

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

IS AUTHORITARIANISM A BETTER OPTION FOR ARMENIA?

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May 2014

Master's Essay in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Political Science and International Relations

SIGNATURE PAGE

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May 2014

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to Dr. Arpie Balian, my Master's Essay supervisor, for her encouragement, motivation and timely feedback to even the most minor problems concerning this essay. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the crucial roles of the staff of American State University particularly that of our Program Chair Dr. Douglas Shumavon, as well as to the all professors that we have for their willingness to help whenever we need it.

I would also like to acknowledge the help of the university's student council members, as well as the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia for their willingness to respond to my inquiries. Special thanks to my parents, family members and friends for their help, support and love. I got it every minute during these difficult days. Last but not least, many thanks to my classmates, who supported me during the most difficult periods of time.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

In all of the fifteen republics that made up the U.S.S.R., the introduction of Western-style liberal democracy and its principles became the dominant political modus operandi after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. Two decades have passed and those republics have developed at various strides and degrees. Enthusiasm for democracy and capitalism has waned considerably over the past 20 years, and most believe the changes that have taken place since 1991 have had a negative impact on public morality, law and order, and standards of living. One of the republics that declared independence in 1991 is Armenia. It is, therefore, useful to assess the initial results of this important development, and draw conclusions in order to gauge the significance of such a change.

Several scholars have argued that most (if not all) of the former soviet republics would undergo a transition process that could eventually lead to the creation of a stable democratic polity. Undoubtedly, the length of time and speed at which each of those countries would succeed in the process of transitioning to a democracy would vary. After

more than two decades, however, the rate of success to becoming a full democracy is mixed and low. Although a few success stories may exist, the rest of the process has quickly fallen prey to old habits that are unable to part with the past or are unwilling to do so. Some of the former Soviet republics have lapsed into new variants of authoritarianism and others simply trying to move in that direction, but not making measurable progress. Many scholars attribute the failure of adopting democratic values to factors such as those countries' traditional preference for autocratic leaders or the elite's ability to exploit the country's resources in order to consolidate power.

PURPOSE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

What did or did not happen from the start, and what is only now slowly becoming apparent, is that civil society in the former Soviet Union lacked proper education on even basic democratic principles. Newly found political freedom roughly translated into free elections for the majority of the people, but they knew little about other principles that are so crucial to a vibrant, working democracy. The importance of properly prepared civil society was demonstrated repeatedly in U.S. and U.N. efforts at establishing the rule of law in post-conflict Armenian society after 1991. Its importance was crucial to Armenia, but there, democracy became a process that was largely instituted from the top down, with the masses sidelined in crucial decision-making or policy-setting agendas.

Other scholars have argued that it is wrong to attribute the absence of freedom in Armenia solely to traditional factors, such as the country's historic preference for autocratic leaders, or the elite class's ability to exploit resources in order to consolidate power and

placate the populace with social spending. Rather, the populace's lack of participation in non-voting social activities, which foster coalition-building and teach organizational skills, is the main reason for the Armenian phenomenon.

The topic warrants investigation to find out whether democracy is the best option (as claimed by the West) or if authoritarianism is an option for one of the fifteen former Soviet states, the Republic of Armenia. The study reviews different types of regimes and tries to identify the type of regime prevalent in Armenia. The study also explores if authoritarian regime would be an option for Armenia. The study reviews the different forms of government, particularly hybrids of authoritarianism, and assesses the advantages that each has offered in different parts of the world. It also tries to find out the position of youth, as well as the position of politicians with respect to the current regime and their attitude toward authoritarianism.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

This research study aims to answer the following research questions:

RQ₁: What types of regimes should be considered for Armenia?

RQ₂: What are the factors that have prevented Armenia from moving forth to becoming a democracy?

RQ₃: Is authoritarian regime appropriate for Armenia and would it help the country to develop politically and economically?

The hypothesis of the study is:

H₁: Transitioning to a fully authoritarian regime would help Armenia to become a more developed country.

H₀: Transitioning to a fully authoritarian regime would not help Armenia to become a more developed country.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

UNDERSTANDING AUTHORITARIANISM

Various scholars have discussed different positions about what authoritarian regime is and what kind of characteristics it has. According to the Oxford Dictionary (n.d.) authoritarian means putting strict restrictions and limitations on the freedom of the population of the country. Huntington (1991) claims that if a country has fair, periodic and open elections and the candidates have an opportunity to compete freely in elections, then it can be more or less stated that the country is democratic. Thus, the absence of the most critical requirement of free and fair elections suggests that a country is non-democratic and more likely to be authoritarian (Huntington, 1991; Diamond, 1999; Dahl, 1971; Schumpeter, 1947; Huntington, 1989).

Other scholars explain autocratic government (Linz, 1970; Levitsky and Way, 2010) arguing that

“... authoritarian regime is a political regime with a limited, not responsible, political pluralism: without elaborate and guiding ideology (but with distinctive mentality); without neither intensive nor extensive political mobilization (except at some points in development), and in which a leader (or occasionally a small group) exercises power within formally ill-defined limits, but actually quite predictable ones” (Linz, 1970, p.297).

Cuba is cited as one of those types of states that have formal democratic institutions on paper but do not have them in practice. Cuba is a Social republic and has a ‘one party system’. The number of human rights violations is high. People in that country are

repressed. The outcome of elections is obvious — mostly not visibly fair and non-competitive (Levitsky and Way, 2010; Linz 1970).

Folch and Wright (2012) and Marinov (2005) examine the issue from a different perspective. They examine the ways in which foreign governments, such as the U.S., have had adverse impacts on authoritarian regimes. Particularly, through the use of economic sanctions, foreign aid, military interventions, and criticisms of human rights violations, the U.S. and other large democracies have affected authoritarian regimes in different forms. According to Folch and Wright (2012), human rights prosecution has little impact on an autocratic leader and it could not force an incumbent to leave power. They argue that in authoritarian regimes where the power is in the hands of the elite, punishment has little effect. Economic sanctions used by democratic countries against authoritarian regimes are more likely to be effective when used for disciplining a democratic country than when applied to autocratic nations.

Though economic sanctions could have impact on the target country, they would not affect the government structure of the country or change its regime type. Military intervention is more likely to have greater impact on transitioning to dictatorship. This means that use of military force by a democratic government will not help to transition from an authoritarian form of government to democracy, but is more likely to create a new type of dictatorship. The fall of an autocratic regime does not always bring democracy; instead, it creates a new type of authoritarian regime (Gleditch and Choung, 2004; Hadenius and Teorell, 2006; Schelder 2006).

During the recent decades authoritarian regime has changed and transformed to something new. Particularly after the Third Wave of democratization it became obvious that authoritarian regimes began a period of transformation. A new type of authoritarian regime emerged, the so called ‘hybrid regime’ (Collier and Levitsky 1997; Carothers 2002).

Cassiani provides a purer definition of the hybrid regime:

“Hybrid regime is characterized by the coexistence of nominally democratic institutions — a multi-party system, competitive elections, a legislature — with the persistent practice of authoritarian patterns of governance, the latter leading to the systematic alteration of the rules guaranteed by the former” (Cassani 2012, p.5).

In the beginning of the 1990s this was classified as a sub-type of democratic regime, but then hybrid regimes changed direction to look more like a type of authoritarian regime (Levisky and Way 2002, 2010; Schedler 2002; Gilbert and Mohseni, 2011).

Several scholars argue that ‘hybrid regimes’ are the type of government where authoritarianism does not necessarily lead to democracy (Collier and Levitsky 1997; Carothers 2002; Erikson 2004). They examine “hybrid” regimes and come to the conclusion that this type of regime is something between democracy and authoritarianism. It is sort of a combination of both democratic and non-democratic forms, showing certain characteristics of both. For example, one of the common features of hybrid authoritarian regimes is that mass media is highly pressed and controlled by the government (Hadenius and Teorell, 2006; Rogan and Jayasuriya, 2009; Ekman 2009; Cassani 2012; Diamond 2002).

