Slovak experiences. Moreover, the American democracy promotion community also played a role, as they had in Slovakia and Serbia. What was critical was their long term investment in Georgian civil society (as in Bulgaria, Romania and especially Slovakia), the pressures they placed on Shevardnadze prior to the election to improve the quality of the elections, and their contributions to campaign strategies and opposition development (Bunce and Wolchik 2006).

6. The Passivity of Security Forces

This leaves the final component of the explanation: the behavior of the security forces. There are generally two explanations for the willingness of the security forces to allow a regime change to occur. Either the political leadership is not powerful enough to command its loyalty (in which case the leadership may either futilely test its obedience or resign), or the leadership itself refuses to use violence.

A Defection of Security Forces, or...

In Georgia's case, evidence exists for both points of view. By the time the moment of decision neared, the government had lost numerous noted supporters from within its ranks. Such defections may have increased the likelihood that security forces would not defend the remnants of the regime and instead remain on the sidelines. US officials also reportedly used their own channels of communication to encourage security forces to abstain from using force. In particular, the loyalty of the Ministries of State Security and Defense, led by Valeri Khaburdzania and Davit Tevzadze, in the event of an order to suppress opposition demonstrations, was up for question. Since 2001, both ministries had established close connections to the United States.

...the Absence of a "Strongman"?

At the same time, other evidence suggests that Shevardnadze did command the loyalty of at least some segment of the security forces until the end. The day before Shevardnadze resigned, the Caucasus Press news agency reported that Minister of Internal Security Koba Narchemashvili said that the Internal Troops and police were ready to act on the president's orders and would undertake all necessary measures envisaged by a state of emergency. Shevardnadze himself insisted it was his choice alone not to order the internal troops to suppress the opposition's rush on parliament (Welt C, 2005).

Consequences of Rose Revolution in Georgia

The Rose Revolution unwrapped a new chapter in the history of Georgia. The post-revolution government achieved a series of successes in such areas as increasing state budget revenues, corruption-fighting, and setting up valuable cooperative relationships with various international financial institutions. However, together with achievements it made some mistakes,

too, in building a democratic state in general and in its economic policy in particular. Its relationship with Russia and its excessive exposure to Russian investments is particularly troubling (Papava V, 2006).

The Georgian people's Rose Revolution of November 2003 strove to achieve a democratic society, improve human rights and living conditions, reduce corruption, and enhance the national economy. Accordingly, the Revolution and its heroes, led by Mikhail Saakashvili, received the support of the Bush administration, the EU, and its member states. Three years later, the euphoria that followed the Revolution, both within and outside the country, has steadily been replaced by more realistic assessments of the consequences of the post-revolution policies. The unconditional support for all endeavors of the post revolutionary government on the part of the Western nations and, most of all, of the U.S. government, is fostering the development of anti-Western and anti-American tendencies among Georgians. Nevertheless, even those analysts who have been in support of the revolutionary leaders from the beginning cannot ignore some recent antidemocratic developments in Georgia, such as the executive domination on the judiciary (Papava 2006).

As part of its efforts against corruption, the government abolished the traffic police that had existed since Soviet times and created a Western-style police patrol. As a consequence, bribery across the country's roads and highways was ended, opening up new chances for the country's advancement as an important international transport corridor. New government also successfully struggled and abolished corruption in the field of education. The results of the reformed system of exams for admission to the country's universities, which had been infamous for their corruption since Soviet times, were quite impressive. By taking the exams out of the control of university administrators and holding them on a national level, the government overcame the deep-rooted corruption in the admissions system (Papava 2006).

State budget revenues were tripled as a result of such anticorruption measures. Apparently this money was used to pay back to the state money and properties that had been stolen from it. The new government announced that during its first year some \$200 million had been returned to the national budget. Almost immediately after coming to power, the Saakashvili government started implementing an ambitious plan of large-scale privatization. The country's new image, improved by the Rose Revolution, enabled it to attract from the outset high-value privatization deals that exceeded by tens and sometimes hundreds of times the amounts raised for the whole period before the revolution (Papava 2006).

Presidential Succession in Armenia

Since achieving independence, Armenia has held five presidential elections: in 1991, 1996, 1998, 2003 and 2008. The President of the Republic is elected directly by citizens of the Republic for a five-year term of office. During the elections of the president of the Republic the entire territory of the Republic of Armenia is considered as a single majoritarian constituency. Under Armenia's Constitution, a presidential candidate must win over 50 per cent of the votes cast for all candidates to be elected in the first round by an absolute majoritarian system, otherwise the two leading candidates take part in a second round two weeks later, in which the winner is decided by simple majority. The incumbent President will not be able to run again as the Constitution limits eligibility to two consecutive terms. The nomination of presidential candidates also requires these persons to have both Armenian citizenship and permanent residence in Armenia for the last ten years (Constitution of the RA, Chapter 3).

The first presidential elections in Armenia since independence were held on October 17, 1991. The result was a victory of Levon Ter-Petrossian, who won 83% of the vote with 70 %

turnout. Before running for the presidency, Levon Ter-Petrosyan was the leader of the Armenian National Movement (ANM), which grew out of the Karabakh Committee to push for Armenia's independence. Following Armenia's Declaration of Independence, the presidential elections were held one year later to the Declaration, during which Ter-Petrosyan being supported by the ANM, won the vote against six other candidates, including dissident Paruir Hairikian (National Self-Determination Union) and Sos Sarkisyan (Armenian Revolutionary Federation). Ter-Petrosyan was inaugurated on 11 November 1991, for a five-year term. His suspension of the activities of Armenian Revolutionary Federation party in December 1994 and a trial of its leaders raised concerns among some observers about possible impediments to democratization (Encyclopedia of the Nations).

Considering the fading popularity of President Levon Ter-Petrosian it could have been expected that a united opposition would have a fair chance to win 1996 presidential elections. Three years after the last battles in Nagorno-Karabakh were won, Armenia's population was tired of poverty and the Government experienced increasing difficulty in countering allegations that the economic difficulties were because of state corruption and incompetence (WRITENET, 1997).

Initially, all major opposition parties proposed their own presidential candidate. Only in September 1996 did Paruir Hairikian, Aram Sarkisian (Democratic Party), and Lenser Aghalovian (Artsakh-Hayastan movement) unite behind Vazgen Manukian (National-Democratic Union, NDU). Despite the opposition unification, Ter-Petrosyan succeeded in reelection as president on 22 September 1996, by garnering 51.75% of the vote, a far smaller majority than in 1991, barely avoiding runoff balloting (WRITENET, 1997).

