

**DOKUZ EYLÜL UNIVERSITY**  
**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**  
**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS MASTER PROGRAM**  
**MASTER'S THESIS**

**A POST-SOVIET STATE UNDER RUSSIAN THREAT:  
EXPLAINING GEORGIA'S ALIGNMENT  
PREFERENCES**

**Murat GÜNEYLİOĞLU**

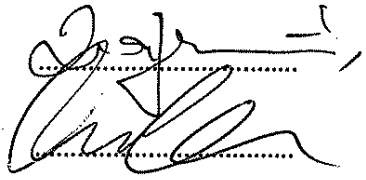
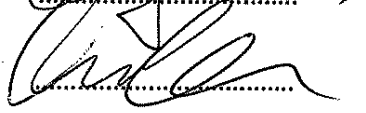
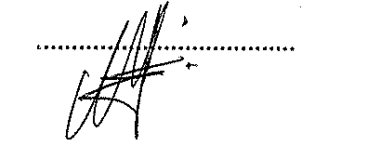
**Supervisor**  
**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nazif MANDACI**

**2011**

MASTER THESIS/PROJECT  
APPROVAL PAGE

University : Dokuz Eylul University  
Graduate School : Graduate School of Social Science  
Name and Surname : Murat GÜNEYLIOĞLU  
Title of Thesis : A Post-Soviet State Under Russian Threat: Explaining Georgia's Alignment Preferences  
Defence Date : 23.06.2011  
Supervisor : Assoc.Prof.Dr. Nazif MANDACI

EXAMINING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<u>Title, Name and Surname</u>	<u>University</u>	<u>Signature</u>
Assoc.Prof.Dr.Nazif MANDACI	YAŞAR UNIVERSITY	
Assist.Prof.Dr.Şevket OVALI	DOKUZ EYLÜL UNIVERSITY	
Assist.Prof.Dr.Ahmet Nazmi ÜSTE	DOKUZ EYLÜL UNIVERSITY	

Unanimity (✓)  
Majority of votes ( )

The thesis titled as "A Post-Soviet State Under Russian Threat: Explaining Georgia's Alignment Preferences" prepared and presented by Murat GÜNEYLIOĞLU is accepted and approved.

Prof.Dr. Utku UTKULU  
Director

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this master's thesis titled as "**A Post-Soviet State Under Russian Threat: Explaining Georgia's Alignment Preferences**" has been written by myself without applying the help that can be contrary to academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resources in the reference list. I verify all these with my honour.

Date

.../.../.....

Murat GÜNEYLİOĞLU

Signature

## ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Rus Tehdidi Altında Sovyet Sonrası bir Ülke:  
Gürcistan'ın İttifak Seçeneklerinin Açıklanması

Murat GÜNEYLİOĞLU

Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi  
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü  
Uluslararası İlişkiler Anabilim Dalı  
İngilizce Uluslararası İlişkiler Programı

Bağımsızlığından bu yana Gürcistan küçük bir devlet olarak, egemenliğini ve toprak bütünlüğünü güvence altına alma yolunda, önemli zorluklarla karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Sovyet sonrası ülkelerde görülen birçok diğer problemin yanı sıra, Abhazya'da ve Güney Osetya'daki etnik ayrımcılık ve bu çatışmaların güçlü komşu Rusya tarafından manipülasyonu Gürcü devletini oldukça savunmasız bir konuma itmiştir. Bu yüzden Gürcistan, Rusya'yı dengelemek ve bağımsızlığını güçlendirmek amacıyla, dış devletlerin müttefikliğine ihtiyaç duymuştur. Ancak Gürcistan her zaman Rusya'yı dengelemeyi tercih etmemiş ve 1993 yılının sonunda Moskova'yla güvenlik işbirliğine dayalı bir ittifaka gitmiştir. Birkaç yıl içinde Gürcü devleti ittifak stratejisini yeniden Rus tehdidini dengelemek üzere değiştirmiş ve ABD ve Avrupalı devletlerin bir müttefiki olmuştur.

Bu çalışma Rus tehdidine bir cevap olarak gelişen Gürcistan'ın ittifak seçeneklerini açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Gürcistan'ın Rusya da dahil olmak üzere, dış devletlerle kurduğu ittifakların gerçek nedenlerini ve sonuçlarını inceleyebilmek için, Stephen Walt'un tehdit dengesi (balance-of-threat) teorisi ve bu teorinin eleştirileri kullanılacaktır. Ayrıca Gürcistan'ın NATO üyesi ülkelerle oluşturduğu ittifakın temelleri incelenecek ve Gürcistan-NATO ilişkilerine yönelik genel bir bakış ortaya konulacaktır. 2008'deki Rusya-Gürcistan savaşının, bu ilişkiler üzerinde ortaya koyduğu yeni anlamlar da çalışma içerisinde tartışılmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Grcistan, gvenlik, (uluslararası) ittifaklar, tehdit dengesi (balance-of-threat), Rusya-Grcistan iliřkileri, NATO-Grcistan iliřkileri.

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Master's Thesis**

#### **A Post-Soviet State under Russian Threat: Explaining Georgia's Alignment Preferences**

**Murat GÜNEYLİOĞLU**

**Dokuz Eylül University  
Graduate School of Social Sciences  
Department of International Relations  
International Relations Master Program**

Since its independence Georgia, as a small state had many difficulties in securing its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Besides many other problems that observed in all post-Soviet states, the ethnic separatism in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the manipulation of these conflicts by Russia –the powerful neighbor, put the state in a very vulnerable situation. For that reason Georgia needed external states as allies to balance Russia and consolidate its independence against the former hegemonic power. However Georgia did not choose always to balance Russia and formed an alignment with Moscow, beginning in the end of 1993 that was based on security cooperation. In several years, the Georgian state shifted its alignment strategy to balance again and it became an ally of the US and the European States.

This study aims at explaining alignment choices of Georgia that emerged as a response against the Russian threat. It uses Stephen Walt's balance-of-threat theory and its critics to examine the real reasons for and consequences of the alliances that Georgia formed with the external states including Russia. It also examines the origins of the alignment between Georgia and NATO member states and gives an overview of the NATO-Georgia relations. The implications of the Russia-Georgia war of 2008 on this relations are also discussed.

**Key Words:** Georgia, security, alliances, balance-of-threat, Russia-Georgia relations, NATO-Georgia relations.

**A POST-SOVIET STATE UNDER RUSSIAN THREAT: EXPLAINING  
GEORGIA’S ALIGNMENT PREFERENCES**

TEZ ONAY SAYFASI.....	ii
YEMİN METNİ.....	iii
ÖZET .....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ABBREVIATIONS .....	x
LIST OF MAPS .....	xii
INTRODUCTION .....	1

**CHAPTER ONE**

**THEORETICAL BACKGROUND FOR ALLIANCE FORMATION**

1.1. BALANCING, ALIGNING AND BANDWAGONING: NEOREALIST VIEW	8
1.2. BALANCE-OF-THREAT THEORY.....	12
1.2.1. Aggregate Power.....	13
1.2.2. Geographic Proximity .....	14
1.2.3. Offensive Power.....	15
1.2.4. Aggressive Intentions.....	16
1.2.5. Conditions that Favor Bandwagoning.....	18
1.2.5.1. Weak and Strong States .....	18
1.2.5.2. The Availability of Allies.....	19
1.2.5.3. The Impact of Intentions .....	20
1.2.6. The Instruments of Alliance Formation: Foreign Aid and Transnational Penetration.....	21
1.2.6.1. Foreign Aid .....	21
1.2.6.2. Transnational Penetration.....	22
1.2.7. The Relative Advantages of Balance-of-Threat Theory .....	25
1.3. CRITICS OF BALANCE-OF-THREAT THEORY AND ALTERNATIVE THEORIES OF ALLIANCE FORMATION .....	27

1.3.1. Omnibalancing Theory .....	29
1.3.2. Balance-of-Interest Theory (Bandwagoning for Profit).....	33

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**THE GEORGIAN STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND**  
**GAMSAKHURDIA’S PERIOD**

2.1. THE HISTORY OF GEORGIA .....	37
2.2. THE GAMSAKHURDIA PERIOD.....	40
2.2.1. The Sources of Russian Threat .....	43
2.2.2. Conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia: Internal Threats or Not? .....	46

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**FROM THE BANDWAGONING DECISION TO THE BALANCING**  
**STRATEGY: GEORGIA UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF**  
**SHEVARDNADZE**

3.1. RUSSIAN ABILITY TO COMPEL OBEIDENCE .....	55
3.2. GEORGIA JOINS THE CIS.....	60
3.3. THE REASONS FOR GEORGIA’S BANDWAGONING IN BALANCE-OF- THREAT PERSPECTIVE.....	66
3.3.1. The Impact of Intentions (The possibility of Appeasement) .....	66
3.3.2. The Availability of Allies .....	68
3.4. TOWARDS THE BALANCING STRATEGY.....	73
3.4.1. Georgia’s Acquaintance with NATO through the PfP Program.....	74
3.4.2. The Emergence of GUAM: Anti-CIS? .....	77
3.4.3. Demands on the Withdrawal of Russian Bases and the End of Bandwagoning Period .....	81
3.4.4. The Second Chechnya War and Georgia’s Position in the post-9/11 Security Environment.....	83
3.4.5. The Account of the Balancing Period under Shevardnadze Administration	87