Levistky and Way (2010) call hybrid regimes incomplete or ‘transition’ democracies (although the use of ‘transition’ is debatable). According to these authors, in hybrid regimes

key political drivers such as electoral, executive, judicial and legislative are either weak or do not exist. In effect, legislation does not exist because the ruling party is the only body with the power, and there are no checks and balances between executive and legislative bodies. The judiciary is too weak and corruption is very high. People and officials get what they want by means of bribery and extortion. The Supreme and Constitutional courts function not only as arbiters of legal principle but more as advocates of the government (Levistky and Way 2002, 2010; Ekman 2009; Huntington, 1991; Diamond, 1999).

DIFFERENT TYPES OF HYBRID REGIMES

Hybrid authoritarianisms can be classified into three major types: competitive authoritarianism, electoral authoritarianism, and semi-authoritarianism (Howards and Rossler, 2006; Ekman 2009; Huntington, 1991; Diamond, 1999; and Schedler 2002).

Diamond (2002) goes further and classifies hybrid regimes according to their degree of competitiveness. He calls these “competitive authoritarian” and “hegemonic electoral authoritarian” labeling them as being “ambiguous regimes” (Diamond 2002, p.22). Diamond posits that elections are free when candidates can enter into the political arena without strong opposition; in other words, when the candidates are able to organize election campaigns and solicit votes, as well as when the voters are sure that their voice will be heard and counted. Moreover, elections are fair when they are organized by neutral authorities and administered by competent staff that watches for fairness and fraud-free-elections, including counting of the votes. In fair elections the number of dispute cases is low and the procedures related to voting and vote-counting are clear to everyone (Levistky and Way 2002, 2010; Ekman 2009;

Huntington, 1991; Diamond, 1999). The examples of Venezuela, Ukraine and Nigeria are cited as examples of *ambiguous regimes*.

In contrast, Hadenius and Teorell (2006) argue against that line of argument, claiming that competitiveness is not the only factor that makes a difference between different types of regimes; rather multi-party competition and elections are the more important factors.

COMPETITIVE AUTHORITARIANISM

After the Third Wave of democratization which took place in the mid 1970's, competitive authoritarianism became a prominent regime type. In a competitive authoritarian regime formal political institutions served as tools for political authorities to exercise power. There are striking differences between competitive authoritarianism and democracy as opposed to full scale authoritarianism.

In competitive authoritarianism, basic civil liberties are protected to some extent and formally guaranteed. Opposition groups could criticize the government and hold public meetings and demonstrations. They could have an organized office and hold campaigns. There is a functioning independent media. Civic associations could access the media to criticize the government. On the other hand, all opposition groups, such as opposition politicians, journalists and activists are often subject to violent attacks and arrests. In competitive authoritarianism regular elections take place, but government uses repressions and other reactionary forces to create unequal conditions between government and the opposition (Levitsky and Way 2002, 2010; Ekman 2009; Huntington, 1991; Diamond, 1999).

The distinction between competitive authoritarianism and democracy is apparent in the following: democracy has free and fair elections and broader protection of civil rights, as well as a reasonably level playing field; in competitive authoritarianism, however, elections are neither equal nor legal. Institutions in competitive authoritarian regimes are highly corrupt. The governments of such countries use repression as a tool to target the opposition

and the media. They use the judiciary system in order to create barriers for other candidates to run in elections (Howard and Roessler, 2006; Huntington, 1991; Levitsky and Way, 2002, 2010; Cassani 2012).

The main differentiating feature lies in the fact that competitive authoritarianism has a larger opposition in the parliament or legislature. Those countries where elections are not fair, the ruling party always wins the majority of parliamentary seats. For example, in 2010 the ruling party of Singapore repeatedly won 95 percent of the parliamentary seats; in Tanzania, 89 percent in the 2000 elections. In the case of Cambodia, in 1998 the ruling party of Hun Sen, known as the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) had only 70 percent, but in 2002 it won 99 percent of the seats. Other examples of cases where the ruling president was reelected many times are Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen. Here, the presidents were reelected over periods as long as 21, 15 and 12 years respectively (Diamond, 2001).

Levitsky and Way (2010) differentiate among three different paths of competitive authoritarianism in the period between 1990 and 2008):

1. ***Democratization***, when the government holds free and fair elections, while upholding a wide range of civil liberties and a level playing field. For example, in Croatia, Nicaragua, Peru and Serbia, democratization came after the fall of competitive authoritarianism;

2. ***Unstable authoritarianism***, where countries like Kenya, Madagascar, Moldova and Senegal passed through different stages, but did not democratize. Here, the authoritarian government was removed but the new government was not democratic.

3. *Stable authoritarianism*, when the power is held by the authoritarian incumbents or their successors, who stay in power for more than three presidential or parliamentary terms. Countries that are categorized as stable authoritarianism are Gabon, Tanzania, Malaysia and Cambodia.

ELECTORAL AUTHORITARIANISM

Like competitive authoritarianism, electoral authoritarianism emerged after the Third Wave of democratization. As in competitive authoritarianism, in electoral authoritarianism, the elections are unfair and unequal. This kind of regime needs multiparty elections (Schedler 2002, 2006; Diamond, 2002; Brownlee, 2009). Unlike authoritarianism, electoral authoritarianism provides for an open political system and limited forms of pluralism. Here, the emphasis is on access to power (Schedler, 2006; Diamond, 2002; Brownlee, 2009).

Electoral regimes are divided into three sub-types: no-party regime, one-party regime and multiparty regime. In no-party regimes, elections are held but either all opposing candidates or those candidates repressing the ruling party are prohibited from participating. Here competition does not exist at all. A typical example of a country with such a regime is the Maldives. One-party regimes are those where all parties except one are prohibited to take part in elections. This could be either formal or de facto. Such examples are the cases of Iraq during Saddam's rule and Cuba during Castro.

Last is the type with a limited multiparty regime that holds parliamentary or presidential elections. Here, one or several candidates run independently from the ruling party. Though in this case the opposition may have the opportunity to participate, but the

elections are not free and fair. This means that the opposition does not have any chance to win the elections. An example of such a regime is the case of Mexico up until 2000. Here the shift in governmental structure is obvious. The number of seats that the governing party won after the elections in 2000 was more than two-thirds of the total seats. In a multiparty regime, the emphasis is on the stability of the government and its capacity to rule with a majority number of seats in the government (Hadenius and Teorell, 2006; Roessler and Howard, 2009; Diamond, 2002).

In the case of Russia it is difficult to characterize which type of hybrid regime it represents. Ekman (2009) acknowledges that after the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia transitioned to a full hybrid regime. Diamond (2002) continues the idea and claims that Russia today is a country where the prominent type of regime is electoral authoritarianism. He claims that during Putin's era widespread human rights violations, corruption and pressure on freedom of press have occurred. Diamond also examines the outcome of recent elections and finds that competition has become uneven. From 2000 to 2004, the gap between presidential candidates and the winner grew from 24 percent to 58 percent, with the media supporting Putin during the recent presidential elections. The same pattern was exhibited during the recent parliamentary elections. OSCE observers claimed that the elections were far from being free and fair. Both presidential and legislative elections have had ineffective political opposition. Despite these factors, Russia has recorded strong economic growth during the recent years. Although people are repressed in their country, the majority favors the government and its regime (Levistky & Way, 2010; Ekman 2009, Diamond 2002; Roessler & Howard, 2009).

Venezuela is another case of a post-democratic hybrid regime. Venezuela took the path to the current hybrid regime after Hugo Chavez came to power. A new constitution was adopted and the president was vested more power. He used his power to repress the opposition. As in the case of Russia, elections are unfair and unequal in Venezuela (Ekman, 2009).

SEMI-AUTHORITARIANISM

The third and final type of hybrid regimes is semi-authoritarianism. This kind of regime allows having presidential and parliamentary elections and gives some kind of political freedom to the citizens of the country (Olcott and Ottaway, 1999; Snyder, 2006; Wright, 2008). Olcott and Ottaway (1999) argue that in these kinds of regimes there exists a mechanism that helps to prevent transfer of power from the existing leaders or party to the new political elite or administration. Also such countries usually have a relatively stronger civil society, albeit oppressed by the government. Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan fall in this kind of regime.