However, discrepancy of an almost identical number were recorded in the official results both in terms of ballot papers issued to polling stations but subsequently unaccounted for, and

ballot papers recorded as issued but not recorded as being present in the ballot boxes (OSCE/ODIHR Final Report, 1996). On the basis of these and other irregularities international observers called into question the integrity of the overall election process. The opposition's own suspicions of electoral fraud brought protestors onto the streets of Yerevan: demonstrators marched on and broke into the National Assembly, where the Central Election Commission (CEC) was then housed, to demand a recount. In the process protestors beat up the parliamentary speaker and deputy speaker. In response, police beat demonstrators and later arrested at least 28 opposition leaders and supporters and CEC staffers (Karatnycky and Moty 1997).

In the wake of these events, police detained about 200 more individuals believed to have participated in the demonstration, President Ter-Petrosian banned public demonstrations and called in army troops to patrol Yerevan, and the prosecutor general announced his intention to bring criminal charges against Vazgen Manukyan and seven other opposition leaders, for attempting to violently overthrow the government. Police closed the offices of, among others, the National Democratic Union, Manukyan's party (Human Rights Watch, World Report, 1997).

These were not the first political party restrictions imposed by Ter-Petrosian's administration. At the end of 1994 Ter-Petrosian had suspended the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), a major opposition party, and ordered the closure of 12 media outlets allegedly associated with it, claiming that the ARF had become a cover for a secret organization allegedly responsible for terrorism, drug trafficking, and illegal arms trading. In January 1995 the Supreme Court upheld the ARF's suspension for a six-month period, citing, however, not threats to national security, but the presence of foreigners in the party's board. The government claimed that it was by mere coincidence that the six-month suspension was to lapse just after parliamentary elections (Armenia's first post-Soviet elections) on July 5, 1996. The government

allowed individual ARF members to run for parliament, but the party's absence paved the way for a resounding victory of Ter-Petrosian's ANM (Human Rights Watch, World Report, 1996).

In March 1997, trying to gain greater public support for his regime, Ter-Petrosyan appointed a widely popular war hero of the NK conflict, Robert Kocharian, to the post of prime minister of Armenia. Ter-Petrosyan and his supporters viewed Kocharian as having the necessary leadership abilities to help revive the slumping economy and to increase tax collection. In order to act in his new post, Kocharian resigned as president of NK (Encyclopedia of the Nations).

In September 1997 Ter-Petrosyan announced that he had accepted an OSCE peace plan for resolving the NK conflict that would require "compromises" from the Armenian side, such as NK Armenians' withdraw from most territories they had occupied outside of NK and discussion of NK's status. This announcement brought open criticism from Kocharian and other Armenian and NK officials. On February 1, 1998, Yerkrpah headed by the country's defense minister, called for Ter-Petrosyan to resign. Many members of Ter-Petrosyan's ANM legislative faction defected, causing the resignation of the parliamentary speaker. The culmination turned to be resignation of Ter-Petrosyan's on 3 February 1998. Though, according to the Constitution, legislative speaker should assume the duties of acting president pending an election, Prime Minister Kocharian took up these duties because of the resignation of the speaker. The forthcoming Coming elections, which were considered to be special, were scheduled for 16 March 1998 (Encyclopedia of the Nations).

The main contenders registered for the elections were Robert Kocharian, Vazgen Manukyan and Karen Demirchyan (head of the Armenian Communist Party from 1974 to 1988). Since none of the candidates won the required "50% plus one" of the 1.46 million votes cast (in a 64% turnout), a runoff election was held on 30 March. In the runoff, acting President and Prime

Minister Kocharian received 59.5% of 1.57 million votes cast (in a 68.5% turnout) (Encyclopedia of the Nations).

The OSCE concluded that though the improvements were noticed in some respects over the 1996 election, the elections did not meet OSCE standards to which Armenia has committed itself. Observers alleged ballot box stuffing, discrepancies in vote counting, and fraud perpetrated by local authorities that overstated the number of votes for Kocharian. Nevertheless, he was inaugurated on 9 April 1998 (OSCE/ODIHR Final Report, 1998).

The next presidential elections were held on 19 February 2003, with two main rival contestants against incumbent president - Stepan Demirchyan (People's Party of Armenia) and Artashes Geghamyan (National Unity). A runoff election was scheduled for 5 March, during which Kocharyan defeated Stepan Demirchyan by taking 67% of the vote (Encyclopedia of the Nations).

On 20 February, the CEC announced the preliminary results of the presidential election. The official tally showed that of 1,418,811 votes for the nine candidates, incumbent Robert Kocharyan received 707,155 votes (49.84%), just short of the required majority necessary to win in the first round, while his closest competitor, Stepan Demirchyan, received 400,846 (28.25%). Based on these results the CEC announced that a second round would be held on 5 March between Kocharyan and Demirchyan. The official results were announced five days later, showing that the incumbent's percentage fell slightly to 49.48%, while Demirchyan's total also fell slightly to 28.22% (OSCE/ODIHR, Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions, 2003).

Between the announcement of preliminary first round results and the official start of the second round campaign, the opposition who supported second-placed candidate Stepan Demirchyan held large unsanctioned rallies in Yerevan. Police on February 22 began detaining

opposition supporters for alleged hooliganism and/or participation in unsanctioned public meetings: At least 200 individuals were detained including many opposition staff, and many were sentenced to up to 15 days of administrative detention, a clear attempt to damage the opposition prior to the runoff election held on March 5 (Human Rights Watch, 2003).

Following publication of the preliminary second-round results, the opposition resumed protest gatherings in Yerevan and staged a picket outside the CEC building for several days up to the announcement of the final results (OSCE/ODIHR, Final Report, 2003).

However Kocharyn was sworn in for a second term in early April and the constitutional court upheld the election, while recommending that a referendum be held within a year to confirm the election result (Stern D, 2003).

On April 12, 2004 (almost a year to the day from the Constitutional Court ruling), Armenia's political opposition united in mass peaceful protests to force this "referendum of confidence" on President Kocharyan and to call for his resignation. The government dispersed the demonstrations using excessive force: repeating the cycle of repressive tactics from the 2003 election, the authorities arrested opposition leaders and supporters, violently dispersed demonstrators, raided political party headquarters, attacked journalists, and restricted travel to prevent people from participating in demonstrations. In response to international pressure, the government released some opposition leaders detained during the crackdown, and participated in discussions about cooperation with the opposition. However, the referendum recommended in the 2003 Constitutional Court ruling never happened (Human Rights Watch, 2004).

According to OSCE/ODIHR 2003 report, presidential election in the Republic of Armenia fell short of international standards for democratic elections. While the election involved a vigorous countrywide campaign, the overall process failed to provide equal conditions for the candidates. Voting, counting and tabulation showed serious irregularities,

including widespread ballot box stuffing. The second round was clouded by the administrative detentions of over 200 opposition supporters, in contravention of OSCE commitments. Over 80 people were sentenced to up to 15 days in jail, often in closed hearings and without the benefit of legal counsel. Public TV and the major State-funded newspaper were heavily biased in favor of the incumbent, failing to comply with their legal obligation to provide balanced reporting on candidates or with OSCE commitments on equal access to the media.