**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**THE ROSE REVOLUTION AND AFTER**

4.1. THE ROSE REVOLUTION: A TRANSNATIONAL PENETRATION ACT?	91
4.1.1. US-Western Involvement in the Rose Revolution	93
4.1.2. What was the Rose Revolution for?	97
4.2. SAAKASHVILI'S RELATIONS WITH THE EXTERNAL POWERS: USA, EU AND RUSSIA	99
4.2.1. The Bush Administration and Saakashvili	99
4.2.2. The European Union	102
4.2.3. The Russian Federation: From Cooperation to Confrontation	106
4.3. GEORGIA'S BID FOR A NATO MEMBERSHIP: AN ASMMETRY OF MOTIVATION?	110
4.3.1. Georgia's Motives for its Accession to NATO	111
4.3.2. The Interests of the NATO Members in an Alliance with Georgia	112
4.4. THE RUSSIA-GEORGIA WAR OF 2008 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS	115
4.4.1. A Five-Day War	118
4.4.2. The Western Steps and Mediation	119
4.4.3. The Post-War Situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia	120
4.4.4. The Implications of the War on Georgia's Alignment Policies	121
4.4.5. New Policies by the Obama Administration and Recent Developments	124
CONCLUSION	129
BIBLIOGRAPHY	139

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BTC</b>	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline
<b>BTE</b>	Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Natural Gas Pipeline
<b>CFE</b>	Treaty of Conventional Forces in Europe
<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>CST</b>	Collective Security Treaty
<b>CSTO</b>	Collective Security Treaty Organization
<b>CUG</b>	Citizens' Union of Georgia
<b>DoD</b>	US Department of Defense
<b>EAPC</b>	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
<b>ENP</b>	European Neighborhood Policy
<b>ESDP</b>	European Security and Defense Policy
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GTEP</b>	Georgia Train and Equip Program
<b>GUAM</b>	Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova
<b>GUUAM</b>	Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova
<b>ID</b>	Intensified Dialogue
<b>INOGATE</b>	Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe
<b>IPAP</b>	Individual Partnership Action Plan
<b>ISAF</b>	International Security Assistance Force
<b>ISFED</b>	International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy
<b>KFOR</b>	Kosovo Force
<b>MAP</b>	Membership Action Plan
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MoD</b>	Ministry of Defense
<b>NACC</b>	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NDI</b>	National Democratic Institute
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
<b>OSI</b>	Open Society Institute

<b>PCA</b>	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
<b>PfP</b>	Partnership for Peace
<b>RF</b>	Russian Federation
<b>SSOP</b>	Sustainment and Stability Operations Program
<b>TACIS</b>	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>TCP</b>	Trans-Caspian Project
<b>TRACECA</b>	Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNOMIG</b>	United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
<b>US</b>	United States
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USAID</b>	US Agency for International Development
<b>USSR</b>	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization

## **LIST OF MAPS**

Map 1: Georgia Political Map	p. 4
Map 2: Geopolitical Map of the Caucasus Region	p. 5

## INTRODUCTION

What is Georgia's position in the geopolitical struggle over the Caucasus? How has the state been affected by strategic behaviors of the great powers and international organizations that are active in post-Soviet space? What are the interests of Tbilisi in its relations with Russia, USA and Europe? Because Georgia has a strategic location between Black Sea and the CIS area, its choices among different alignment opportunities in its around has a lot to tell about the future of the power struggle over the Caucasus region that connects the West to the Newly Independent States. To offer reliable answers to these important questions above, one need an analysis of Georgia's alignment preferences that were made since its independence.

This study aims at explaining alignment choices of Georgia. The focus will be on security cooperation between Georgia and its allies, because alliances are defined as arrangements for security cooperation in the neorealist literature. The methodology of the study, uses the competing theories of alliance formation to explain Georgia's alignment strategy from different aspects. Since it is thought that Stephen Walt's balance-of-threat theory is the most suitable and explanatory one for Georgia's alignment behavior, the study mostly uses its hypotheses in examining the data significant to understand alignment motives of Georgia. The chapters of this study not only deal with the reasons for Georgia's alignment strategy but also put forth the consequences with all implications it promoted for Georgia and its allies.

Georgia, as a small state, bordering Russia had many difficulties in consolidating its independence and ensuring its survival. Without external assistance it did not possible for Georgia to provide the control and sovereignty over its land. Because the turmoil in the Caucasus after the dissolution of the Soviet Union promoted ethnic separatism in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as the governments of these regions initiated their own independent state building projects. The manipulation of these ethnic conflicts by the former hegemonic power Russia further increased the problems of security for Georgia. For that reason, the Georgian state's foreign policy was driven by mostly its motives on providing the immediate security

of the country. Accordingly its alignment behavior was mostly shaped by its aim at gaining foreign assistance and securing its independence. That is why this study's focus is on the high security issues. Through its chapters the study mostly deals with the issues of territorial integrity, external-internal threats, conflicts, security cooperation, and foreign military assistance. The other important issues outside the security realm, e.g. Georgia's economic and democratic development remain beyond the scope of the analysis.

The study examines particularly Georgia's relations with the external states, mainly Russia, the US, the European countries and partly, some regional states i.e. Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Turkey. Georgia's relations with important international organizations; Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), NATO, the European Union; and the GUAM group (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova) are also analyzed in terms of their implications on Georgia's security policies.

The first chapter outlines the neorealist theoretical approaches to alliance formation. It gives an overview of competing theories; balance-of-power, balance-of-threat, omnibalancing and balance-of-interest. The aim of this chapter is to introduce the main hypotheses of these theories and discuss their explanatory power in Georgia's alignment strategy. To avoid a pure summary of theoretical disputes, data from the Georgia case and theoretical views are interconnected.

Then, the second chapter begins to analyze the Georgia case using the theoretical suggestions. It examines Georgia's national struggle for independence against the Soviet Union to expose the evolution of the threat perceptions by Georgians. As Stephen Walt defines the sources of an external threat as 'aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power and aggressive intentions', it is also examined what those factors mean for Georgia case. Later the chapter gives an overview of conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia to introduce their effects on Georgia's alignment.

The third chapter, on the other hand, covers the Shevardnadze period that maintained more than ten years. However there was no continuity in Shevardnadze's alignment policies. Between 1994 and 1998, Tbilisi chose allying with Russia and gave up balancing the Russian threat. Then Shevardnadze adopted a clear balancing policy against Russia and became one of the Washington's key allies in 2000s. In this chapter, it is examined that why Georgia first decided to ally with Russia and what are the real reasons which induced this alignment to shift. The developments of NATO-Georgia relations since the mid-1990s and Georgia's position in the post-9/11 security environment are also examined within this chapter.

Finally, the chapter four examines the Rose Revolution's effects on Georgia's position in the international affairs. It is argued that the events led to the revolutionary regime change was mostly manipulated by Georgia's Western allies, therefore had significant effects on Georgia's alignment with the West. The new President Mikheil Saakashvili soon defined Georgia's national goals as joining the EU and NATO. However, while Georgia faced many important difficulties and impediments in the process of integration into the Euro-Atlantic security structures, it also promoted a direct confrontation with Russia which vehemently opposed Georgia's NATO membership. At the end Georgia's attack on South Ossetia, in 2008, transformed the tensions between Georgia and Russia into a real war. In this sense, the fourth chapter examines the consequences of Georgia's bid for a NATO membership in terms of its relations with the West and Russia. It also discusses the prospects of such a membership with all implications the 2008 war brought.

In conclusion, first the theoretical implications of the study's findings are outlined to expose the results by the testing of the theories of alliance formation in Georgia case. It is argued that while balance-of-threat theory captures most of the important aspects of Georgia's alignment, the critics also contributes to explain some niceties of the state's behavior which the former fails to clarify. Then the implications for policy are presented that define the nature and limits of the alignment between Georgia and the West.

**Map 1: Georgia Political Map**



Source: *The World Factbook 2011*. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency. 2011. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gg.html> (Central Intelligence Agency announces that the *Factbook* is in the public domain and it may be copied freely without permission of CIA.)





## CHAPTER ONE

### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND FOR ALLIANCE FORMATION

*It is impossible to speak of international relations without referring to alliances.*<sup>1</sup>

This chapter aims to introduce the main theories which are improved to explain alliance formation and/or alignment behaviors of particular states. In this chapter, I seek answers for three distinct questions: First, what do the main theories of alliance formation tell and how do they predict alignment behaviors of particular states? Second, which theory is the most suitable and explanatory for Georgia's state behavior in the face of international developments in its around. And finally, in what points do the modalities of the relevant theories benefit to the hallmarks of the Georgian alignment policy and in what points they fall short in reflecting the logic of its change and continuities.