In the case of Azerbaijan, after Heydar Aliev came to power in 1992 and won the subsequent elections twice, this happened without a strong opposition. In Kazakhstan, the situation appears to be much more complicated. This country likes to show that elections are free and fair, but during the elections in 1999 the existing constitution was suspended in order to make way for Nursultan Nazarbayev to run and win the presidency (Olcott and Ottaway, 1999).

Beside the main three types of hybrid regimes, Geddes suggests yet another combination. He presents three types of regimes: personalistic, military and single-party regime. In a personalistic regime “the ruler does not always directly control coercion: depending on how far the ruler’s patronage network penetrates the armed forces, the military apparatus may be able to act autonomously from the ruler” (Snyder, 2006, p.2). Dictators governing such political regimes create institutions that are different from the other types of regimes, because this regime type is based on the exchange of private goods in order to get political support (Wright, 2008).

Personalistic regimes are more likely to have a longer life than military regimes, although not as long as single-party regimes. Personalistic regimes use the legislature in order to punish elites who challenge their power. In this category are countries where monarchic and "dynastic" systems reign. Syria and North Korea are examples of dynastic systems, where power is passed from father to son. A more typical example of the monarchic system is Saudi Arabia (Wright, 2008; Hadenius and Teorell, 2006).

Military regimes are those in which military forces hold power and the use of force directly or indirectly is normal. For example, the military could control the civilian leaders behind the scene. There are strike distinctions, however, with those regimes where persons of military background are elected in open elections; this suggests that elections were not controlled by the army and the resulting government should not be considered to be a military regime (Hadenius and Teorell, 2006; Wright, 2008).

Military and single party regimes often are very dependent on natural resources and investments for survival compared to personalist regimes. That is the reason why they tend

to create institutions which, however, later begin to exercise power to control the government. They have less oil resources than personalist regimes do (Wright, 2008). Typical examples of military regime are Chile from 1973 till 1989 and Congo-Kinshasa since 1997.

Despite all the negative factors of the types of authoritarian regimes described above, some authoritarian regimes have succeeded in recent decades. An excellent example of such a hybrid authoritarian regime is that of Singapore. Scholars that have analyzed the case of Singapore posit that authoritarian regimes could succeed and be highly instrumental in a country's development. The GDP per capita of that country is the highest in Asia. It is one of the safest countries in the world. It has a one-party system (the People's Action Party, PAP). The bulk of the credit for Singapore's success comes from its first prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, who came to power in 1965 when Singapore established its independence. He served as the world's longest term prime minister ever. He is known to have designed the Singapore government and society from scratch, placing emphasis on education, discipline, ethnic tolerance and hard work.

Further, Lee's strength in and focus on national defense earned him international recognition. After securing the national defense of Singapore, he shifted attention to economic problems. Before gaining independence, Singapore had an unemployment rate of 14 percent (in 1959). Lee developed an economic strategy in two-parts. Firstly, he developed a strategy for dealing with hostile regional relations and secondly, a strategy that places Singapore as a "First World Oasis in the Third World Region" (Victor & Thompson, 2006, p.3).

The reforms Lee realized in the initial years of independence turned Singapore into an attractive place for investors. Lee also negotiated with labor unions, and established the National Trades Union Congress, which represented the interest of the working class. Opposition forces did not even exist. The government of Singapore reduced the number of publications and put heavy restrictions on the number of publications that wrote articles or opinion pieces against the government (Vietor & Thompson, 2006). In a word, everything was controlled.

Further, the government organized the “clean and green” movement in an effort to correct or deal with environmental issues of concern. This helped clean the surrounding territories of Singapore. Many other popular reforms have made Singapore to rank fifth among the least corrupt countries in the world. Civil servants’ salaries were increased significantly (e.g., the prime minister gets more than one million U.S. Dollars annually), which had a positive effect on the other sectors as well.

Thus, Singapore created an educated labor class that was successful in raising the productivity of the country, while creating a liberal market, a strong intellectual property system, and bio-investments (Vietor and Thompson, 2006). In order to protect this hybrid form of government, Singapore adopted the so called *Asian values* (Sim, 2001; Roy 1994; Tan, 2012). The ideology supporting these values is to protect the government against the Western destructive ideology, as well as to protect their one-party system. Thus, the Government of Singapore placed stern restrictions against Western values, establishing instead an “Asian democracy” or soft authoritarianism (Roy, 1994, p.233). This is used by the government as a tool to manipulate and promote fanaticism (Tan, 2012; Rogan and

Jayasuriya, 2009; Sim 2001; Roy 1994). All of these factors have helped to create an economically strong country with stable political dynamics.

The Chinese model of authoritarian capitalism is also an example of steady economic growth. In 1974, China was suffering from poor economic conditions. The Chinese government decided to introduce neoliberal economic reforms and emphasized the importance of the Party. The government designed and adopted the so called *China Model*, which mostly encompasses the liberalization of the economy; opening a significant part of the economy to foreign and domestic investors; adopting a low tax rate, as well as allowing certain flexibilities in the labor law. Secondly, the government of China allowed the ruling party to control the government, the courts, the army, and the media (Zhao, 2010, p.419). This brought significant economic growth to China and made it one of the most prosperous countries in the world.

Both the Singapore and China examples show that economic liberalization is not the same as political liberalization. Countries may be economically liberal and have excellent economic capacities, but still have autocratic regimes.

North Korea is another good example of regime survival. Although over two decades have passed since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Kim II Sung dynasty is still in power and the members of the dynasty continue to enjoy political and economic support. Snyder (2001) argues that the first factor contributing to popular support is the economic legacy that Kim II Sung left behind. He established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DRPK), whose ideological framework was different from other ideologies of communist republics. Kim Jong II identified himself with his father, but he skillfully changed his father's legacy and

established his own mode of governance. This twist in the political ideology of North Korea was the second important factor for political mobilization and control. In the inter-Korean Summit of June 2002, Kim Jong II announced that North Korea has adopted the Korean unification policy. This summit was the starting point for the economic cooperation between South and North Korea. The successful use of political mobilization and internal security mechanism helped enhance DPRK's power (Snyder, 2001).

The only feature that could drive North Korea to a collapse or change is economic instability. If North Korea continues to have a decline in its economy it could have a severe adverse impact on the political situation in the country and may become reason for political instability. In 1967, Kim announced North Korea's supreme national objectives, as follows: 1) self-identity in thoughts; 2) political independence; 3) self-reliant economy; and 4) a self-reliant defense economy (Koh, 1970, p.661).

Chu, Chang and Hu (2003) have found that the tendency to become more democratic in Asian countries is low. People support their government and think that it is the best option for them. They argue that this kind of tendency is not casual. The sustainable record of strong economic growth has its positive impact on how people think and feel toward the regime. Geddes and Zaller (1989) have worked in Brazil to create a model, which examines the perception of people toward their country's regime type.

These authors come to the conclusion that people in authoritarian regimes do not participate in protests against the government mostly because of reasons of self-interest. Although these citizens are repressed in their countries, but considering that the country achieves measurable economic growth that helps improve the quality of life of citizens, their

positioning is more reserved. In contrast to other U.S. studies that people are more prominent to protests when they are better educated and have more access to information. These people position themselves against the government, but are not strong enough to organize into an opposition (Geddes and Zaller, 1989; Chu, Chang and Hu (2003). Moreover, those who resist are not united and have different arguments, such as economic interest, prior politicization or even personal values. Besides, people who support authoritarian regimes are those who are moderately sophisticated in politics. The level of education has no impact on people's performance especially in the case of the people of Singapore and North Korea, as well as in case of other developing authoritarian countries (Geddes and Zaller, 1989).

Many authors come to the conclusion that, in order to succeed, an authoritarian regime should be supported by a strong and intellectual elite and run by a devoted and clever leader who will not support corruption in any form. They come to the conclusion that strong authoritarian regimes have common features: strong leadership, sustainable economic growth, public support as well as ideology, which help control the population and create feelings of safety and comfort among the population in the country (Geddes and Zaller, 1989; Chu, Chang and Hu, 2003)

ARMENIA AS A COMPETITIVE AUTHORITARIAN COUNTRY

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, like many of the fifteen former Soviet republics, Armenia declared its independence and began transitioning toward creating a democratic state, at least officially. However, this process has been slow moving forward

and in the opinion of some researchers, Armenia continues to embody the characteristics of a *stable authoritarian* regime (Levitsky and Way, 2010).