The report concluded that the failure of the 2003 presidential election to meet international standards lay not in technical or procedural lapses, but in a lack of sufficient political determination by the authorities to ensure a fair and honest process. Restoring confidence in the election process will require prompt and vigorous action by the authorities, including a clear assumption of responsibility and holding accountable those who violated the law, particularly those in official positions (OSCE/ODIHR Final Report, 2003).

With Robert Kocharyan coming to the end of his two-term limit as president, his heir apparent in the 2008 presidential contest was Prime Minister Serj Sargsyan. The scene for the election had largely been set by the parliamentary elections in 2007, in which Sargsyan's Armenian Republican Party had consolidated its grip on parliament. Opposition parties had continued to decline in parliamentary representation, with the principal opposition from 2003, the Armenian People's Party, routed (Human Rights Watch 2009).

Levon Ter-Petrossian, after stepping down as president in 1998, had retreated from public life and avoided contact with the media. His party, the Armenian Pan-National Movement, had gone into sharp decline. For the first time since his resignation, on September 21, 2007 Ter-Petrossian gave his first public speech, sharply criticizing the Kocharyan administration, calling it a "criminal regime" and denouncing widespread corruption in the country. In another speech

on October 26 he confirmed publicly his intention to run for president against Sargsyan (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2007).

Armenian citizens voted on 19 February, 2008 in their 5th presidential elections - and for their 3rd president - since independence. The main contenders for the top political job included Prime Minister Serge Sargsian, backed by the outgoing president Robert Kocharian; Armenia's first president, Levon Ter-Petrossian; a former speaker of the house, Arthur Baghdasarian; and the current deputy speaker of the house, Vahan Hovannisian (Kotchikian 2008).

Similar to many other elections in the former Soviet Union, the winner of the election was the individual backed by the state institutions; in this case Sargsian. However, unlike other elections some new elements were present during the election and post-election period which made this particular poll interesting. One of the most important aspects of the elections in Armenia was the return of Ter-Petrossian to the political arena. After a decade of self-imposed isolation, the former president declared his candidacy and managed to gather enough support from various opposition groups that he was viewed as the main opposition contender against Sargsian. Ter-Petrossian's potential return created basis for talks both domestically and internationally about the possibility of Armenia's first president becoming its third one as well (Kotchikian 2008).

While Ter-Petrossian was gaining momentum and challenging the status quo, the government's response was swift and the state-owned and supported media staged a campaign against the former president by linking his return with the dreadful socio-economic conditions that Armenians were living under during his first tenure in power, when Armenia was fighting a war in Nagorno-Karabakh and the country was under an economic blockade from Turkey (Kotchikian 2008).

In a pre-election period many parties continued to join the first president. The “Heritage” party (the leader of the party is Raffi Hovhannisyan) announced about their decision to support the candidature of the ex-president Levon Ter-Petrosyan on the upcoming elections. The oppositional party “New times” (leader Aram Karapetyan) also announced that was going to support the candidacy of Levon Ter-Petrosyan on the elections. So, just a few days before the elections, number of the political forces, supporting the first president, became more than twenty. A number of members of the second ruling party “Prosperous Armenia” also took the side of Levon Ter-Petrosyan. Some members of ARF Dashnakcutyun also announced about supporting Levon Ter-Petrosyan on the elections. They declared appealing to put aside ideological disagreements for some time and voting for the first president Levon Ter-Petrosyan. The oppositional “Orinac Erkir” party (the leader of the party is Arthur Baghdasaryan) made a decision that his party would return to the question of joining one of the candidates after the first phase of the elections (Hovhannisyan 2008).

On the election day, two diverging trends describing the election process appeared. While international monitors, mostly from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and OSCE, reported that the elections were administered in compliance with OSCE and Council of Europe standards, the local media painted another picture. Even from the early hours of the election, news that pro-Sargsian and pro-Ter-Petrossian groups had been conducting such gross violations of electoral laws as ballot stuffing and intimidating election monitors were reported by a wide array of local media sources. At the end of the day election results showed that Sargsian had won the election by almost 53 percent of the votes, thus sparing him a run-off second stage election with his nearest rival Ter-Petrossian, who was officially declared to have won over 21 percent of the votes (Kotchikian 2008).

The immediate outcome was that the Ter-Petrosian camp called for the annulment of the results and asked the people to continuously demonstrate until their demands were met. While tens of thousands of people responded to Ter-Petrosian's call, the election results were unchanged (Kotchikian 2008).

An international observer mission comprising the OSCE, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), and the European Parliament initially endorsed the election, issuing a preliminary report on February 20 that found the election mostly in line with the country's international commitments. Similar statements followed from European Union High Representative Javier Solana, European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the EU presidency, and the Council of Europe's envoy (OSCE/ODIHR press release, 2008)

On March 3, however, the OSCE issued a harsher statement, claiming that there had been irregularities, including implausibly high voter turnout at some polling stations, high numbers of invalid ballots especially at some Yerevan polling stations, and significant procedural errors and irregularities in the vote counting and tabulation. In addition, it noted insufficient protection for registering and addressing voters' complaints (OSCE/ODIHR Post-Election Interim Report, 2008).

On May 30 the OSCE issued a final report on the elections that, while maintaining its original generally favorable assessment, stated that there was an insufficient regard for standards essential to democratic elections which devalued the overall election process (OSCE/ODIHR, Final Report, 2008).

Immediately following the elections, Human Rights Watch documented nine cases of assailants intimidating, threatening, and even violently attacking opposition party activists, journalists, and observers. The victims had been complaining about what they believed to be

electoral fraud and other violations of the electoral rules, such as incorrect voters' lists, intimidation of voters, violations of the right to a secret ballot, and ballot stuffing. In several of the incidents police were present during the assaults and did not intervene. Some of the victims reported the attacks to the police, who began investigating (Human Rights Watch press release, 2008).

Levon Ter-Petrossian himself made accusations of widespread election falsification and claimed that he had won the election. On March 5, 2008, Ter-Petrossian appealed to the Constitutional Court challenging the legitimacy of Sargsyan's victory and seeking to have the election declared invalid. His challenges were on technical grounds rather than on grounds that there had been violations in the conduct of the vote, however. On March 8 the Constitutional Court rejected his appeal (OSCE/ODIHR Post-Election Interim Report, 2008).

Prior to election day, Levon Ter-Petrossian had called on his supporters to gather in Yerevan on February 20—when preliminary election results would be known—for either a victory or a protest rally depending on the outcome. From February 21 a continuous protest was installed on Freedom Square, on the north side of Yerevan city center. Daily, several thousand protestors would gather to hear opposition leaders speak, and each night a group of protestors stayed in front of the National Opera House on Freedom Square, mostly in tents, their numbers varying from a few hundred to just over a thousand (OSCE/ODIHR Post-Election Interim Report, 2008).