Before moving to theories of alliance formation, one should begin with identifying the concepts of 'alliance', 'alignment' and 'bandwagoning'. Stephen Walt defines alliance as "a formal and informal arrangement for security cooperation between two or more sovereign states."<sup>2</sup> This identification is also accepted by the scholars who criticize Walt's theory and suggest their alternative theories.<sup>3</sup> Walt's definition includes both "formal alliances where the commitment is enshrined in a

---

<sup>1</sup> George Liska, **Nations in Alliances: The Limits of Interdependence**, John Hopkins University Press, 1962, p. 3, Quoted in Emerson M. S. Niou and Peter C. Ordeshook, "Alliances in Anarchic International Systems", **International Studies Quarterly**, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Jun., 1994), p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen M. Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1987, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> See Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962-73", **International Organization**, Vol. 45, No. 3, (Summer, 1991), p. 370; and Steven R. David "Explaining Third World Alignment" **World Politics**, Vol. 43, No. 2, (Jan., 1991), p. 234. In balance-of-power theory, on the other hand, alliances are identified as the apparatuses which have a central importance in promoting balances of power and in determination of distribution of power within a given international system. See Michael Sheean, **Balance of Power: History and Theory**, Routledge, London, 1996, p. 54-59 and Kenneth Waltz, **Theory of International Politics**, McGraw-Hill Inc, New York, 1979, p. 118. Morgenthau also defines the term alliance with special reference to balance of power concept: "The historically most important manifestation of the balance of power...is to be found... in the relations between one nation or alliance and another alliance." Quoted in Emerson M. S. Niou and Peter C. Ordeshook, "Alliances in Anarchic International Systems", 1994, p. 167.

written treaty and informal ad hoc agreements based either on tacit understandings or some tangible form of commitment, such as verbal assurances, or joint military exercises.”<sup>4</sup> To justify his approach, Walt suggests that many contemporary states are unwilling to sign formal security treaties with their allies. If the analysis is limited to formal alliances, that would exclude many important cases.<sup>5</sup> Walt uses the terms alliance and alignment interchangeably, as some other scholars who study on alliances do.<sup>6</sup> Through its chapters, this study will also follow the same suit.

On the other hand, bandwagoning is a term which was brought by Stephen Van Evera into international relations literature from domestic politics.<sup>7</sup> Both Evera and Kenneth Waltz use the term as opposite to ‘balancing behavior’ which means allying against the powerful side that is inherently threatening.<sup>8</sup> Therefore bandwagoning refers to grouping around a leading powerful state and joining the stronger alliance. It has to be noted that, Stephen Walt defines bandwagoning particularly in terms of threat rather than accounting the distribution of power. He suggests that bandwagoning is meant to be allying with the major source of threat.<sup>9</sup> Walt also exposes the distinction between bandwagoning behavior and the other types of rapprochement strategies such as mutual accommodation or detente.

---

<sup>4</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “Why Alliances Endure or Collapse”, **Survival**, Vol. 39, No. 1, (Spring 1997), p. 157.

<sup>5</sup> Walt gives a significant example: “There has never been a formal treaty of alliance between the United States and Israel, but no one would question the level of commitment between these two states”, Stephen M. Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 12

<sup>6</sup> See **Ibid.**, p. 12, Kenneth Waltz, **Theory of International Politics**, 1979, p. 118; Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962-73”, **International Organization**, Vol. 45, No. 3, (Summer, 1991), pp. 369-395. David, on the other hand, uses only the term alignment while examining alliance choices of the Third World. See Steven David, “Explaining Third World Alignment” **World Politics**, Vol. 43, No. 2, (Jan., 1991), pp. 233-256.

<sup>7</sup> Robert O. Keohane, “Alliances, Threats, and the Uses of Neorealism”, **International Security**, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Summer, 1988), p. 170.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Waltz, **Theory of International Politics**, 1979, pp. 126-127

<sup>9</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power”, **International Security**, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Spring, 1985), p. 4, This definition does not seem to contradict with Waltz and Evera. Because both Waltz and Evera gives bandwagoning to threats. For example Waltz suggests that secondary states tend to balance since it is the stronger side that threatens them. See Kenneth Waltz, **Theory of International Politics**, 1979, p. 127. On the other hand, Evera also uses the terms with reference to threats. See Stephen Van Evera, “Primed for Peace: Europe after the Cold War”, **International Security**, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Winter, 1990-1991), p. 20. One alternative definition to note is ‘bandwagoning for profit’ concept suggested by Schweller. For him, revisionist states may join the stronger side for alter the status quo to achieve their ends. See Randall L. Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In”, **International Security**, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer, 1994).

According to him, “bandwagoning involves unequal exchange; the vulnerable state makes asymmetrical concessions to the dominant power and accepts a subordinate role.”<sup>10</sup> Conversely, detente is possible only when the both sides converge in the mutual recognition of legitimate interest. Bandwagoning departs from the other types of rapprochements explicitly, since it indicates the “willingness to support or tolerate illegitimate actions by the dominant ally.”<sup>11</sup>

This chapter continues with the theories of alliance formation starting with balance-of-power theory –a fundamental theory of international politics. In the second section, Walt’s balance-of-threat theory is introduced within a more extended form since the theory covers many aspects of alliance politics with a large number of hypotheses. The third section includes the critics of Walt and of balance-of-power theory as well. Omni-balancing and balance-of-interest theories proposed by the scholars who criticized the previous theories, are also examined within the section. The reason why this section assigns a room to those alternative views is that it is thought that Walt’s theory cannot accurately explain all niceties of the Georgian foreign policy under the reign of succeeding leaders.

### **1.1. BALANCING, ALIGNING AND BANDWAGONING: NEOREALIST VIEW**

Balance of power is a key concept in international relations that contends important assumptions, theories -and a guide of foreign policy about distribution of power, maintaining peace and stability, as well as alliance formation. It has been accepted a reality for political scientists and its wide-spread usage through the history, inevitably exposed a lot of definitions for the concept.<sup>12</sup> The different usages

---

<sup>10</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “Alliance Formation in Southwest Asia: Balancing and Bandwagoning in Cold War Competition” In **Dominoes and bandwagons : strategic beliefs and great power competition in the Eurasian rimland** (eds.), Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder, Oxford University Press, New York, 1991, p. 55

<sup>11</sup> **Ibid**

<sup>12</sup> Sheehan has quoted some different particular definitions edited by Zinnes that dates back to the history from 18th century to 1977. The concept was defined in many meanings including an equal distribution of power, actions for maintaining power equilibrium between neighboring states, an international arrangement not to permit for domination, individual and jointly efforts by states against powerful and threatening states. See Michael Sheehan, **Balance of Power: History and Theory**, 1996, p. 2,3.

of balance of power concept cause confusion and make it very difficult to study with the theories examining alliance choices. Yet, when we narrow the scope to the realist and neo-realist school in which the theory has been improved and enriched, it is possible to seize the main characteristics of the concept. Classical realists who placed power politics in the centre of international affairs also utilize balance of power, however their approach based on human nature made it difficult to theorize it.

As the founder of structural realism, Kenneth Waltz presents a powerful and elegant version of balance-of-power theory in his book 'Theory of International Politics'. According to Waltz, "if there is any distinctively political theory of international politics, balance-of-power theory is it."<sup>13</sup> Waltz emphasizes the effects of structural constraints over state behavior that lead to formation of balances of power repeatedly. In a self-help system, within the anarchic international realm, states with weaker capabilities will suffer from powerful states and they are vulnerable to the dangers that risk their security and survival. This danger forces the states behave in ways that leads to balance. Balancing acts fall into two categories: internal and external efforts. Internal efforts cover the moves to increase one state's own national -economic and military power. On the other hand external efforts are about alignment strategies.<sup>14</sup> Since inequality among states cannot be disposed only by internal acts, the best option to create the system equilibrium is to use fluid alliances. In balance of power system, alliances are temporary and tend to be reshaped when the units realize that realignment would serve to benefit of balance of power.<sup>15</sup> The system of alliances reproduces balance of power that helps to maintaining international peace and stability.

Waltz uses the terms balancing and bandwagoning as opposite to each other in order to define alignment strategies. Balancing means allying with weaker states while bandwagoning means jumping into powerful side. He suggests that, "Secondary states if they are free to choose, flock to weaker side, for it is the stronger side that threatens them. On the weaker side they are both more appreciated

---

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth Waltz, **Theory of International Politics**, 1979, p. 117.