Since its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Armenia has experienced a reversal from democratization to a Soviet-style authoritarian regime and has been accused of repressive approaches to human rights. In his book, Simon Payaslian juxtaposes a masterful survey of the history of the Armenian people from the nineteenth century through the first republic (1918-21) and Sovietization to the present, with the evolution of international human rights standards, and argues that a statist and authoritarian political culture has impeded political liberalization and institutionalization of human rights principles. His claim is that there is a clash between sovereignty on one side and human rights and democracy on the other.

Wheatley and Zurcher (2008) posit that Georgia and Armenia are governed by true *hybrid* regimes. The war with Azerbaijan and the energy blockade have placed Armenia in an economically constrained situation. In the first years of independence, Armenia faced mass protests taking place all over the country. Despite the favorable conditions for democratization and highly favorable international environment and support, the thrust for creating a strong civil society was feeble and almost insincere. Armenia invested considerable energy and resources into state-building, and striving for a robust authoritarian regime (Howard 2003; Levitsky and Way 2010, 2002; Slater 2003; Donno, 2011; Wheatley and Zurcher, 2008).

In 1995, Armenia adopted its Constitution, which was nicknamed and criticized for being “hyper-presidential” — i.e., giving too much power to the president (Astourian, 2000,

p.3). For example, according to Article 55 the president has the power to dismiss the prime minister; dissolve the National Assembly; and even suspend certain constitutional rights, if the country is in danger. Further, according to Article 94, the president is the guarantor of the judicial bodies. The president and the administration fulfill many of the functions that were within the authority of the Communist Party during Soviet rule (Wheatley and Zurcher, 2008; Astourian, 2000).

Moreover, in countries like Armenia, the opposition is weak, civil society small, and political organizations are unable to get organized and mobilize forces around a significant issue. Political parties have become largely irrelevant to society. The ruling party formally established the “party of power” to which the elite of the country belong. Opposition groups are poorly institutionalized, non-ideological, and mainly dependent on their leaders with respect to the political agenda. The leaders of opposition groups promote democratic ideals and make promises for creating a fully democratic republic; but after coming to power they govern more like autocratic leaders (Levon Ter-Petrosyan, Robert Kocharyan, Serj Sargsyan) (Howard 2003; Levitsky and Way 2010, 2002; Astourian, 2000). According to Levitsky and Way (2010) countries like Armenia have a high state/party capacity and low Western leverage.

Coercive capacity has an incredible role for authoritarian regimes and could have measurable impact on democratic institutions. For example, in the 1996 Armenian elections, there were rampant cases of corruption. In that same period, the ruling party was strong. The opposition included near 200,000 dissenters that comprised mostly veterans of the war with Azerbaijan. They complained against the rigged presidential elections. The government of

Armenia used all possible avenues to repress the dissenters — from security forces to local monitors, intelligence agencies, informal patrons and others. Levon Ter-Petrosyan, the incumbent president of Armenia, retained power (Levitsky and Way 2010; Welt, 1997). The coercive group included the army, police forces, security units and intellectuals. They were well organized and possessed the capacity and ‘authority’ to repress the opposition. Levitsky and Way (2010) explain that in countries like Armenia, where the state apparatus is more or less unified, the government could order large-scale repression and be successful without retort. For Armenia, material resources have not affected coercive capacity, because the state apparatus did have impact on the opposition despite serious financial problems in the 1990s (Weitzer 1990; Luckham 1996; Roessler 2005; Levitsky and Way 2002, 2010).

Elections in Armenia were held starting in early nineties; but as Brownlee (2006) mentions in his research, multi-candidate elections do not have any impact on authoritarian stability. They do not provide the voters with a real choice of policy alternatives, but they confer a stamp of legitimacy on the incumbent regime. Wheatley and Zurcher (2008) iterate the words of Andrew Wilson who argued that for authoritarian countries “elections are a means by which the authorities organized face democracy” (Wheatley and Zurcher, 2008, p.8). Ruling parties use state financial resources in order to win. Victory comes using different approaches, ranging from legitimate campaigning to favoritisms by the media.

In Armenia independent newspapers exist, but journalistic standards are lower than what’s needed in democracies. Several television stations are under the control of government authorities. Several years ago, the broadcasting license of A1 Plus was not renewed presumably because of its influential opposing position.

Finally, Armenia's political elite is split. For example, the Yerkrpah Union of war veterans, established by the late Defense Minister Vazgen Sargsyan, is not in accord with the ruling elite. Another competing group includes Telman, former Minister of the Interior Vano Siradeghian and former Defense Minister Vazgen Sargsyan. The Yerkrpah and the Karabakh elite — comprising the former president of the Republic Kocharyan and his then Defense Minister Serzh Sargsyan (now president of the Republic) — have gradually marginalized the former. Moreover, widespread corruption is yet another critical problem. In Armenia, both the political elite and ordinary people are used to dealing and getting things done their way through corruption (Wheatley and Zurcher, 2008; Roessler 2005; Levistky and Way 2002, 2010).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN/METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used in this study is mixed (quantitative and qualitative) with an explanatory design. The mixed approach is used in order to enhance the rigor of the study, particularly with respect to increasing the validity and generalizability of the research findings. For the quantitative part, a survey was used to measure public opinion with respect to the preferred form of government that would work best in Armenia. Here, the study relied heavily on the analysis of social opinion. The quantitative method was used because it yields results that are easily tabulated, summarized, analyzed and generalized. The qualitative part of the research included analysis of notes from semi-structured interviews with various government officials. This helped to understand the current political situation in the country and what kinds of changes should be considered for improvement.

Mixed method designs seem especially firmly rooted in this type of studies that attempt to evaluate a system or process. One major advantage to using the mixed method is that it affords triangulation, which examines the consistency of findings, such as those obtained through the different instruments used in this study, interviews and surveys. A second advantage of using the mixed method is complementarity, i.e., using qualitative and quantitative data results to assess overlapping but distinct facets of the phenomenon under study.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Two data collection instruments were used: a survey and expert interviews. The survey was conducted online using Qualtric.com and targeting students and professors of all the universities of Armenia. The link to the survey was placed on each of the universities' official Facebook page, securing prior agreement with each student council or office responsible for the management of the university Facebook page.

This approach to stratifying the population and surveying only university students and professors was selected to ensure, to some extent, that potential survey respondents have attained a certain level of education that has given them, at the minimum, basic knowledge and understanding of government forms and structures. Invitations to participate in the survey were extended to all universities, state and private, including satellite university campuses in rural Armenia.

Expert interviews targeted individuals from the government of Armenia on the basis of their knowledge on particular issues related to the need for government reforms related to the research topic. Different governmental officials expressed their position on the current regime, the problems that exist in the country and expressed their opinion about what they thought of authoritarian regime as an option for Armenia.

TESTING OF SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

The surveys were tested on March 25, 2014 with a group of students from the American University of Armenia (AUA) and Yerevan State University (YSU). Twenty (20) students from the departments of economics and political science participated. The questionnaire was modified slightly following the testing based on (1) clarification questions asked by the participants; (2) differences in understanding among the test takers; and (3) variances among the responses received.

SAMPLING AND PARTICIPANT

As mentioned earlier, the survey was conducted online in 17 different universities and delivered 225 responses. Taking the survey was totally voluntary and open to all students and instructors sixteen years of age or older. Given the limitations of time, reminder notices were not posted or more active solicitations for participation, although desirable, were not performed.

The list of expert interview included individuals from: (1) the President's Office; (2) the ruling Republican Party; (3) the National Congress opposition party; (4) the Prosperous Armenia opposition party (formerly in the government coalition); and (5) a person with no party affiliation.