The authorities allowed the protest encampment and rallies for nine days. Ararat Mahtesyan, first deputy chief of national police, told Human Right Watch that although the demonstration was illegal - it was being conducted without permission from the Yerevan city authorities - it was initially tolerated as the Central Election Commission had not announced

final results of the presidential election, and police investigations into election day complaints were still ongoing (Human Rights Watch interview with Mahtesyan A., 2008)

The authorities moved to suppress the protests on March 1, and in several episodes of violent confrontation between law enforcement officials and protestors, at least eight protestors and two police officers were killed and more than 130 people were injured. President Kocharyan announced a 20-day state of emergency under which all public gatherings and strikes would be banned, and freedom of movement and independent broadcasting severely limited (Human Rights Watch 2009).

On the night of February 29 to March 1, several hundred protestors were on Freedom Square, staying in some 25 to 30 tents. Police moved against the protestors' camp early on the morning of March 1 (HRW interview with Shamshyan G., 2008).

According to first deputy police chief Ararat Mahtesyan, speaking to Human Rights Watch four weeks later, the police had arrived at the square on March 1 to conduct a search, acting on information that demonstrators had been arming themselves with metal rods, and possibly firearms, in preparation for committing acts of violent protest on March 1.

Mahtesyan said that initially a group of 25-30 police officers, including experts and investigators, were sent to do the search of the protestors' camp. When the group tried to conduct the search, the protestors turned aggressive and resisted police with wooden sticks and iron bars, resulting in injuries to several policemen. At that stage more police had to be deployed and had to use force to disperse the crowd and support the group conducting the search. According to Mahtesyan, this operation lasted for about 30 minutes and 10 policemen sustained injuries as a result. Despite Human Rights Watch's request, Mahtesyan did not provide any details about these injured police and the nature of the injuries they sustained.

Levon Ter-Petrossian, who had been sleeping in his car parked at the square, was woken up. According to the account he gave Human Rights Watch, he addressed the protestors, some of whom by this time were out of their tents, asking them to step back from the police line, and then to stay where they were and wait for instructions from the police. He also warned the police that there were women and children among the demonstrators.

Even before Ter-Petrossian finished his address, police advanced towards the demonstrators in several lines, beating their truncheons against their plastic shields. According to multiple witnesses, the police made no audible demand for anyone to disperse nor gave any indication of the purpose of their presence. They started pushing demonstrators from the square with their shields, causing some to panic and scream and others to run. Some demonstrators appeared ready to fight the police, that's was why, according to Ter- Petrossian, he urged the crowd not to resist the police. Others were still in their tents (HRW interview with Sanasar S., 2008).

Immediately afterwards, without any warning, police started to attack the demonstrators, using rubber truncheons, iron sticks, and electric shock batons. According to Ter-Petrossian, a group of about 30 policemen under the command of Gen. Grigor Sargsyan approached him and forcibly took him aside. Levon Ter-Petrossian was subsequently taken home and effectively put under house arrest. During an interview with Human Rights Watch Vahagn V. (2008), a 42-year-old economist who had spent the night on the square in front of the Opera House, gave this account and reassured that police, without any warning, started beating truncheons on their shields, making loud noises that created chaos. They switched off the microphones and electricity. It was still dark and the only lights that could be seen were small red lights that at first seemed to be flashlights, but they turned out to be from electric shock devices. The police were attacking from all sides and beating people. Women were screaming.

Gagik Shamshtyan, a photo correspondent for political opposition newspapers who attempted to photograph the raid, was assaulted by police and then detained. During his interview with Human Rights Watch (2008) he described how the policemen in riot uniforms in helmets, shields, and truncheons were beating the protestors. They were also pouring buckets of water on the tents and continued to assault with truncheons. G. Shamshtyan was shooting photos and after having made about 20-25 shots, policemen saw his camera's flash and about 15 of them attacked me. When one of them recognized the photo correspondent, he instructed others to beat him. In the end, G Shamshtyan's camera was grabbed and he himself was beaten with truncheons and kicked. Afterwards, policemen handcuffed him and pulled his hands from behind. Two of them even grabbed him by his jacket and dragged him for about 40 meters, with his face down on the pavement. Police kept Shamshtyan on the ground for about 20 minutes, assaulted him periodically, and then drove him to the central police station. He was later released.

As news spread about the morning's violence and the de facto house arrest of Ter-Petrosian, other people started making their way to Freedom Square, only to find it closed off by a police cordon. Police were ordering people away. Two eyewitnesses described separately to Human Rights Watch how police attacked, beat, and detained groups of 20 to 30 people who attempted to gather near the square. Unable to assemble on Freedom Square, many people started to gather near the Alexander Miasnikyan monument on Grigor Lusavorich Street, about 15 minutes walk across the city center from Freedom Square. The monument faces a large open area in front of the new Yerevan City Hall, with the French embassy on the adjacent corner. The Italian and Russian embassies are also in the vicinity (Human Rights Watch 2009).

The number of people assembling at this location grew very fast. Anahit Bakhshyan, a member of parliament from the opposition Heritage Party (2008), told Human Rights Watch that when she arrived there at around 10:30 a.m. she saw fewer than 100 protestors, but in just 20

minutes the entire street became packed. Protestors initially were divided into two groups, those gathered in front of the French embassy and those across the road at the Miasnikyan monument, with police standing in between and preventing them joining up. Bakhshyan, together with other women, made a line between police and the protestors, trying to calm the angry crowd. She told Human Rights Watch, that police allowed her to use their loudspeaker to address the protestors, calling for calm. Police even threatened to beat people up unless they dispersed. One young man objected to them, saying that they had no right to beat the protestors. As soon as he said that, a policeman hit him with a truncheon on his head and he fell down. Bakhshyan tried to help him and drag him away, but police also were pulling on him and they managed to take him away.

Lack of accurate information about the earlier police operation at Freedom Square contributed to numerous rumors about possible casualties and heightened feelings among the demonstrators. As Gevorg G. (2008) explained to Human Rights Watch, there were rumors floating around about a 12-year-old girl having been killed during the police attack in the morning. People were just furious about it and wanted to be more prepared if police attacked again. However, this rumor was untrue: there were no fatalities during the events at Freedom Square.

Around 11:30 a.m. other opposition leaders arrived near the French embassy. Estimates vary widely as to the number of protestors gathered by then, but as the Deputy Police Chief told Human Rights Watch that there were about 7,000 people gathered at the Miasnikyan monument. David Shahnazaryan and Levon Zourabyan, close Ter-Petrossian associates, led negotiations with police officials Alexander Affyan, deputy police chief and Ashot Giziryan, head of the 6th Department, on changing the venue for the spontaneous rally that was already in progress. The police offered to move the demonstration to a venue in front of Matenadaran, the museum of ancient manuscripts in downtown Yerevan, a venue frequently used for political meetings. They

allowed David Shahnazaryan to address the crowd through a police loudhailer at 1 p.m., to announce that the police would withdraw soon to allow the crowd to move to Matenadaran (Human Rights Watch 2009).