<sup>14</sup> Waltz, **ibid.**, p. 118

<sup>15</sup> Michael Sheehan, **Balance of Power: History and Theory**, 1996, p. 55,56.

and safer.” Even though joining the stronger side would increase one’s own power more, Waltz suggests, the security -not the power is the highest end in anarchic structure. For that reason the system induces balancing behavior to states. The first concern of a state is maintaining its position in international system rather than to maximize its power.<sup>16</sup>

If balance-of-power theory is true, then what about the weaker states that prefer bandwagoning? Or how can it be possible to explain different choices of the states that are relatively weak and located in the same region? Furthermore, in some cases opposite alignment strategies can be observed, adopted by the same state in different periods, as in the case of Georgia. According to Waltz, these questions cannot challenge the theory, because balance-of-power is instrumental in explaining the results of the systemic configurations, as ‘the recurrent formation of balance of power’. The theory, itself does not focus on the intentions and particular behaviors of states, although those combine to produce the result consequently.<sup>17</sup> Balance-of-power theory is a system level theory not a theory of foreign policy.<sup>18</sup> “The theory makes assumptions about the interests and motives of states rather than explaining them.”<sup>19</sup>

However there are many works inspired by neo-realism and used balance-of-power theory to explain particular state behaviors, and some scholars portray them as degenerating research design.<sup>20</sup> Using the theory to explain regional dynamics is another problem. As Wohlforth points out some writers stated a universal balance-of-power theory, yet at the same time applied it to regional sub-systems.<sup>21</sup> In some works using the theory in a regional context or in explaining particular state behaviors, scholars could not find enough balance-of power evidence and stated the

---

<sup>16</sup> Waltz, **Theory of International Politics**, 1979, pp. 126-127

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122

<sup>20</sup> Susan B. Martin, “From Balance of Power to Balancing Behavior: The Long and Winding Road”, In **Perspectives on Structural Realism**, eds., Andrew K. Hanami, Palgrave, New York, 2003, p. 61

<sup>21</sup> William C. Wohlforth, “Revisiting Balance of Power Theory in Central Eurasia”, In **Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in 21. Century** (eds.), T. V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, Michael Forthman, Stanford University Press, Stanford-California, 2004, p. 216

events disconfirmed the theory.<sup>22</sup> However, as argued by Wohlforth, “State behavior unrelated to systemic concentrations of power has nothing to do with balance-of-power theory.”<sup>23</sup>

Even though Waltz himself uses the particular behaviors of states as illustrations, he explicitly suggests that neo-realism is a theory of international outcomes and state behavior is ‘indeterminate’<sup>24</sup> Explaining alliance choices as a particular state behavior is another thing. According to Waltz state behaviors also depend on characteristic of states and international constraints are not the only variables that affect alliance choices. States’ responses to the threats alter with the effects of different internal structures on external policies. Waltz suggests that another theory is needed to explain this interaction between internal structures and alignment strategies.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, examining alliance choices requires a refinement of Waltz’s theory through combining elements of other theories and adding some other variables both at systemic and unit level. The scholars who used balance-of-power theory have already done some refinements emphasizing military technology, geography and other power variables contrary to Waltz, who merely counts of power poles.<sup>26</sup> In the following sections competing alternative theories of alliance formation are to be examined for that reason.

---

<sup>22</sup> For example Steve Yetiv tested the theory with the evidence from U.S. policy in the Middle East through 80s and 90s, and concluded that evidence strongly disconfirm balance-of-power theory. Steve Yetiv, “The Travails of Balance of Power Theory: The United States in the Middle East”, **Security Studies**, Vol. 15, No. 1, (April 2006), pp. 70-105. In addition, Stephen Walt states, before studying alignment behaviors of Middle Eastern states he was convinced that it [balance-of-power] was the most useful general theory available”, yet he “was disturbed by several anomalies.” See the preface of Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987. On the other hand, William Wohlforth in his study applying the theory in Post-Soviet Eurasia shows the anxiety about Russian hegemony by neighboring states. Although he finds no evidence of internal balancing efforts by those weak states, he shows the tendency towards ‘pass the buck’ to their Western allies. William C. Wohlforth, “Revisiting Balance of Power Theory in Central Eurasia”, 2004, pp. 214-238

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 218

<sup>24</sup> Susan B. Martin, “From Balance of Power to Balancing Behavior....”, 2003, p. 61.

<sup>25</sup> Waltz, **Theory of International Politics**, 1979, p. 122.

<sup>26</sup> Tomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, “Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity”, **International Organization**, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Spring, 1990), p. 138

While concluding this section, it must be noted that Martin claims the systemic balance-of-power theory can be used to explain the state behaviors, only when we can prove that systemic constraints -and the tendency toward balance-dominate the result of state behaviors (rather than internal factors).<sup>27</sup> Three adjustments have to be made when leaving system level and making predictions at unit level:<sup>28</sup> (i) to identify the balancing strategy capturing ‘balancing intentions or motivations’ of the state (since states can follow same strategies for different reasons) ; (ii) the motivation behind balancing has to be ‘ensuring survival’ against the most powerful and threatening state; (iii) to expand definition of threat including ‘other material sources of threat (e.g. military power, geography) and threat perception’ by weaker state. The Author concludes that “balancing can best be understood as actions taken by a state to counter an external threat.” This definition clearly demonstrates us that –although it is systemic, balance-of-power theory can contribute to explain Georgia’s alignment strategy. Because it aims to guarantee the country’s survival (or territorial integrity) against perceived threat from powerful Russia in the anarchic structure of international system. At the same time that kind of definition of balancing behavior draws our concern to Stephen Walt’s balance-of-threat theory.

## 1.2. BALANCE-OF-THREAT THEORY

Stephen Walt challenges Waltz’s assumption that smaller states join the weaker side since it is the stronger side which threatens them. According to him this view is seriously flawed, “because it ignores the other factors that statesmen will consider when identifying the potential threats and prospective allies.”<sup>29</sup> He suggests that, for example a state may join the stronger side, when the weaker side is perceived to be more threatening for other reasons.<sup>30</sup> Therefore distribution of

---

<sup>27</sup> Susan B. Martin, “From Balance of Power to Balancing Behavior”, 2003, p. 66

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 68-70

<sup>29</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power”, **International Security**, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Spring, 1985), p. 8

<sup>30</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “Alliance Formation in Southwest Asia: Balancing and Bandwagoning in Cold War Competition”, 1991, p. 53. Walt gives two examples: The coalitions against Germany and its allies in the World War I and II were stronger than German side. On the other hand, Western European countries chose to ally with the stronger side that is USA and NATO rather than Soviet



capabilities is not the only factor that determines alliance choices -although it is an important one. States, in fact join alliances against 'the most threatening power'.<sup>31</sup>

Walt suggests his theory as a refinement of balance-of-power. Once he opposes to the view that power and threat are identical, he re-defines balancing and bandwagoning in terms of threat perceptions, rather than power alone. In balance-of-threat theory, balancing means allying against the most threatening state and bandwagoning means allying with the major source of threat.<sup>32</sup> The theory claims that states tend to balance rather than bandwagon when facing an external threat. Because it is a safer strategy to survive. Allying with the dominant power is based on a trust in the latter's continued benevolence.<sup>33</sup> However intentions can change and it may promote threats to survival of state.

After defining alliances as a response to threats, Walt suggests four factors that determine the level of an external threat and consequently alignment preferences. Those are aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power and aggressive intentions. All of them are explained below:

### 1.2.1. Aggregate Power

Like other neorealists, Walt views aggregate power as a state's capability to potentially threaten a state; in fact, it includes population, technology, and industrial and military capability.<sup>34</sup> Since other states cannot be sure how a powerful state uses its capabilities, power imbalances tend to create balancing coalitions.<sup>35</sup> Even though power is counted a source of threat, Walt argues, in some cases it can also be prized. States that have greater capabilities can use their power for punishing enemies and

---

Union which seems to be more threatening in terms of proximity, offensive power and aggressive intentions. *Ibid.* p. 53

<sup>31</sup> Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power", 1985, pp. 8,9

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4

<sup>33</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 18

<sup>34</sup> Richard Nere, "Democracy Promotion and the U.S. National Security Strategy: U.S. National Interest, U.S. Primacy, and Coercion", **Strategic Insights**, Vol 8, No. 3 (August 2009) p. 4

<sup>35</sup> Walt, Keeping the World Off Balance: Self Restraint and U.S. Foreign Policy, **John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty Research Working Paper Series**, October 2000, p. 20 [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=253799](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=253799) (accessed on 15 Jan 2010).

rewarding their allies. Thus aggregate power of a state might motive either balancing or bandwagoning.<sup>36</sup>

Particularly, when facing an external threat, a state's decision to balance depends on if it is possible to do that effectively. Especially weak states of which alignment cannot affect the outcome may choose joining the winning side at all costs. Walt further states that, when a state's level of preponderance is unquestionable – even it lacks the total capacity of hegemony to dominate the globe; other states prefer not to balance, since it could provoke the leading power to focus its superior capabilities upon them. Although it seems to contradict with neorealist view, Walt suggests, it does not challenge the theory. As Kenneth Waltz argues, states must seek self-help strategies in an anarchic structure for their survival. However balancing is not always a rational response to survive and bandwagoning sometimes does better.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, Walt portrays balance-of-power theory as incomplete due to its sole concern on aggregate power. States also focus on other sources of threat to adopt rational alignment strategies.

### 1.2.2. Geographic Proximity

Proximity is an important factor which either consolidates or weakens an external threat. Since power wanes over distance, a state that is in close proximity has the ability to threaten a particular state more than a state that is far away.<sup>38</sup> When making alliance choices, states primarily pay regard to nearby powers rather than the distant ones. In his book, Walt examines the alliance choices made by regional states of Middle East between 1955 and 1979. He shows that those states made alliance choices principally in respond to threats by other regional states. They seek both

---

<sup>36</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 23.