DATA ANALYSIS

The primary data gathered from both surveys was analyzed using SPSS. Data analysis included correlation analyses between pairs of selected variables using two-tailed tests using Pearson R at a confidence level of 95%. Further, content analysis of notes from in-depth

expert interviews was performed. The narratives from interviews were codified using descriptors related to the research questions and hypothesis, and subsequently analyzed for intensity and frequency of the direct references made by the interviewees.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

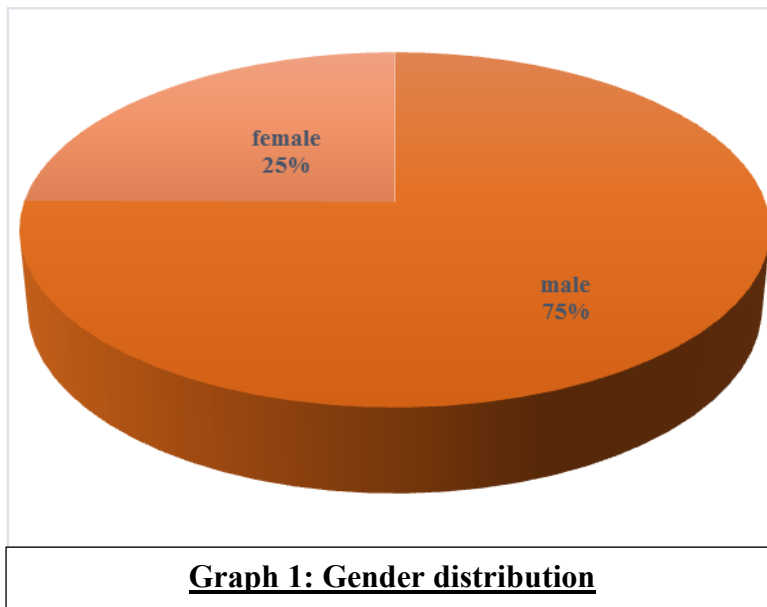
The limitations of this study lie primarily in the low number of responses than desired, as well as the few interviews conducted. It would have been more appropriate and desirable to send out several reminder notices encouraging students and faculty to respond to the survey questionnaire. This was not done given the time restrictions for completing this research. Also, had the study not been so concerned about soliciting answers from individuals who, at the minimum, had an understanding of the different types of authoritarian regimes, the survey could have been conducted widely and throughout Armenia, without restricting it to university students and instructors. Moreover, at the time the expert interviews were being conducted, the resignation of the Prime Minister and dissolution of the government caused quite a bit of indecisiveness throughout the country causing many potential interviewees not to accept requests to interview.

Given the serious limitations of the study, primarily the low number of responses received and the researcher's ability to solicit more experts to interview, the results are compared in discussing findings with prior research on this topic.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

A SURVEY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS

Descriptive Statistics: The data collected from 217 participants depicts the following picture with respect to gender, age, level of education, and locale:



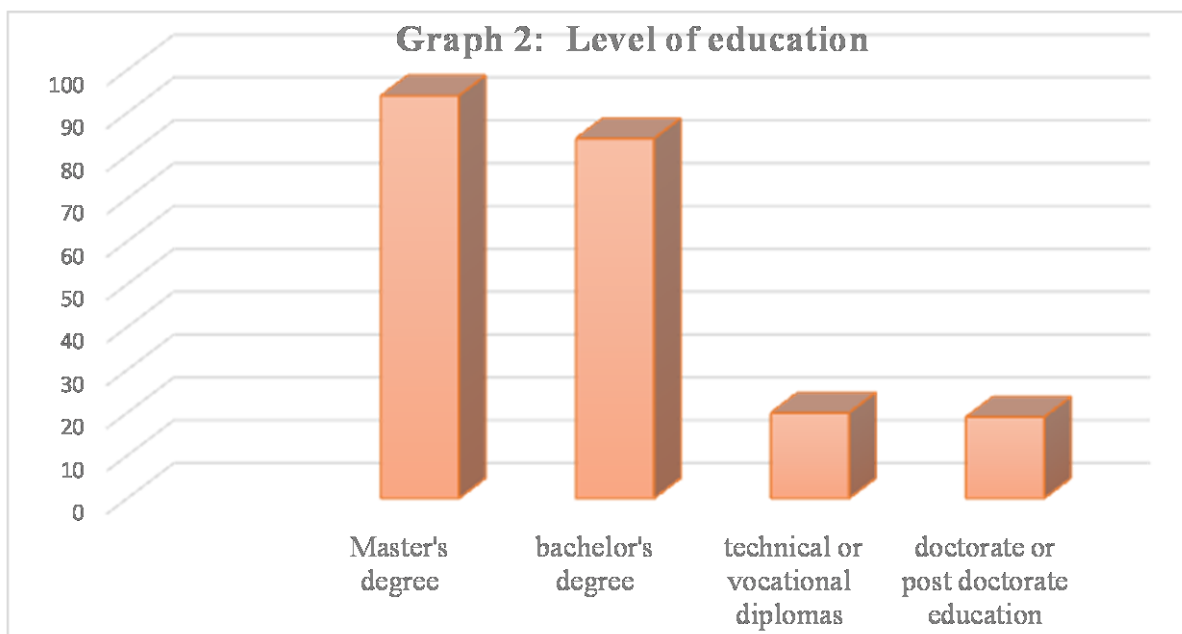
- **Gender distribution:** The number of female responders, 54 (or 24.88 percent of total respondents), is considerably lower than the number of male responders, 163 (75.12

percent).

- **Age distribution:** The distribution of respondents by age group revealed that there were 119 (or 54.83 percent of total respondents) in the 22-31 age-group or the largest proportion of respondents. This is expected, given that it represents the dominant age group of the university population. Other groups were distributed as follows: 84 people

or 38.70 percent in the 15-21 age group; 14 people or 6.4 percent in the 32-60+ age group.

- **Level of education:** The data collected shows that 94 respondents or 43.31 percent have earned a master's degree; this proportion is slightly higher than those who have earned a bachelor's degree (84 respondents or 38.70 percent). The other 20 people or 9.21 percent have technical or vocational diplomas and 19 people or 8.75 percent have doctorate or post doctorate education.



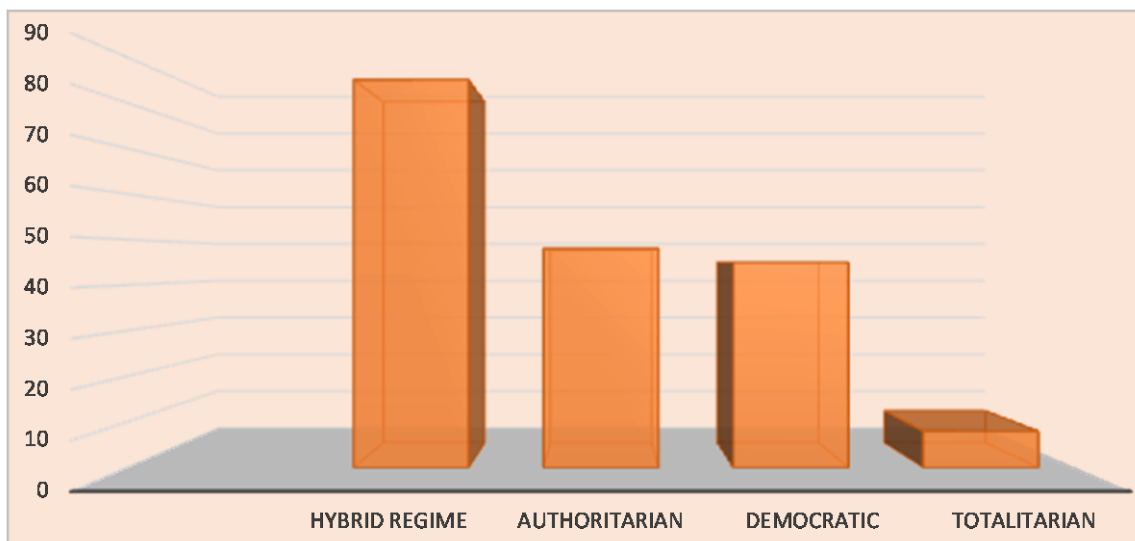
□

University locale and field of education: The highest number of respondents came from Yerevan State University with 63 people responding or 28.11 percent of the number of total respondents. The distribution of all remaining participants is as follows: American University of Armenia: 52 people or 23.96 percent; Yerevan State Institute of Economy: 42 respondents or 19.35 percent; and others at 28.58 percent

The majority of respondents are students of political science and international affairs (56 or 25.80 percent); 31 respondents or 14.28 percent are economists; 16 persons or 7.37 percent are marketing specialists; and 114 or 52.55 percent in other fields of study.