As police withdrew, an incident occurred that led to the first violence at the afternoon demonstration. A police car with three policemen inside drove into people at high speed, injuring at least two protestors; two witnesses who recounted the incident to Human Rights Watch believed that the driver lost control of the car in panic at being among the last police to leave the scene. The incident further infuriated the protestors, who attacked the police car and set it on fire, while the policemen escaped (HRW interview with Bakhsyan A., 2008).

Towards the end of the day journalists and demonstrators saw police and other security personnel regrouping in parts of the city center close to where the demonstrators were gathered, notably around Republic Square and Mashtots Avenue, and on Leo and Paronyan streets (Human Rights Watch 2009).

At the Miasnikyan monument, a rally continued until around 3 a.m. on March 2. An aggressive police action to disperse the crowd began at around 9:30 p.m. on March 1, and was met with stone throwing and even petrol bombs from the side of the demonstrators. After that, the police retreated and left the large crowd alone. A smaller group of demonstrators, however, engaged in a violent confrontation with police and security forces. It was in this context that most of the fatalities occurred. Multiple witnesses told Human Rights Watch that shortly after 9 p.m., without prior warning, police started shooting tracer bullets in the air, apparently intending to intimidate the demonstrators and make them disperse. A first episode of tracer fire lasted about 10-15 minutes. Half an hour later, police in riot gear began approaching from the direction of Leo and Paronyan streets. Organized in four to five rows, they advanced toward the demonstrators, accompanied by the second episode of tracer fire (Human Rights Watch 2009).

Some demonstrators broke into shops on Mashtots Avenue and looted them. Most protestors to whom Human Rights Watch spoke alleged that those shops were broken into by so-called provocateurs intending to smear the peaceful demonstrators. However, at least two witnesses who had been participants in the demonstrations told Human Rights Watch that three shops belonging to prominent supporters of then President-elect Sargsyan were broken into, and thus tried to justify the crowd's behavior as targeting certain oligarchs only (Human Rights Watch interview with Vigen V., 2008). The Office of the Public Prosecutor reported that altogether seven shops were looted and 63 vehicles were set on fire (Arminfo, 2008).

According to summaries of the deaths publicized by the Office of the Public Prosecutor at least 10 people were killed as a result of the March 1 events: four civilians died from wounds from firearms, three civilians died from direct impact of unexploded teargas canisters (apparently fired directly at the demonstrators from close range), and one police officer died from fragmentation wounds. Another two people died later from injuries sustained on March 1: one civilian died from a head wound and a serviceman with the Ministry of Internal Affairs died from a firearm wound (Office of the Public Prosecutor of the RA, 2008).

At approximately 10:30 p.m. on March 1, President Robert Kocharyan signed a decree to prevent a threat to constitutional order and protect the rights and legal interests of the population by declaring a state of emergency in Armenia. The National Assembly formally approved the state of emergency on March 2. The decree remained in force for 20 days and imposed severe restrictions, including a ban on all mass gatherings and a requirement that all news media use only official information in their domestic coverage (Demourian 2008)

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Armenian language broadcasting was taken off the air and their website blocked.¹⁵⁶ Several other online news publications, including A1+, Haikakan Zhamanak, and Aravot, were blocked by internet service providers on the orders

of the security services. During the state of emergency all pro-opposition newspapers were banned from publishing, after they went through prescreening by security service representatives at the publishing houses. Although media restrictions were lifted on March 13, security service representatives continued interfering with the opposition newspapers' printing, allowing them to publish only on March 21 (RFE/RL, 2008).

The Main Causes of the Failure of Revolution in Armenia

The 2008 electoral crises in Armenia didn't transform into a revolution as in Georgia, but ended up with the Armenian regime surviving the election and presidential transition amidst major protests. Although Armenia had many of the preconditions for a likely colored revolution, including the presence of outside donors aimed at promoting democracy and developing civil society, and links that provided opportunities for strategic learning from foreign opposition movements, the attempts were doomed to failure due to the following factors

1. Tough in-party Elite Cohesion
2. Highly Institutionalized Ruling Party
3. Lack of Determined, Well-Organized and Unified Opposition
4. Tight Control over the Security

1. Tough in-party Elite Cohesion

In general, colored revolutions are most likely to occur during leadership succession crises. This creates doubts within the ruling elite on who will be next president. There is always a risk for them that opposition can come to the head of the country and this leads to elite fragmentation within the ruling regime. Such Presidential succession crises can provide critical windows of opportunity for the opposition to mobilize support and challenge fragmented ruling

elite, but these opportunities can be limited when the ruling regime is backed by a strong political party and the incumbent clearly designates a successor (Hess 2009).

In case of Armenia there was little doubt that Serzh Sargsyan was next in line to inherit the presidency. Sargsyan had a long career as a high profile official in the Armenian government. As Sargsyan entered the 2008 presidential election in firm control of the HHK and well-connected to the security forces, both tightly organized, cohesive institutions, the ruling party had little difficulty repressing post-election opposition demonstrations in support of Ter-Petrosian and railing against government vote-rigging. The successor's hold on national institutions was established in advance of the election, mitigating the opposition's ability to capitalize on the presidential succession (Musayelyan 2008).

2. Highly Institutionalized Ruling Party

Usually authoritarian regimes structured around well institutionalized single parties are remarkably durable. Because one party monopolizes decision-making, influence and power, and can distribute positions and material rewards to loyal cadres, there are significant long-term rewards for cooperating with the regime and high costs for defecting. Having a strong, well-institutionalized party thus makes it unlikely that an authoritarian regime will fragment when facing opposition post-election protests (Geddes 1999).

Armenia was dominated by a ruling coalition centered on Republican Party of Armenia (HHK), a well-established political party founded in 1990 and associated with the Armenian independence movement. The party, which stood as the primary political base of support for the Kocharyan regime heading into the 2008, clearly represented a much more powerful, cohesive, and institutionalized political party apparatus (Hess 2009).

3. Lack of Opposition: Determined, Well-Organized and Unified

Determined and Well-Organized

Perhaps the most frequently accepted premise explaining why colored revolutions occur focuses primarily on determined and well-organized opposition movements as primary actors in bringing about political change. In this view, opposition movements become more effective in bringing about regime change by strategically learning from their own experiences and those of earlier colored revolutions in other countries and have been substantially strengthened through the support and funding of international donors.

Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik (2006) argue that colored revolutions in post-communist states have typically taken place when oppositions followed an “electoral model” which transformed rigged electoral rituals into fair elections, thereby facilitating a transition from an illiberal to a more liberal government. This electoral model involves forming a well-organized and unified opposition and organizing prearranged protests and demonstrations should the ruling party ultimately rig the election.

For a whole decade, opposition had little meaning in both Armenian politics, in general and on public policies, in particular. The main reason was the apparent inability and lack of will of any political force to assume the role of building a credible alternative to the dominant model. In 2008, when Ter-Petrosian returned to the political arena, people stood behind him not because he presented any economic or social program that promised an improvement of existing conditions, but because he promised to punish the withholders of power, whom he accused of corruption and even banditry (DerGhoukassian 2011).