<sup>37</sup> Walt, Keeping the World Off Balance: Self Restraint and U.S. Foreign Policy, **John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty Research Working Paper Series**, October 2000, pp. 21-22 [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=253799](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=253799) (accessed on 15 Jan 2010).

<sup>38</sup> Richard Nere, "Democracy Promotion and the U.S. National Security Strategy: U.S. National Interest, U.S. Primacy, and Coercion", **Strategic Insights**, Vol 8, No. 3 (August 2009) p. 4

superpowers as allies which were more distant to oppose regional threats and reinforce their position in the region.<sup>39</sup>

Proximity can also lead to either balancing or bandwagoning like aggregate power. If a proximate power trigger balancing around itself, an alliance network of containment may emerge. Conversely when a threat by a proximate power leads to bandwagoning, a sphere of influence is constituted. “Small states bordering a great power may be so vulnerable that they choose to bandwagon rather than balance, especially if a powerful neighbor has demonstrated its ability to compel obedience.”<sup>40</sup> It is important here to note that geographic proximity has played a major role in alliance choices of Georgia, since Moscow sometimes showed “its ability to compel obedience” supporting to separatist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia which are located on its South-Western border.

### **1.2.3. Offensive Power**

Walt suggests that states which have great offensive capabilities mostly provoke an alliance rather than “those are incapable of attacking because of geography, military posture, or something else.” Offensive power and geographic proximity are closely tied each other. Yet they are not identical, since a state can threaten a nearby country more readily than the other.<sup>41</sup>

Offensive power is also related to aggregate power although they are not identical. Offensive power means the ability of one state to threaten to another state’s territorial integrity. It is difficult to measure, since offensive power is related to a states capacity to convert its aggregate power into offensive power (e.g. by gathering, mobilizing masses and military equipment) easily and quickly enough to change offense-defense balance favoring the former.<sup>42</sup> If offence has the advantage for a threatening state, then that is more likely to trigger balancing actions. Conversely, if

---

<sup>39</sup> See Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, Chapter 3,4 and 5

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-24

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 24

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 24

defense has the advantage, in another words “when a state can defend its own territory but cannot attack others with high confidence”, the motive toward balancing decreases.<sup>43</sup>

The problem caused by the difficulties to distinguish offensive and defensive power is best reflected by the concept of ‘security dilemma’. That is; one state’s actions to enhance its security cause to reactions which make other states less secure in the end. Because when offensive and defensive forces are identical, states cannot be sure that they are for defense.<sup>44</sup> Yet, in our case the advantage of offense is clear for Russia. The 2008 South Ossetia War was a clear account of the Russian offensive power.

Walt argues that, like other sources of threat, a state’s offensive power may lead the others to either balancing or bandwagoning. States with large offensive capabilities mostly motivates balancing. However, when offensive power of a state made it possible to conquer the others rapidly, it may discourages smaller states to resist. Because their allies could not manage to support them quickly enough. States which are far from potential allies may have to choose bandwagoning. Walt suggests that it could be a reason for why sphere of influences emerge.<sup>45</sup>

#### **1.2.4. Aggressive Intentions**

The last factor posed by Walt that affects the level of threat has perceptual meanings, unlike the material others. As Walt writes, states that are perceived to be aggressive are likely to trigger other to balance. Their superior capabilities are not important as much as the perception of their intentions.<sup>46</sup> “In fact, offensive

---

<sup>43</sup> Walt, Keeping the World Off Balance: Self Restraint and U.S. Foreign Policy, **John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty Research Working Paper Series**, October 2000, p. 25 [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=253799](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=253799) (accessed on 15 Jan 2010).

<sup>44</sup> Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict”, **Survival**, Vol. 35, no. 1, Spring 1993, p. 28.

<sup>45</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 25.

<sup>46</sup> Walt, *Ibid.*, p. 25.

intentions are what give these states an aggressive perception rather than aggregate power.”<sup>47</sup>

If a state is perceived to be unalterably aggressive, than the others may not choose bandwagoning since it seems irrational. In these cases, vulnerable states may become a victim –even if they allied with it.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, aggressive intentions play a major role in alignment preferences. In our case there are many reasons for Georgians to perceive Russia as the greatest threat. First of all, after the end of WWI, Georgia loosed its independence to Soviet Union by a conquest. On the other hand, Russian support to separatist movements in Georgia and recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states in 2008 demonstrated its ‘unalterably aggressive’ intentions.

By defining balancing and bandwagoning in terms of threats rather than power alone and suggesting the other factors which affects the level of threat, Walt argues that “we gain a more complete picture of the factors that statesmen will consider when making alliances sources.”<sup>49</sup> Yet, we cannot decide which sources of threat had played the most significant role in a given case. In fact all the factors are likely to play a role. And as the level of threat grows, the tendency to seek allies for a vulnerable state increases.<sup>50</sup>

After declaring that, Walt argues, balancing is more preferable than bandwagoning for states which face an external threat, and there is a dominant tendency for balancing in international affairs. He examines the diplomatic history of regional states in Middle East in order to test his argument. Between 1955 and 1979, he discovers thirty-six alliances – and consequently eighty-six separate alliance choices made by those states. He infers that at least 87.5 percent of them were made against the states that appeared most dangerous. On the contrary the number of

---

<sup>47</sup> Richard Nere, “Democracy Promotion and the U.S. National Security Strategy”, 2009, p. 4.

<sup>48</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 26

<sup>49</sup> Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power”, 1985, p. 13

<sup>50</sup> **Ibid.** This suggestion of Walt indicates that the only independent variable taken in balance of treat theory is the level of threat a state face. The four factors, on the other hand, constitute the dimensions of this independent variable.

decisions to bandwagon with threatening states is at most 12.5 percent.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, Walt expands its application of the theory to Southwest Asia including the countries; Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and India.<sup>52</sup> Balance-of-threat theory's predictions are mostly confirmed in the light of these studies, while balance-of-power theory often fails. Walt, on the other hand, has also improved some hypotheses to explain the exceptional cases of bandwagoning.

### 1.2.5. Conditions that Favor Bandwagoning

As stated above, Stephen Walt also observed some cases of bandwagoning. According to him, balance-of-threat theory also accommodates the possibility of bandwagoning decisions, yet those are expected to occur only 'under certain conditions'. There are three conditions exposed by Walt which increase the generally low tendency to bandwagon for states facing an external threat. First, "weak states are more likely to bandwagon than strong states." Second, when potential allies are not simply available bandwagoning is more likely. Finally, when the most threatening power is perceived to be appeasable, incentives for bandwagoning increase.<sup>53</sup> All of them are briefly explained below:

#### 1.2.5.1. Weak and Strong States

If a state is very weak against its opponents, it is more likely to bandwagon. Because weak states have no capacity to change the result effectively, while it is possible for them to suffer intensively in the process. Therefore it is not rational for them to balance and they may have to choose the winning side. On the other hand, for strong states of which alignment can alter the outcome, it is very rational to balance.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 149.

<sup>52</sup> See Walt, "Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia", **International Organization**, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Spring, 1988), pp. 275-316

<sup>53</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 173

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.* pp. 29-30.

For weak states geographic proximity of a threatening power further increases the incentive to balance. Small states bordering or nearby great powers are more likely to bandwagon, especially when the offensive capabilities of threatening states permit an immediate action of conquest. As Wivel points out, if occupation is possible to occur very fast and easily, then defense may be pointless.<sup>55</sup> On the contrary, weak states are more likely to balance when dealing a state that has roughly equal capabilities with them.<sup>56</sup>

### 1.2.5.2. The Availability of Allies

When a state lacks potential allies, it is more likely to bandwagon. States can also try to balance a threatening power by internal efforts to a degree, but it is not possible especially for weak states. With a credible external assistance, they will be more likely to balance. In addition to that, Walt states, “excessive confidence in allied support will encourage weak states to free ride, relying on the efforts to others to provide security.” And free-riding is an optimum policy for them of which capabilities are insignificant.<sup>57</sup>

Since the recognition of shared interest is essential for creating an alliance, ‘an effective system of diplomatic communication’ is needed both for understanding the common interests and coordinating the responses. States which lack this processes, yet may have to choose to accommodate the most threatening power.<sup>58</sup> That is an important reason why sphere of influences emerges around great powers. Here, I shall argue that, USA has sometimes restrained itself from being explicitly included in regional politics within Russia’s sphere of influence. Because it has avoided provoking Russia, especially when a period of an optimistic dialogue arises between the two countries. That was a significant reason of why Georgia lacked enough external assistance in the very beginning of its independence. It can also

---

<sup>55</sup> See Anders Wivel, “Balancing against Treats or Bandwagoning with Power? Europe and the Transatlantic relationship after the Cold War”, **Cambridge Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 21, No. 3, (September 2008), p. 297

<sup>56</sup> Walt “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power”, 1995, p. 12

<sup>57</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p.30.

<sup>58</sup> Walt, **Ibid.**, pp. 30-31

explain why divergent views about regional politics are shaped by Georgia and the USA-NATO bloc.