CAUSE-AND-EFFECT RELATIONSHIPS

Respondents to the survey were asked to independently identify the regime that Armenia has adopted after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The majority of respondents stated that although Armenia adopted democracy it is more of a hybrid regime (85 people or 39.17 percent); 45 people or 20.73 percent think that Armenia had adopted a democratic regime and 48 or 22.11 percent think that Armenia had adopted an authoritarian regime. Only 8 people think that Armenia had adopted a totalitarian regime and the rest mentioned regimes such as fascism, oligarchy-monopolistic and etc.



Graph 3: Current regime in Armenia

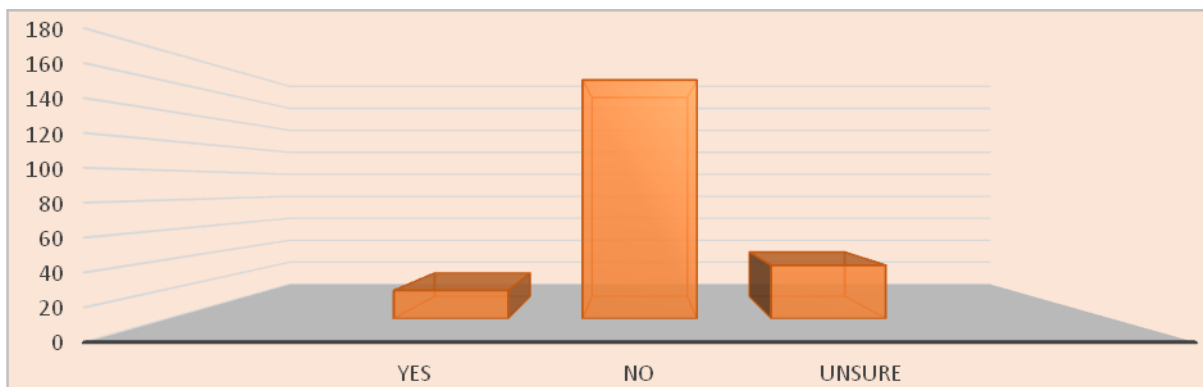
In order to understand if the respondents know what kind of regime is a hybrid regime there were asked several questions about the level of satisfaction with basic democratic values. The majority were totally dissatisfied or dissatisfied with different components of democratic governance, as follows: freedom of speech: 77 respondents or 35.98 percent;

freedom of expression: 88 respondents or 40.55 percent, opportunity for candidates to compete freely in elections: 158 respondents or 72.81 percent; equal opportunity for candidates to air their campaigns: 142 respondents or 65.43 percent; transparency of government to the public: 162 respondents or 74.65 percent; government-organized public awareness campaigns on important issues: 153 people or 70.5 percent. Although other studies have shown that Armenia has made progress in running free and open elections, including reports by foreign organizations, respondents' views were dominantly different. The results show that the public is also dissatisfied with information-sharing campaigns and forums organized on important issues and the transparency of the government. These could be the reasons why trust in government is so low among the respondents.

They were also asked if the level of the public trust toward government is at a normal level; 195 people or 89.86 percent strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement. At the same time around 117 respondents or 53.91 percent mentioned inadequate knowledge of rule of law and policy making among National Assembly delegates as a primary obstacle for Armenia to transition to a democracy. If we compare these two answers we could come to the conclusion that public trust in government is at a low rate because they don't believe that the delegates of NA are capable enough to make appropriate decisions.

It is obvious that the majority of respondents are dissatisfied with the government's fulfillment of basic democratic values, such as freedom of speech and freedom of expression; they are also dissatisfied with the functions of the government and the opportunities for candidates to run their campaigns equally and freely. Cassiani described hybrid regime as a type of government where the nominal democratic institutions coexist within persistent

practices of authoritarian patterns of governance. As it was mentioned by Levistky and Way (2010) in competitive authoritarianism the competition among candidates exists, but it is neither equal nor fair. Moreover, democratic institutions in this kind of regime are highly corrupt, the judiciary is weak, and such other similarities with Armenia prevail. More than 90.7 percent of the respondents think that the main obstacle for Armenia is corruption. They were also asked if Armenia has a strong law enforcement practice.



Graph 4: Does Armenia have a strong law enforcement practice?

Table 1 shows that the correlation between public trust and public belief that everybody is equal before the law. Respondents who strongly disagree or disagree that trust in the government is at a normal rate, do not believe that everybody is equal before the law.

		Do you think everyone is equal before the law in Armenia?	Public trust in the government is at a normal level
Do you think everyone is equal before the law in Armenia?	Pearson Correlation	1	0.181**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.008
	N	216	216
Public trust in the government is at a normal level	Pearson Correlation	0.181**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	
	N	216	217

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 (2-tailed).

Table 1: Correlation between the public trust and believe that people in Armenia are equal before the law.

Positive correlation exists between those who consider that all persons are not equal before the law in Armenia and those who think that public trust in government is at a normal level.

For further developing the country the majority of respondents agree that the government needs a strong anti-corruption system (188 respondents or 86.63 percent of the total) and they are also in favor of changing the constitution to a parliamentary system of government rather than presidential (77 responders or 35.48 percent). Moreover, the majority of respondents — 163 respondents or 117 percent — do not feel that the government controls them, while 54 respondents or 24.88 percent feel that it does. Further, the majority of respondents (169 or 77.88 percent) would not want to see an increase in government control of the media. The results show that the government should consider making changes to the RA constitution, but at the same time the population neither thinks that they are controlled by the government nor want to have more control of the media.

When the respondents were asked to acknowledge the main obstacle for Armenia to become a more prosperous country, they mentioned corruption as the primary reason: 197 respondents or 90.7 percent; the level of education of the population: 130 respondents or 59.9 percent; not adequately trained civil servants: 144 respondents or 66.35 percent; close borders with neighbors: 145 respondents or 66.82 percent; unresolved political problems with two of its neighboring countries: 158 respondents or 72.81 percent; lack of a strong national identity and values: 97 respondents or 44.7 percent and lack of advancement of democratic institutions; 149 respondents or 68.66 percent.

The majority of respondents consider Armenia to be a country that does not have a competitive market. They also think that the constitution of Armenia give too much power to the president; 129 responders or 59.44 percent. Analysts have labelled our constitution as being “hyper-presidential” — a constitution that gives too much power to the president, the whole system is under his control even the judiciary system, which must be an independent body.

All the results mentioned above show that Armenia is more likely to have a hybrid regime rather than purely democratic or autocratic. All the features that were previously mentioned by authors and research work reviewed have posited that a hybrid regime exists in Armenia.

Moreover, the majority of the respondents answered that the Republican party’s ideology is based on *tseghakron*¹ not strong enough to gather Armenians from all over the world around it, but at the same time they didn’t consider the lack of national identity and values as a primary obstacle for further development. This is important as in many autocratic countries ideology plays a key role in the style used in governance. Those countries reviewed earlier have a strong ideology that has successfully gathered its citizens around one single idea.