What, then, really explains the post-March 1, 2008 polarization of Armenian politics is the lack of social justice, uneven distribution of wealth and unfavorable social conditions. All this opened the way to the canalization of its grievances into political mobilization.

Unified

Ter-Petrosian, being an opposition frontrunner, had announced before the elections that he had serious grounds to believe that other opposition forces would join him. In fact, he mainly referred to Arthur Baghdasarian, the head of Orinats Yerkir (Country of Law) Party. Heritage Party leader Raffi Hovannisian, who also has a sizeable popular following, was also thought to be on the verge of offering an endorsement. However, during a meeting with non-governmental organizations in February 11, Baghdasarian clearly indicated a reluctance to play second fiddle to any other candidate. He reminded participants that he had hundreds of thousands of supporters and that he was not struggling for the runner-up's position, but he was struggling for the post of Armenia's president (Grigoryan 2008).

As a consequence, the opposition was admittedly weakened by the inability of Ter-Petrosian to create a unified coalition with rival candidate, Artur Baghdasarian.

4. Tight Control over the Security

Way Lucan (2008) argues that having a powerful and effective security apparatus, often hardened through the experience of war, is an important element in ensuring authoritarian stability. This experienced and unified force will maintain its cohesion and execute its orders when commanded by the ruling party to disperse opposition protestors, violently if need be. The decision of each leader to ultimately order the application of force against his own citizens is greatly reflective of the individual ruler's values, experience, and confidence in security forces to carry out his orders.

The decision of each leader to ultimately order the application of force against his own citizens is greatly reflective of the individual ruler's values, experience, and confidence in security forces to carry out his orders. Differences in the values and background of leaders and the loyalty of the military are substantially more subjective than measures of conventional

military capabilities but are nevertheless evident when comparing the cases of Armenia and Georgia (Hessm 2009).

Kocharyan and many of his political allies had strong connections to the military forged in the Nagorno-Karabakh War as well as experience commanding forces in the field. This explains not only Kocharyan's decision to turn to cohesive methods of suppressing the meetings, but also his ability to make the military obey his orders.

While the supportive role of international donors and foreign opposition movements, and efforts at democracy promotion by the United States, the European Union, and other state and non-state actors may well have an important place in helping opposition activists to unite, mobilize supporters, coordinate their efforts against ruling regime vote-rigging, and perhaps better and more peacefully consolidate democracy after the revolution, these contacts, as evidenced in Armenia, will not be effectual in affecting regime change if they are resisted by a strong and united ruling party backed by a well-trained and effective security force (Hess 2009).

Comparison of Georgian and Armenian Cases

Having considered separately all the presidential elections in Georgia and Armenia with their peaceful and conflictive aspects, it's time to look deeper on similarities and differences of factors which led to the Rose Revolution in Georgia and bloody confrontation in Armenia.

We will once again consider the following factors but this time in a comparative framework: 1) Regime, 2) Electoral Process, 3) Ruling Elite, 4) Opposition Leaders, 5) Foreign Support, 6) Security Forces.

1. *Regime*. The regime in both in Georgia (2003) and in Armenia (2008) were rather unpopular and unwanted. The mere fact, that they cherished to stay stay in power by fixing

elections, speaks of their being undesired. According to public polls conducted before 2003 parliamentary elections, Georgia's ruling party had the support of less than 15 percent of the population. In case of Armenia the huge number of people who went to street and opposed the election results is a vivid sign of people's discontent with the ruling regime. In this aspect Georgia and Armenia are similar.

2. *Electoral Process.* Electoral process in two countries was full of fraud and vote rigging. In Georgia parallel vote tabulation, i.e. a parallel count of the official vote in a statistically significant number of precincts was conducted. It provided composite hard data with which the official results were later compared. This provided a good opportunity to have a distinct image of true and false vote results. In Armenia OSCE/ODIHR released a post-election interim report, which clearly stated irregularities, including implausibly high voter turnout at some polling stations, high numbers of invalid ballots especially at some Yerevan polling stations, and significant procedural errors and irregularities in the vote counting and tabulation. In this aspect too Georgia and Armenia are similar.

3. *Ruling Elite.* Armenia has been dominated by a ruling coalition centered on Republican Party of Armenia (HHK), a well-established political party founded in 1990 and associated with the Armenian independence movement. The party, which stood as the primary political base of support for the Kocharyan regime heading into the 2008, clearly represented a powerful, cohesive, and institutionalized political party apparatus. Meanwhile, the number of people who stood next to Shevardnadze after 2003 parliamentary and presidential elections was becoming less and less. The crucial point was that some of the high officials started leaving their posts and joining the opposition.

In this context, the ruling elite in Georgia and Armenia has essential differences. Kocharyan had a strong backing of governing coalition and could successfully suppress any tensions, while Shevarnadze's government had become visibly weak and chose not to give up the office.

4. *Opposition Leaders.* The Georgian opposition was able to persuade followers that political change is possible. While the opposition was quite strong in Georgia mainly due to its experienced professionals and united struggle, the Armenian opposition was relatively weak and unified. The desire of each opposition leader to be a frontrunner not only complicated their path to presidency but also vanished any opportunity of expected revolution. The differences of opposition leaders' intentions and activities resulted in different outcomes after presidential elections in Georgia and Armenia.

5. *Foreign Support.* In the context of foreign contribution to the promotion of democracy and democratic elections, Georgia and Armenia are relatively similar. In both countries international organizations and NGOs, such as OSCE/ODIHR, USAID, Soros Foundation, had their contribution in democracy promotion. However, in the framework of international pressure, the cases of Armenia and Georgia are different. Prior to elections, the regime found itself facing a number of international pressures that may have increased perceptions among Georgian citizens that the regime was exceedingly fragile if devoid of foreign, in particular U.S., support. As far as Georgia was also ranked as one of the three most corrupt countries in the CIS, International Monetary Fund as well as the US announced a reduction in foreign aid if Georgia didn't implement their recommendations.

6. *Security Forces.* In this context the cases of Armenia and Georgia are vividly different. If in case of Georgia security forces were described as tolerant and passive, in the Armenian case, security forces played an active role in disperse people and hopes of a revolution. In Georgia's case, evidence exists that by the time the moment of decision to use or not use force neared, the

government had lost numerous noted supporters from within its ranks, which increased the likelihood that security forces would not defend the remnants of the regime and would remain on the sidelines. At the same time, other evidence suggests that Shevardnadze himself insisted it was his choice alone not to order the internal troops to suppress the opposition's rush on parliament.

Nevertheless, in case of Armenia Kocharyan and many of his political allies had strong connections to the military as well as experience commanding forces in the field. This explains not only Kocharyan's decision to turn to cohesive methods of suppressing the meetings, but also his ability to make the military obey his orders.