### 1.2.5.3. The Impact of Intentions

Finally, when a threatening power seems to be appeasable, states are more likely to chose bandwagon. Because bandwagoning is motivated by the hope that it would moderate the aggressive intentions of the threatening state.<sup>59</sup> For example, USA has two neighboring states on its borders choosing to bandwagon with it, since US policy toward both has been benign.<sup>60</sup> On the contrary, the perception of Soviet Union's unalterably aggressive intentions induced Turkey and Iran to balance, even when an external assistance was uncertain.<sup>61</sup>

By using all those hypotheses of balance-of-threat theory about balancing and bandwagoning which are examined above, it is possible that, we can seize many important aspects in Georgia's alignment strategies.<sup>62</sup> Because the theory not only tells us balancing is more preferable than bandwagoning but also introduces the conditions that favor bandwagoning. Those conditions are highly illustrative in order to understand opposite alignment strategies adopted by Georgia in different periods and its shifting position between Russia and its Western Allies. However, it should be underlined that the theoretical background will remain uncompleted if one does not handle the additional arguments of Walt about the effects of foreign aid and transnational (political) penetration in alliance formation.

---

<sup>59</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 176

<sup>60</sup> Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power", 1985, p. 36

<sup>61</sup> See Walt, "Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia", **International Organization**, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Spring, 1988), pp. 275-316

<sup>62</sup> For a summary of the hypotheses on balancing and bandwagoning, see Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, pp. 32, 33 It should be noted that in chapter 2 Walt propose a fourth condition which favors bandwagoning and that is about peace and war. In peacetime, he suggests, states are more likely to balance. However in wartime, and especially when the outcome is certain, some states would bandwagon with the powerful side to share the spoils of victory. But restoration of peace enforces the incentives to balance again. **Ibid.**, p. 31



## **1.2.6. The Instruments of Alliance Formation: Foreign Aid and Transnational Penetration**

In balance of threat theory, Walt emphasizes the role of security and threats reminding us the separation between high and low politics in realism. According to him foreign aid and political penetration cannot create alliances but make it more effective. The effects of those instruments in alignment are examined below.

### **1.2.6.1. Foreign Aid**

Traditional hypotheses about the effects of foreign aid in alliance formation suggest that economy and military assistance can create effective allies; in other words, ‘the more aid, the tighter resulting alliance.’ This belief is also encouraged by politicians who want to justify their large aid programs. In addition, there is another widespread argument that foreign assistance provides a significant leverage to the donor over the recipient, since its continuity is crucial. Stephen Walt challenges both arguments. Firstly, he suggests that economic and military aid is offered and accepted only when two countries share common interests and when they perceive that it is in their interest to oppose an external threat together. Therefore, foreign assistance must be “the result of political alignment than a cause of it.”<sup>63</sup>

Similarly, Walt also questions the claim that foreign aid always generates a strict leverage over the recipient, because sometimes a recipient can behave in ways that are not approved by the donor. Furthermore, he suggests that sometimes foreign assistance could be self-defeating. Accordingly, ‘the degree to which such assistance has powerful independent effects on the recipient’s conduct’ varies in different cases and the emergence of significant leverage provided by foreign assistance depends on some identifiable conditions:<sup>64</sup>

First, the content of aid provided by the ‘patron’ should be very vital for the recipient to increase the leverage. When a donor enjoys a monopoly to supply the

---

<sup>63</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 1987, pp. 41-42

<sup>64</sup> Walt, *ibid*, pp. 42-44

content, the leverage increases further. For example, when the continuity of the aid like food and military equipment is in question (esp. in wartime), the recipient will be more eager to follow the donor's preferences. States which face a significant external threat can be more readily influenced by the donor. Second, if there is 'an asymmetry of dependence' between the two -favoring the donor, the leverage will be enhanced. States facing an imminent threat are more dependent on their donor. On the contrary, "the more important the recipient to the donor, the more aid it is likely to receive", as a result the degree of the leverage decreases.

Third, when there is 'an asymmetry of motivation', in other words "when the recipient cares more about a particular issue" and the relative importance of that issue is lesser to the donor, the ability to influence decreases. Since the recipient is weaker than the donor and it is more at stake, it could bargain harder. Sometimes to follow 'the patron's' wishes costs more than, renouncing assistance. Therefore the recipient could behave contrary to the donor's directions. Finally, Walt suggests that if the government of the supplier embrace bandwagoning hypothesis, the recipient could bargain harder for additional assistance holding the ember of re-alignment. Therefore, providing assistance could be often self-defeating according to Walt and it is better to cut off the recipient from additional aid until it is enough to be appreciated by the recipient. In sum, after explaining alliances as a result of an external threat itself, Walt states that foreign assistance plays a relatively minor role in alliance choices.<sup>65</sup>

### **1.2.6.2. Transnational Penetration**

Walt defines transnational penetration, as the manipulation of one state's domestic political system by another. That could appear in three ways: (1) Public officials with loyalty to an external state can use their initiatives to move their country closer to it, (2) Lobbyists may act in order to change "public perceptions and

---

<sup>65</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 45. For the summary of hypotheses about foreign aid and alliance formation, see **Ibid.**, p. 46. Walt also tests those hypotheses with the evidence from his study on Middle East, See Chapter 7.

policy decisions regarding a potential ally, (3) Foreign propaganda may be used to sway elite and mass attitudes.”<sup>66</sup>

Great and superpowers advantage some important channels to achieve an effective penetration. For example, USA has carried out “political indoctrination programs that accompanied military and educational assistance to various developing countries” while paying attention on similar programs by Soviet Union. Those have fed the claim that penetration can create loyal alliances. However, as about foreign aid, Walt rejects this argument. He emphasizes that those programs will more likely to likely to work out after establishing an explicit alignment, and can only play a role for making the already formed alliances more effective.<sup>67</sup> Transnational penetration could be an effective cause of alignment, ‘only if substantial contacts can be established between two states that have not already allied.’<sup>68</sup>

Stephen Walt also defines some conditions which increase the effect of penetration to the greatest level in alliance formation as an independent variable. First, political penetration is more likely to be implemented effectively against ‘open societies’. In open societies, where power is diffused, foreign propaganda can be carried out free from censorship and without excessive prohibition, –both from abroad and with the assistance of internal dynamics. Second the success of penetration depends on its aims and methods used by the other state, because they should be seen as legitimate. For example, if a penetration tries to provide re-alignment or a more extensive alignment only by manipulating public and elite attitudes in another country the actions are less likely to be seen as illegitimate by the targeted state. Conversely, if a penetration aims to subversion of the regime (for example through the acts of hostile propaganda or supporting opponent groups) in order to move the country closer to the state; those are likely to be reacted negatively. The methods used by a state in order to penetrate are also important. For example attempts to co-opt or indoctrinate foreign troops through a military training program

---

<sup>66</sup> Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power”., 1985, p.30

<sup>67</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 47

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p. 250

could be viewed with suspicion, while lobbying efforts in a democratic system can be perceived as very usual.<sup>69</sup>

Walt views the two conditions closely related to each other, since the more open the targeted society, “the greater the range of activities that will be viewed as legitimate avenues of influence and the less the effort required to effect a change.” After declaring these conditions Walt claims that penetration may be the only significant reason of alignment in rare circumstances. One exception may be that extremely weak states which lack established governmental institutions, may be so vulnerable to external pressures that the leaders -especially who rely on foreign assistance to keep themselves in force, could be forced to realign.<sup>70</sup>

Walt tests his hypotheses on penetration and alliance formation in the Middle East. One indicator that he concerns on is extensive elite exchange which flowed to USA from allied Arab states, for military training and education. He suggests that in the periods of favorable relations, Arab states did not avoid to send students to the USA. They were comfortable with the exchange due to their authoritarian regimes. Because, Walt argues that, in the developing countries in which nationalist credentials are important for leadership, a potential leader who is viewed as a foreign puppet cannot reach a position of power or to remain there for long.<sup>71</sup> Thus the penetration’s effects are limited in alliance formation. Political penetration’s effect alone cannot create an alliance but could make it more effective.

However, in the Georgian case, transnational penetration may have played a greater role. ‘The Rose Revolution’ in 2003 can be viewed a clear example of transnational penetration action. First of all, the NGOs with U.S. origin have played a major role in the events which gave way to the revolution. The revolution which also aimed at promoting an open society seems not like subversion of a regime. Rather, it is the rejection to the results of election by a galvanizing opposition who viewed both the results and Shevardnadze government as ‘illegitimate’. Therefore the movement

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 48

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 248-249

has been popular in Georgia, and consequently Saakashvili -who received his graduate education in USA, reached the position on the top of Georgian state. As a result, transnational penetration actions have been an instrument of enforcing the alignment between Georgia and USA.