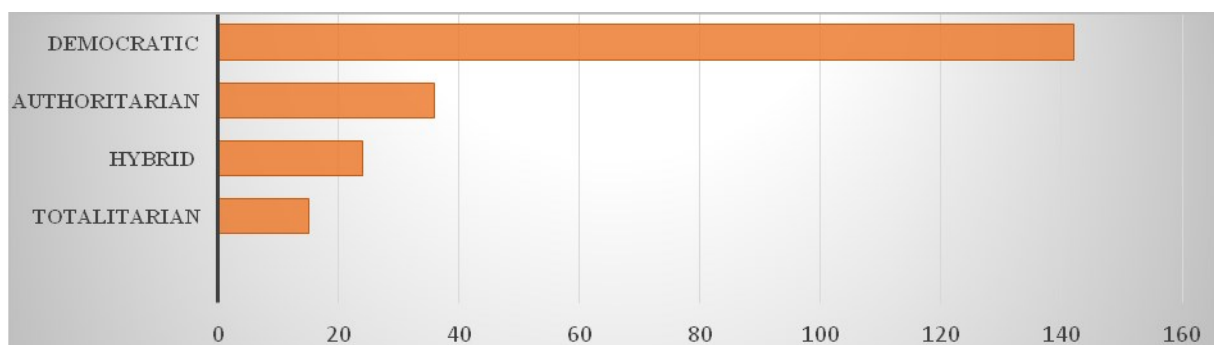
At the same time the majority of the respondents believe that they do not want Diaspora Armenians or groups to be involved in the internal politics of the country (162 responders or 74.65%). Those who answered that they would like Diaspora to be involved in

¹ An early 20th-century Armenian nationalist ideology (roughly translated as "nation-religion"). It was formulated by Garegin Nzhdeh and holds that the Armenian national identity and state should carry religious significance for all ethnic Armenians.

the internal politics of the country mentioned only two reasons: “they are also Armenians and they have the right to make a decision” or “They send money to Armenia and have the right to voice their opinion.”

The government of Armenia has reported positive economic growth in recent years, but the respondents do not agree with it. 178 respondents or 82.2 percent confirm that they totally disagree or disagree with the statement that Armenia is moving forward at a steady development pace.

Although the majority of participants acknowledge that Armenia has adopted a hybrid regime after the collapse of the Soviet Union they think that a better option for Armenia would be to move forward to a fully democratic regime. 142 people or 65 percent of respondents think that democratic regime is the most appropriate for Armenia; on second place is authoritarian regime with 36 respondents or 16.58 percent of the total; followed by the hybrid regime with 24 responders or 11.05 percent; and totalitarianism with 15 responders or 6.9 percent.



Graph 5: The type of regime preferred for Armenia?

Table 2. Crosstabulation

	The types of regime most appropriate for Armenia				Total
	Democratic	Authoritarian	Hybrid regime	Totalitarian	
Political Science	37	7	7	6	57
Economist	21	9	1	0	31
Public Administration	5	1	1	0	7
Historian/theologian	13	1	3	0	17
Engineer	3	2	0	1	6
PR manager	0	0	1	0	1
Linguist / teacher	9	2	4	1	16
Coordinator	0	1	0	0	1
Financier	2	0	1	0	3
Doctor	10	3	0	1	14
Journalist	3	0	0	0	3
Sociologist	0	1	0	0	1
Auditor	3	0	0	0	3
IT technology	11	0	1	2	14
Psychologist	2	0	1	1	4
Chemist	3	2	1	0	6
Physicist	1	0	0	1	2
Athlete	2	4	0	0	6
Lawyer	5	1	2	1	9
Marketing specialist	12	2	1	1	16
Totals	142	36	24	15	217

Table 2 shows the link between those who consider democratic regime as a best option for Armenia and their profession. Political science students are those who consider that the best option for Armenia is a democratic regime, followed by economists and marketing specialists.

Interestingly the majority of the respondents do not consider Singapore as a good example for Armenia and even if the quality of life in Singapore is higher than in many democratic countries the respondents answer that they wouldn't live in the country where every single step of the citizens is controlled by the government. 79 Responders or 36.4% answered that they do not consider the regime in Singapore as a good option for Armenia, while 67 respondents or 30.87% stated that they would consider it; all other respondents were neutral or unsure. At the same time 163 said that they would not live in Singapore, and 54 people agree to live in Singapore if they have such kind of opportunity.

INTERVIEWS

The notes from the in-depth expert interviews were codified and scored according to the strength of the expert's position on each of the pre-set classifications/descriptors, on a scale of 1 to 5, where one represented the weakest point.

The classifications/descriptors are:

- a. Armenia has an authoritarian regime of government
- b. Close borders is one of the main reason why Armenia is not developing
- c. Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh prevented the further development of Armenia
- d. Low public trust is one of the main reasons why Armenia is not developing
- e. Transition to full authoritarian regime would help Armenia to become a more prosperous country

ARMENIA HAS AN AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT (2.2)

It was inferred from the analysis of the interview that Armenia today is considered to have a hybrid regime. The majority of the officials stated that “Armenia has democratic institutions, but is not totally democratic. It has the characteristics of an authoritarian regime.”

It was also noted that even if in the constitution of Armenia in chapter 1, article one is stated that: “The Republic of Armenia is a sovereign, democratic, social state government” in reality some of the democratic institutions are not functioning properly. Three experts noted that because of the current situation it is more likely that we have a hybrid regime. Taking into consideration all the aforementioned arguments, the mean of responses given by the experts in the interview is in the middle for the descriptors (2.2) which means that today Armenia has a hybrid regime.

TRANSITION TO FULL AUTHORITARIAN REGIME WILL HELP ARMENIA DEVELOP FASTER

(2.2)

At the same time the experts were agreeing that an authoritarian regime is not the best option for Armenia. They have mentioned that though there are countries which have shifted to the full authoritarian regime and succeeded, but Armenia should move toward democracy. One of the experts mentioned that an authoritarian regime could become a better option for Armenia, if the public would be aware of the current rules and if the new government would keep the rules and move according to those rules. But as there is no ground for those kinds of changes in Armenia it is not the better choice to shift to full authoritarianism. Full authoritarianism could create an even worse situation in this case. Citizens of Armenia aren't

ready to this kind of changes. Even government by itself is not ready to shift to the full authoritarian regime.

Experts mentioned that though we are moving slow, but we have a right track and creation of a stable democracy is the right choice for us.

The main obstacles for Armenia to become more prosperous country:

- a. **Close borders with neighboring country (4.0)**
- b. **Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh (4.2)**
- c. **Low public trust toward the governmental actions (4.2)**

The government officials stated that the main reason why Armenia is not developing at the faster pace is the close borders with the neighbor country. They stated that it is one of the important problems which Armenia should overcome in order to reach its significant development. Four of the experts acknowledge it as a primary reason. Taking into consideration all the aforementioned arguments, the mean of responses given by the expert's interview is in the high for the descriptors, it is 4.0.

Related to the previous descriptor the experts stated that conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh remain one of the primer obstacles for Armenia today. They stated that until Armenia would not resolve the problems with the neighboring countries it would be difficult to speak about further developing of the country. Today, Armenia is mainly depended from Russia. Russia is one of the main trade partner of Armenia, as well as the mediator in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. One of the experts stated that many officials in Armenia use the problem with neighboring country in order to stay in power.

All the officials agree that the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh is the main obstacle for Armenia. The mean of this descriptor is 4.2.

Most of the experts said that there is a low rate of public trust toward the government. They mentioned that public has no trust to the actions of the government. Until government of Armenia would not improve the situation it would be impossible to speak about further development. Public are not aware of government actions and until this gap is not filled it is impossible to speak about further development.

TESTING THE HYPOTHESIS

My hypothesis was rejected, because the data provided from the chapter four shows that population of Armenia and the government officials do not think that the authoritarian regimes would help Armenia to become a more prosperous country. Although in some countries such as Singapore the transition to the full authoritarian regime brings to better economic conditions and makes these countries more prosperous, the results have shown that most respondents did not perceive that such a regime would be an option or did not understand the concept well enough to provide an educated guess.

The results have also shown that Armenians continue to have an ambition to move towards Western democratic and market principles. This demonstrates a desire for change, albeit a desire tempered by contradictions and uncertainty. This commitment has been particularly visible in Armenia's efforts towards the development of a market economy in spite of the prevailing corruption, through the pursuit of economic restructuring and in accepting macro-economic reforms in consultation with the International Monetary Fund and other organizations. To this date, the results

have been limited due to a visible lack of experience and knowledge of democratization, which is a wholly new concept to a society used to Soviet authoritarian rule for more than 70 years.

We can state that Armenia continues to be a country in transition. Since its independence it has become a member of several international organizations and started developing state institutions, making changes in the constitution according to its obligations with international organizations, adopting new laws, as necessary. During this democratization process Armenia has been trying to find changes, making baby steps forward. But there also were steps that brought the country backward.