Conclusion

The comparison of presidential succession in Georgia and Armenia gives us a necessary background to understand the main factors and circumstances that are most important in determining why post-communist regimes collapse or survive. For the purpose of comparison, two Armenia and Georgia are chosen because, first of all, they have the same geopolitical location and second, they have shared common history by being a comprising state in USSR and gaining independence in 1991.

The first presidential elections in both countries were carried out in 1991 after their secession from the USSR. Since independence Armenia and Georgia have run 5 presidential elections all of which were accompanied with post-electoral gatherings and protests. One and most important precondition of democracy is smooth transition of power – the ability to give up power peacefully. Instead, in Armenia and Georgia there has always been a rugged transition of power with many irregularities recorded before during and after elections.

Having compared two outstanding presidential elections in Georgia (2003) and Armenia (2008), there are several important conclusions to be drawn. The first conclusion is – although regime was rather unpopular and unwanted both in Georgia and Armenia, the opposition managed to overcome the regime and establish a new government, while Armenia failed. In this case, we should not only consider the regime and institutions in general as having similar post-communist characteristics but we should go deeper and look at the individuals comprising it. Armenia failed to carry out a revolution due to its strong cohesive in-part elite. Thus, looking merely at the regime as a factor explaining success or failure of colored revolution is not enough, we should also consider the professional career and personal characteristics of the individuals comprising the regime. If Armenia and Georgia can be considered similar in the type of regime, they are quite different if we look from at individuals running the regimes.

Afterwards, the comparison of two presidential elections shows that having a well organized, determined and united opposition can be successful in reaching a Rose Revolution. In this aspect, Armenia and Georgia are quite far from each other. First of all, people followed the opposition leaders because they were experienced professionals who were young but quite still very strong and qualified. They presented a certain improvement programs, which people favored and followed. However, in Armenia there hasn't been any true opposition for a lot of time and the sudden return of first president Ter Petrossian wakened hope in people's heart that regime change was possible. For most people election Serz Sargsyan or Levon Ter Petrsoossian was not a choice for the best candidate but rather a choice between two evil. Ter Petrossian hasn't been a strong opposition leader with his definite electoral program, but rather a person who managed to open the way to the canalization of its grievances into political mobilization.

We also observed that regimes are successful in suppressing any uprising when they enjoy the support of security forces and can count on it in any situation. In this perspective too,

Armenia and Georgia have chosen different paths. The analysis showed that in Georgia's case, there is evidence that no use of force was exercised because Shevarnadze himself refused to use it, though Minister of Internal Security said that the Internal Troops and police were ready to act on the president's orders and would undertake all necessary measures envisaged by a state of emergency. However, at the same time it was found out that the government had lost numerous noted supporters from within its ranks. Such defections may have increased the likelihood that security forces would not defend the remnants of the regime and would instead remain on the sidelines.

When comparing the behavior of security forces in Armenia and Georgia, we found out that the internal troops and police in Armenia turned to be more loyal to the regime ready to undertake any order given to them. This is mainly explained by the fact that Kocharyan and many of his political allies had strong connections to the military as well as experience commanding forces in the field.

Thus, having compared two post-soviet successor states, we can conclude that among other factors seeking to explain the success and failure of colored revolutions, those that place primary agency on the strength or weakness of authoritarian ruling regimes and their institutions for maintaining in-party elite cohesion, strong and highly-institutionalized political parties, and effective, experienced security forces, have had the greatest explanatory value.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Antelava, Natalia (2004) "Georgia Remembers Rose Revolution." BBC News, Tbilisi. Date of Access - March 24. (On the Web at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4036145.stm>).

Arminfo (2008) “Armenian Prosecutor Gives Details of Damage Caused by Opposition Rally”.

Bunce, V and Sh Wolchik (2006) “International Diffusion and Postcommunist Electoral Revolutions”. In Communist and Postcommunist Studies, 39, no. 3

Constitution of the Republic of Armenia

Demourian, Avet (2008) “Armenia Declares State of Emergency.” Date of Access - July 20. (On the Web at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/03/01/armenia-declares-state-of_n_89363.html)

DerGhoukassian, Khatchik (2011) “Market Fundamentalism, Economic Hardship and social Protest in Armenia: A Critical Perspective of the Polarization of Armenian Politics”.

“fa of the Nations. Armenia – History.” Date of Access - March 28. (On the Web at: <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Europe/Armenia-HISTORY.html>)

Geddes, Barbara (1999) What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years? Annual Review of Political Science 2

“Georgia” (1998) Initial report (CEDAW/C/GEO/1), Date of Access – August 18. (On the Web at: <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/iwraw/georgia.html>)

“Georgia-Government and Politics” (1996). Date of Access - June 25.

(On the Web at: http://www.mongabay.com/reference/country_studies/georgia/GOVERNMENT.html)

Giragosian, Richard (2004) “The South Caucasus: A Chronological Summary of Key Events Since Independence 1991-2004.” Abt Associates, Inc. Bethesda, Maryland. Date of Access - March 12. (On the Web at: <http://arisc.org/RESOURCES/Chronology/Political>)

Grigoryan, Marianna (2008) “Armenia: Opposition Coalition Fails to Materialize.” Eurasia Insight. Yerevan. Date of Access - July 17.

(On the Web at: <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav021108b.shtml>)

“Global Corruption Report 2008, Corruption in the Water Sector.” Transparency International. Cambridge University Press

Gogia, Giorgi and Peter Bouckaert (2009) “Democracy on Rocky Ground. Armenia’s Disputed 2008 Presidential Election, Post-Election Violence, and the One-Sided Pursuit of Accountability.” Human Rights Watch. New York.

Goldberg, Carey (1991) "Georgia's Halo Loses Magic Glow." Los Angeles Times. Date of Access - August 10. (On the Web at: http://articles.latimes.com/1991-09-26/news/mn-3954_1_georgian-gamsakhurdia-opposition)

Hess, Stephen (2009) "Protests, Parties, and Presidential Succession: Assessing Competing Theories of Colored Revolutions in Armenian and Kyrgyz Elections". Date of Access - March 10. (On the Web at: http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/3/7/6/7/1/p376716_index.html)

Holmes, Leslie (1997) Post-communism: An introduction. Durham, Nc: Duke University Press.

Hovhannisyán. Armenak (2008) "Pre-electional situation in Armenia or "the ice is breaking". Date of Access - April 20.