### 1.2.7. The Relative Advantages of Balance-of-Threat Theory

As state above, balance-of-threat theory is a refinement of balance-of-power theory. Walt adds some other important variables to the theory and suggests many hypotheses which can be used for explaining particular alignment behaviors of states. On the other hand, balance-of-threat theory has also been portrayed as a systemic theory which suggests that there is a general tendency toward balancing against threats in international affairs.<sup>72</sup> Yet, Walt's study of 'The Origins of Alliances' is an evidence to that he used the alignment strategies of specific countries 'overtly', while developing his theory. Moreover, unlike Kenneth Waltz, he applies his theory to explain particular state behaviors, while examining alliance choices.<sup>73</sup> In addition, the fact that he defines aggressive intentions as an important factor which determines alliance choices renders it possible to make unit-level analysis with the theory. As Mastanduno argues, since it includes perception of intentions as one aspect of threat, balance-of-threat theory moves away from purely systemic level. Therefore, "balance-of-threat theory includes both systemic factors and the kind of unit-level variables that were present in classical realism."<sup>74</sup>

The theory has also some other important advantages. First, the separation between perception of threat and power calculations increases the theory's explanatory power against what in alliance politics goes on, especially after the Cold War. In bipolarity balance-of-power did much better to explain international alliances, but after 1991 in the period called unipolarity, there has been no strong

---

<sup>72</sup> See, William Wohlforth, "Revisiting Balance of Power Theory in Central Eurasia", 2004, p. 218.

<sup>73</sup> See, Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, chapter 3,4,7, and Walt, "Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia", 1988, pp. 275-316.

<sup>74</sup> Michael Mastanduno, "Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy after the Cold War", **International Security**, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Spring, 1997), p. 59, [fn] 37.

indicators showing that other great powers have been trying to balance U.S. power.<sup>75</sup> Unlike what balance-of-power predicts, European states, for example bandwagoned with USA since they are sure that it has never been a military threat to Europe, yet it goes on to provide security and stability in the region.<sup>76</sup> In fact, great powers tend to balance only when facing a significant external threat since balancing is a costly behavior.<sup>77</sup> Opposing the view that power and threat are identical, balance-of-threat theory manages to combine theory and the reality more successfully.

Second, balance-of-threat theory emphasizes differences in alignment strategies of great powers and regional states. It is significant for the scope of this study. Because, as Hurrell notes, neo-realism's traditional emphasis has been on great powers and most of the literature is a product of the U.S. perspective.<sup>78</sup> However, balance-of-power theory reflects the perspectives of smaller states such as Georgia more effectively. The theory suggests that while superpowers primarily balance to each other, "regional powers are largely indifferent the global balance of power."<sup>79</sup> They primarily concerns on the states nearby them, not on the strongest power in international system.<sup>80</sup> Because, weak states are more vulnerable to proximate powers, having no means to deter.

Third, as mentioned above, since it combines the possibility of exceptional preferences of bandwagoning to specific conditions, the theory can explain different alignment strategies of a particular state adopted in different times. Examining those conditions which favor bandwagoning over balancing enable us to understand the alignment preferences of Georgia more comprehensively. Finally, balance-of-threat theory tells us not only why an alliance is formed, but also how it can be enforced and implemented. The arguments on instruments of alliance formation also shed light

---

<sup>75</sup> See, Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, **World out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 2008, Chapter 2, pp. 22-59

<sup>76</sup> See, Anders Wivel, "Balancing against Treats or Bandwagoning with Power?", 2008, pp. 289-305

<sup>77</sup> See Paul Fritz and Kevin Sweeney, "The (de)Limitations of Balance of Power Theory", **International Interactions**, Vol. 30, No. 4, (October-December 2004), pp. 285-308

<sup>78</sup> Andrew Hurrell, "Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order: What space for Would-be Great Powers?", **International Affairs**, Vol. 82, No. 1, (January 2006), p. 6

<sup>79</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 148.

<sup>80</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 158

on the important political developments in Georgia which were triggered by its allies. In sum, balance-of-threat theory has a greater explanatory power and seems to be generally supported with evidence. However, other scholars had several attempts to criticize the theory and they claimed balance-of-threat theory is also incomplete to explain alignment strategies. There are some other theoretical approaches to alliance formation improved by them and those are examined below.

### **1.3. CRITICS OF BALANCE-OF-THREAT THEORY AND ALTERNATIVE THEORIES OF ALLIANCE FORMATION**

The critics of balance-of-threat theory can be divided in two groups. As Schweller points out, some critics challenge Walt's main claim that balancing predominates, showing numerous examples of bandwagoning in the history and suggesting that balancing is the exception, not the rule. Apart from those, other critics argue that balance-of-threat theory is incomplete since it underestimates the role of domestic factors in alliance formation.<sup>81</sup> The second group of critics could be far more significant for this study, because they try to improve the theory's explanatory power by offering new domestic level variables to be added in the analysis when examining alignment strategies.

For example, Levy and Barnett emphasize the role of domestic political and economic constraints in alignment decisions.<sup>82</sup> They criticize balance-of-threat theory claiming that it overlooks the effect of internal threats which 'illegitimate' leaders of weak states face, especially in the Third World. According to the authors, the leaders of those weak states have many difficulties to mobilize resources in order to deal with both internal and external threats. Since there are many economic constraints for dealing with those threats only by internal efforts, and the politicians could be affected adversely in the process, the most efficient and immediate way to ensure the security of the state and of the regime is alignment with a powerful state which can provide military and economic assistance. Reaching external assistance is

---

<sup>81</sup> Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit", 1994, pp. 108-148.

<sup>82</sup> See, Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962-73", 1991, pp. 369-395.

crucial for those leaders to preserve their rule and domestic political stability against internal threats. Therefore, according to Levy and Barnett, resource-providing function of alliances is a determining factor for alignment strategies of the Third World states. However as mentioned above, Stephen Walt tests the effect of foreign aid in alliance formation in the Middle East -a part of the Third World and finds little evidence for it. Maybe the aim of reaching economic and military assistance can be a motive only for expanding the cooperation and friendly relations between allies.<sup>83</sup>

On the other hand, Larson challenges Walt's hypothesis that weak states are more likely to bandwagon, while the strong states tend to balance.<sup>84</sup> She gives contradictive examples from the 1930s' Europe posing an anomaly that strong states of Europe bandwagoned with Nazi Germany, while Poland -a smaller state with no potential allies, chose balance. To overcome this kind of anomalies, Larson improves "an institutionalist approach". Instead of the material capabilities, she takes political instability and illegitimate authority as the indicators of a state's real weakness. Larson concludes that "states with weak domestic institutions are likely to align with threatening power."<sup>85</sup> Because, her institutional approach assumes that elites in weak regimes must primarily stay in power and they may place their own interest -that is preserving their rule above the state interest.<sup>86</sup> Competing groups in a society use external ties for reaching the top of government or remaining there. To enforce their domestic position, the elites may try to align with a hostile power. But the source of threat they respond is 'internal not external, as in more traditional balance-of-power theory'<sup>87</sup> The critics which emphasize domestic conditions seem to have some shared aspects, yet they do not suggest an alternative theory. On the other hand, Steven

---

<sup>83</sup> The case study on Egypt, by Barnett and Levy is also concluded that Nasser and Sadat both were not willing to tighten Egypt's alignment with Soviet union in the periods when they confronted by relatively lower economic constraints and weaker domestic political opposition. And when they were challenged more seriously by these constraints they both sought more friendly relations with Soviet Union. See **Ibid.**, pp. 393-395

<sup>84</sup> See, Deborah Welch Larson, "Bandwagon Images in American Foreign Policy: Myth or Reality?", In **Dominoes and bandwagons : strategic beliefs and great power competition in the Eurasian rimland** eds., Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder, Oxford University Press, New York, 1991, pp. 85-111

<sup>85</sup> **Ibid.** p. 86

<sup>86</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 87

<sup>87</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 89



David proposes his theory named ‘omnibalancing’ to explain the alignment strategies in the Third World -whose conclusions may be significant for Georgia too.<sup>88</sup>

### 1.3.1. Omnibalancing Theory

Steven David criticizes Walt’s claim that alliances are formed against external threats. He suggests that, in the Third World, statesmen must counter all threats which are not necessarily external but may also be internal. Because he challenges the neorealist view that states are unitary actors and domestic politics are hierarchically ordered. According to him, this view ignores “the unstable, dangerous and often fatal nature of domestic political environment that characterizes the Third World.”<sup>89</sup> Third World domestic politics can be viewed as a microcosm of international politics which have an anarchic structure. The leaders of the Third World states which are often perceived as illegitimate must balance against both internal and external threats to ensure their survival.<sup>90</sup> Therefore omnibalancing theory suggests that “the most powerful determinant of the Third World alignment behavior is the rational calculation of the Third World leaders as to which outside power is most likely to do what is necessary to keep them in power.”<sup>91</sup>

To enforce his argument, David emphasizes the situation that “internal threats (with or without external backing) are far more likely to challenge the Third World leaders hold on power than are threats from other states.” Internal wars outnumber the war among states, as a result of widespread domestic conflicts in the Third World states. On the other hand, military coups have often overthrown the regimes and that have become the most common form of regime change in those states.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup> In fact, Alfred Sauvy -the originator of the Third World concept, indicates non-aligned states in the Cold War period. In this case, his definition place Georgia in the Second World which refers to communist bloc.