An all-encompassing understanding of the concept of democracy is thus fundamental to better assess the reach of the democratization processes. The expectations associated with these processes, their demands and often deficient implementation, have sometimes led to reversals, demonstrating the difficulties of the post-communist transition — developments that have led critics to question the appropriateness of applying a standard democratization model.

An assessment of the Armenian path towards democratization is closely linked to internal political options and changing strategic alignments. Mixed neighborly and global relations are marked by the Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) conflict, rendering the regional setting very complex. Armenia has no official diplomatic relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan and has depended on its other neighbors to counterbalance this isolation. Russia is Armenia's most important partner and good relations with both Georgia and Iran are perceived as an asset in this difficult set-up. In addition, the role of other actors in the area, in particular the

EU and the United States, further complicates the political-economic and security dealings of both national and regional policies.

CONCLUSIONS

The summary of the results shows that Western authors, the population in Armenia and different governmental officials agree that Armenia has a mixed form of government, but it is determined to move forth with democratization. The principal reason for the slow progress in the democratization process is the lingering impact of the Soviet regime. After the collapse of Soviet Union Armenia proclaimed itself as a democratic country, but had no knowledge and experience of the values and principles to adopt to move it away from authoritarianism. Though Armenia has slowly established many democratic institutions, it has not been able to overcome the difficulties imposed by its geographic position and the often contradictory impositions by Russia and the EU. Both the results from the survey and expert interviews show that the determination and choice for democratization exists. The relatively weaker law enforcement practices, corruption problems, and other internal issues aside from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict were considered as primary problems for Armenia's slow democratization.

Although most respondents agree that today Armenia represents more of a hybrid regime than a democracy, the desire to democratization continues to be strong and changing to an authoritarian regime is not an option. It is obvious, however, that a push is needed to learning about programs and processes where civil society produces better policy options for Armenia.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study has shown that there continues to be a lack of knowledge in Armenia on the different forms of government and, more importantly, on the democratic values that are absent there and in other former Soviet republics. Thus, suggestions for future research include looking into what would increase collective knowledge to move the population away from traditional authoritarian practices.

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ANNEX 1

SURVEY QUESTIONER

General Questions on Personal Characteristics- Question 1-5- *for each of these questions below, please mark the box that best fits your personal characteristics.*

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age

- 15-21
- 22-31
- 31-60+

3. Level of education

- Technical/Vocational diploma
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate or post-doctoral education

4. Where are you currently study or work?

- Eurasia International University
- France University of Armenia
- Russian- Armenian (Slavonik) University
- Haybusak University of Yerevan
- Yerevan Gladzor University
- American University of Armenia
- Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture
- Armenian State Pedagogic University
- Yerevan State Linguistic University
- Yerevan State Medical University
- Yerevan State Institute of Economy
- Goris State University
- Vanadzor State University
- Gyumri Pedagogical University
- Yerevan State University
- State Engineering University of Armenia

5. Your profession is _____

Knowledge of the current political situation in Armenia- Question 6-8. *These questions are intended to measure your understanding of the subject.*

6. In your opinion, after the collapse of the Soviet Union which of the following types of government was adopted in Armenia?

- Democratic
- Fully Authoritarian
- Hybrid regime
- Totalitarian
- Other _____

7. In your opinion, which of the following types of regimes is most appropriate for Armenia? Rank order from the most appropriate [5] to the least appropriate [1]

1. Democratic
2. Fully Authoritarian
3. Hybrid regime
4. Totalitarian
5. Other _____

Level of Satisfaction- Question 8-18: These statements aim to measure the level of your satisfaction with the function of the different governmental institutions in Armenia.

On a Likert scale of 1 through 5, where 1= total dissatisfaction; 2 = dissatisfaction; 3= neutral; 4 = satisfaction; 5=full satisfaction; please check the number that best reflects the level of satisfaction with the following provisions:

	1	2	3	4	5
8. Freedom of the press					
9. Freedom of expression					
10. Opportunity for candidates to compete freely in elections					
11. Equal opportunity for candidates to air their campaigns					
12. The economy of Armenia is moving forward at a steady pace					
13. The government's activities are transparent to the people					
14. Public awareness of issues is promoted by the government					
15. Public trust in the government is at a normal level					
16. Anti-corruption strategy adapted by the government					
17. Quality of education is improving with the Bologna process					
18. Although Armenia claims to be democratic, but its governance is closer to being autocratic					

19. What are the main obstacles for Armenia to become more prosperous? On a Likert scale of 1 through 5, where 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5 strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Corruption					
Average level of education of the population					
Not adequately trained civil servants					
Closed borders with neighbors					
Unresolved political problems with two of its neighboring countries					
Lack of a strong national identity and values					
Lack of collective knowledge of rule of law and policy making by delegates of the National Assembly					
Lack of advancement of democratic institutions					

20. Which of the following countries is more democratic in your point of view? Rank order the countries listed below from [1] most democratic to [10] least democratic

Armenia
 Georgia
 Azerbaijan
 Russia
 USA
 North Korea
 China
 Singapore
 France
 Turkey

21. Singapore has moved to full authoritarian regime and succeeded. Do you consider it as a good example for Armenia?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Questions 22-34. These questions aim to find out people's perception toward transition to strong authoritarian regime.

22. Do you think transition to full authoritarianism will lead to better economic conditions?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
23. Do you have feeling that the government controls your every step?
- Yes
 - No
24. How do you think the government should increase its control of the media as it was during Soviet rule?
- Yes
 - No
25. Imagine you have an opportunity to live in Singapore where everything is under government control, but the quality of life is superior, would you want to live there?
- Yes
 - No
26. How do you think our government needs strong anti-corruption program?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
27. How do you think Armenia have fully competitive market?
- Yes
 - No
28. Do you think everyone is equal before the law in Armenia?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
29. Do you think our constitution gives too much power to our president?
- Yes
 - No
30. Will you prefer to have a parliamentary system rather than presidential system?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

31. How do you think Armenia has strong law enforcement practice?

- Yes
- No

32. Today the Republican Party's ideology is based on *tseghakron*. Do you think it is a strong ideology or we need to create a new ideology, which will gather Armenians all over the world around it?

- Yes, we need a new one
- No, this one is good enough
- Don't know

33. Should Diaspora Armenians be engaged in the internal politics of Armenia?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

34. If "yes", explain why and how _____

ANNEX 2

THE LIST OF UNIVERSITIES WHERE THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

Eurasia International University

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/212286474261/?fref=ts>

France University of Armenia- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/300303386744159/>

Russian- Armenian (Slavonic) University-

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RauUniversity/>

Haybusak University of Yerevan-

https://www.facebook.com/groups/haybusak/?notif_t=group_r2j_approved-

Yerevan Gladzor University-<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Yerevan-Gladzor-University/151269381600082?fref=ts->

American University of Armenia-

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/217036625079982/?fref=ts>

Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture-

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/fizkult-institut/136059736411119>

Armenian State Pedagogic University-

<https://www.facebook.com/mankavarjakan.hamalsaran.75>

Yerevan State Linguistic University-

https://www.facebook.com/yslu.bryusov.9?fref=pb&hc_location=friends_tab-

Yerevan State Medical University-

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Yerevan-State-Medical-University/257632814368419?fref=ts>

Yerevan State Institute of Economy-

https://www.facebook.com/groups/137423059663118/?notif_t=group_r2j_approved

Goris State University-

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Գորիսի-պետական-համալսարանի-ՈԻսանոդական-Խորհուրդ/545261075514546>

Vanadzor State University-

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100007355700819&fref=ts>

Gyumri Pedagogical University

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100004888231902&fref=ts>

Yerevan State University-

<https://www.facebook.com/yerevanipetakan.hamalsaran.5>

State Engineering University of Armenia-

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Երևանի-Ճարտարապետության-և-Շինարարության-Պետական-Համալսարան/339562482818680?fref=ts>

ANNEX 3

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1.** Does Armenia have an authoritarian type of government?
- 2.** Do close borders affect Armenia's democratization process and its development?
- 3.** Is the level of public trust reason for the slow advancement toward democratization?
- 4.** Is the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict slowing down progress for Armenia?
- 5.** Would transitioning to authoritarianism change the situation to the better?