(On the Web at: http://domkaukaski.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=156&Itemid=37)

Human Rights Watch, World Report (1997) "Armenia Chapter". Date of Access - June 5. (On the Web at: http://www.hrw.org/reports/1997/WR97/HELSINKI-01.htm#P95_35834)

Human Rights Watch, World Report (1997) "Armenia Chapter". Date of Access - June 5. (On the Web at: http://www.hrw.org/reports/1996/WR96/Helsinki-02.htm#P168_33365)

Human Rights Watch (2003) "An Imitation of the Law: The Use of Administrative Detention in the 2003 Armenian Presidential". Date of Access - June 10. (On the Web at: <http://www.hrw.org/backgrounder/eca/armenia/index.htm>)

Human Rights Watch (2004) "Cycle of Repression: Human Rights Violations in Armenia." Date of Access - June 15. (On the Web at: <http://hrw.org/backgrounder/eca/armenia/0504/>)

Human Rights Watch (2009) "Democracy on Rocky Ground. Armenia's Disputed 2008 Presidential Election, Post-Election Violence, and the One-Sided Pursuit of Accountability"

Human Rights Watch press release (2008) "Armenia: Violence at Polling Station Mars Elections". Date of Access - July 10. (On the Web at: <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/02/20/armenia-violence-polling-stations-mars-elections>)

Human Rights Watch interview with Ararat Mahtesian, (2008) Yerevan

Human Rights Watch interview with Gagik Shamshtyan, photo correspondent for Aravot and Chorrord Ishkhanutyun newspapers, (2008) Yerevan

Human Rights Watch telephone interview with Sanasar S., (2008), Yerevan

- Human Rights Watch interview with Vahagn V., (2008), Yerevan
- Human Rights Watch interview with Shamshyan G., (2008), Yerevan
- Human Rights Watch interview with Anahit Bakhshyan, MP, Heritage Party, (2008), Yerevan,
- Human Rights Watch interview with Vigen V., (2008), Yerevan
- Iberia (2010) “Zviad Gamsakhurdia - The national Hero, who was swimming against the tide”. Date of Access - July 25. (On the Web at: <http://iberiana.webs.com/geosur/gamsakhurdia.htm>)
- Johnson, Nicholas (1998) “Georgian Media in the 90’s: A step to Liberty”. Date of Access - August 20. (On the Web at: <http://www.uiowa.edu/~cyberlaw/georgia/gamed90s.html>)
- Kandelaki, Giorgi (2006) “Georgia’s Rose Revolution: A Participant’s Perspective”. United States Institute of Peace. Special Report. Date of Access – August 17. (On the Web at: <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr167.pdf>)
- Karatnycky, Adrian and Alexander Moty (1997) Nations in Transit: Civil Society, Democracy and Markets in East Central Europe and the Newly Independent States. Transaction Publishers,
- Kotchikian, Asbed (2008) “Post-election jitters in Armenia”. Date of Access - March 20. (On the Web at: <http://www.dailyestimate.com/print.asp?idarticle=14608>)
- Kuzio, Taras (2008) Democratic Breakthroughs and Revolutions in Five Post-Communist Countries: Comparative Perspectives on the Fourth Wave. George Washington University
- Matveeva, Anna (2002) “South Caucasus: Nationalism, Conflict and Minorities”. Minority Rights Group International
- Miller, Jonathan (2003) “Peaceful Revolution in Georgia”. Date of Access - August 19. (On the Web at: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/july-dec03/georgia_11-24.html)
- Musayelyan, Suren (2008) “The Successor: Sargsyan takeover faces extraordinary conditions. Will Kocharyan play a role?” Armenia Now. Date of Access - August 5. (On the Web at: http://www.armenianow.com/special_issues/march_first_events/8296/the_successor_sargsyan_takeover_fa)

Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Armenia (2008) “Ninety cases concerning 111 people have been sent to court”. Date of Access - July 24. (On the Web at: <http://www.genproc.am/main/ru/121/5329/>) (accessed January 19, 2009).

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), (1998) “Republic of Armenia: Presidential Elections.” Date of Access - April 10. (On the Web at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/armenia/14192>)

OSCE/ODIHR, (2003). “Republic of Armenia: Presidential Elections”. Final Report. Date of Access - April 10. (On the Web at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/armenia/14054>)

OSCE/ODIHR, (2003). “Republic of Armenia: Presidential Elections”. Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions. Date of Access - April 10. (On the Web at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/armenia/14052>)

OSCE/ODIHR, (1996) “Armenian Presidential Elections September 24, 1996”. Final Report. Date of Access - June 12.

(On the Web at: http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/1996/10/1208_en.pdf)

OSCE/ODIHR press release, (2008) “Armenian presidential election mostly in line with international commitments, but further improvements necessary”. Date of Access - June 4. (On the Web at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/49474>)

OSCE/ODIHR (2008) Election Observation Mission to the Republic of Armenia Presidential Election “Post-Election Interim Report, 20 February – 3 March 2008”. Date of Access - June 19. (On the Web at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/armenia/31027>)

OSCE/ODIHR, Final Report, (2008) “Republic of Armenia Presidential Election, 19 February 2008”. Election Observation Mission.

Papava. Vladimir (2006) “East European Democratization: The Political Economy of Georgia’s Rose Revolution” Published by Elsevier Limited on behalf of Foreign Policy Research Institute.

"Post-Communist Georgia" (2005) Date of Access - June 19 (On the Web at: http://georgianamerica.com/eng/information2/about_georgia/post_communist_georgia_19)

“Political Turmoil Grips Georgia” (2003) Date of Access - August 26.

(On the Web at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/3229266.stm>)

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (2007) “Armenian Ex-President Confirms Comeback Plans”. Date of Access - June 25. (On the Web at:

<http://rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/11/FC64B5FB-EFAC-4463-8E9F-13B3D6FD1714.html>)

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (2008) "Internet blocked in Armenia." Date of Access - July 15. (On the Web at: <http://www.rferl.org/content/pressrelease/1120732.html>)

Routio, Pentti (2008) Comparative Study. Date of Access - September 20 (On the Web at: <http://www.uiah.fi/projekti/metodi/172.htm>)

Sakwa, Richard (1999) Postcommunism. Buckingham: Open University Press,

Stern, David (2003) "Anger at 'flawed' poll in Armenia." Financial Times.

McFaul, Michael "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Compromise and Non-cooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World" (2002). In World Politics, vol. 54. Stanford University

"The History of Georgia: Post-communist Georgia (1990-2003)" (2004) Date of Access - August 13. (On the Web at: <http://www.aboutgeorgia.ge/history/index.html?page=12&print=1>)

Urushadze, Levari (2007) "Zviad Gamsakhurdia - the first President of Georgia." Date of Access - June 10. (On the Web at: http://www.archive.org/stream/ZviadGamsakhurdia-TheFirstPresidentOfGeorgia/ZviadGamsakhurdia_djvu.txt)

Way, Lucan (2008) "The Real Causes of the Color Revolutions." Journal of Democracy

Welt, Cory (2005) "Georgia: Causes of the Rose Revolution and Lessons for Democracy Assistance". Russia and Eurasia Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies. Prepared for the USAID Workshop on Democratic Breakthroughs in Serbia, Georgia, and Ukraine.

WRITENET (1997) "Armenia: After the 1996 Presidential Elections." Date of Access - April 2. (On the Web at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a6c014.html>)