<sup>89</sup> Steven R. David, “Explaining Third World Alignment” **World Politics**, Vol. 43, No. 2, (Jan., 1991), p. 235

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p.243

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 238-239

David also focuses on the problem of national homogenization that appears in the Third World states. He states that the most of the Third World states which had been under colonial rule in the past are artificial creations by foreign powers and their borders were drawn arbitrarily. There are many sub-national groups in those states “which owe allegiance to and act on behalf of interests other than the national interest.”<sup>93</sup> Therefore, this situation provides “an ideal vehicle for advancing the interest of outside states.”<sup>94</sup> Since most of the Third World states lack sufficient military and logistic capabilities to suppress the internal threats they are both vulnerable to and dependent on foreign powers. This generalization of the domestic structure in the Third World by David seems to be significant for the case of Georgia as well. Because the national borders within Southern Caucasus region were redrawn by Soviet Union after it annexed the region in the beginning of the 1920s. For example, Ossetian population divided between Georgia and Russia and southern part was embedded in Georgia with the status of autonomous oblast. Soviet Union and Russia have traditionally utilized ethnic disagreements in order to make Georgia dependent on Moscow in terms of its security. When Soviet Union had been disintegrating both Abkhazia and South Ossetia began to seek independence and they present the most dangerous internal threats for Georgia.

It is important here to note that Stephen Walt, in his some later work on balance-of-threat theory, acknowledges that domestic threats could partially determine alliance choices. He suggests that:

Although external threats were more important, domestic concerns also encouraged Pakistan and Iran to seek U.S. support. As Steven David has suggested, regime stability and personal survival rank high on the agendas of most Third World leaders. Balance-of-threat theory can accommodate this possibility fairly easily -states seek allies to balance both internal and external threats, “whichever is most imminent” –but balance-of-power theory cannot.<sup>95</sup>

Turning to omnibalancing theory, it should be stated that while David continues to improve his argument, the theory departs from our case apparently. Because he suggests that the different ethnic, religious and regional groupings

---

<sup>93</sup> Steven R. David, p. 239

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, p. 241

<sup>95</sup> Walt, “Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia”, **International Organization**, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Spring, 1988), p. 312. (emphasis added)

struggle for reaching power. They often seek the subversion of the present regime to promote their own interest, that is, to keep their sub-national groups in wealthy and influential in politics. Under these conditions, omnibalancing theory predicts that Third World leadership keeps their interest above state interest when allying with an outside state.<sup>96</sup> Yet, in Georgia, ethnic groups do not try to reach the power of central government in Tbilisi, but they seek independence.

On the other hand, the applicability of omnibalancing theory to Georgia case is also questioned in the study of Miller and Toritsyn.<sup>97</sup> The authors who follow the evidence of omnibalancing theory in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), suggests a refinement of David's theory so as to cover galvanizing opposition movements -as internal threats- which resulted in the 'velvet' revolutions in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and as well as Georgia. In their study, they argue that in the most of the Central Asian states, leaders place their interest of political survival above state interest. However, in the case of Georgia they cannot find remarkable omnibalancing evidence. Before the Rose Revolution, they state, the president Shevardnadze have waited long to prevent the opposition movement using the support of an outside power. However, in his final days he could turn to Russia for personal protection.<sup>98</sup> The authors conclude that "In this sense, omnibalancing theory does not predict that leaders might make the correct choices, but it solely highlights why they would seek to omnibalance."<sup>99</sup> On the other hand, this situation seems to enforce Walt's claim quoted above that the threats "whichever is most imminent" will be resisted. In Georgia, Russian support to secessionist movements constitutes the most imminent threat to survival of the state within its internationally recognized

---

<sup>96</sup> Steven R. David, 1991, pp. 239-240

<sup>97</sup> See Eric A. Miller and Arkady Toritsyn, "Bringing the Leader Back In: Internal Threats and Alignment Theory in the Commonwealth of Independent States", **Security Studies**, Vol. 14, No: 2, (April-June 2005), pp. 325-363

<sup>98</sup> The Authors inform that "Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov brokered an agreement between Shevardnadze and soon-to-be president Mikheil Saakashvili, whereby Shevardnadze ceded power but avoided imprisonment or a much worse fate in the face of the widely supported and vocal opposition." **Ibid.**, p. 337

<sup>99</sup> Miller and Toritsyn, 2005, p. 336.

borders. A state is unlikely to bandwagon with a state that threatens its territorial integrity - if it could reach of course, the potential allies to support its position.<sup>100</sup>

Nonetheless, David's emphasis on the effects of internal threats and Walt's acknowledgement of the situation are significant for this study. Here it is argued, in a more general sense including not only galvanizing opposition movements but also secessionist conflicts in Georgia. Since the external power in our case pursues its interests by supporting ethnic conflicts in Georgia, one should focus on the internal threats (conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia) particularly. On the other side, as mentioned above, balance-of-threat theory considers the ability of the outsider to conquer the targeted country. In our case a conquest by Russia is more likely to occur with the ostensible aim of protecting the right to life of minorities (as in the case of the war in 2008). At this point, Walt's claim that balance-of-threat can accommodate the role of internal threats as an opportunity seems credible. In this study, it is argued that the role of internal threats is indispensable and has to be taken into consideration when measuring the level of Russian threat. In other words, this study takes the internal threats which appeared as conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia as intervening variables that help to conceptualize and explain the influence of independent variable (the level of Russian threat) on the dependent variable (Georgia's alignment strategy).<sup>101</sup> In Georgia case it seems very logical, since the external and internal threats are associated due to the Russian military support to ethnic secessionist movements.

Nevertheless, despite Walt's acknowledgement of the role of internal threats, balance-of-threat and omnibalancing theories differ in conclusions. While the former merely suggests that balancing is more common and preferable, the latter concerns on the rational calculation of political leaders based on personal interest. It follows

---

<sup>100</sup> On the other hand, Miller and Toritsyn continue domestic level analysis which acknowledges the 'neorealist conclusion' above. They suggest that omnibalancing may not explain Georgia case due to the 'overt' support of Russia to the internal threats of secessionist movements in South Caucasian states. And, if the leaders of the region had allied with Russia they will suffer politically more adversely by the opposition. **Ibid.**, p.359

<sup>101</sup> The definition of intervening variable is cited from Uma Sekaran, **Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach**, (4th Edition), John Wiley&Sons, Inc., United Kingdom, 2008, p. 94

that there are many impediments to grasp the rational calculation of political leaders. However, after taking some aspects of omnibalancing theory as a contribution, it is believed that it will be possible to test if David's prediction is credible or not.

### **1.3.2. Balance-of-Interest Theory (Bandwagoning for Profit)**

One of the most outstanding critiques of Walt is put forth by Schweller who stays out both group of critics that emphasize either the bandwagoning tendency or domestic factors. Instead, he proposes another theory of alignment. Schweller's critics of Walt based on his definition of bandwagoning which limits the possibility for this behavior to occur only in the cases when states have no other choice.<sup>102</sup> In opposition to Walt who identifies bandwagoning as 'a capitulation' in which weaker states make asymmetrical concessions to the dominant power and accept a subordinate role, Schweller introduces the concept of profit. Accordingly, he claims that the decision of bandwagoning are not taken only for threats since alliance choices "are often motivated by opportunities for gain as well as danger, by appetite as well as fear"<sup>103</sup>

Schweller challenges the neorealist view that the first concern of all states is achieving greater security. He notes, all modern realists as well as Waltz and Walt observe "the world solely through the lens of a satisfied, status-quo state."<sup>104</sup> There are other 'revisionist states' which try to improve their positions in the system and they may bandwagon with expanding revisionist powers. Therefore balance-of-interest theory concludes that "satisfied powers will join the status-quo coalition, even when it is the stronger side; dissatisfied powers, motivated by profit more than security, will bandwagon with an ascending revisionist state."<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup> See Randall Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit...", 1994.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79

<sup>104</sup> *ibid.*, p. 85

<sup>105</sup> *ibid.*, p. 88. In general form balance-of-interest theory suggest that "the stability of the system depends on the balance of revisionist and conservative forces. When status-quo states are far more powerful than revisionist states, the system will be stable. When a revisionist state or coalition is stronger than the defenders of the status quo, the system will eventually undergo change." *Ibid.*, p. 104. Schweller further states that "in today's world "all major powers are coming to hold a common view of what constitutes an acceptable status quo," the current system is likely to go from balance to

In conclusion, balance-of-interest theory seems to have no relative superiority to explain the alignment strategies of Georgia. Because Georgia has a huge motivation to preserve the status quo, as a state which suffers from separatist movements. Not surprisingly, it allied with USA and the Western countries which are satisfied with status quo in the international system. Schweller, after defining the other types of bandwagoning behaviors which reflect the tendency of revisionist states,<sup>106</sup> suggests; “by contrast, relying on force to coerce states to bandwagon involuntarily often backfires for the dominant partner. Seeking revenge, the unwilling bandwagoner becomes a treacherous ally that will bolt from the alliance the first chance it gets.”<sup>107</sup>

That can be the reason why the problematic relationship endured between Georgia and Russia, even after the security cooperation had been initiated between the two, in 1993. Moreover in Georgia and Azerbaijan, Russian coercive actions have caused reactions and both states have sought the Western allies to balance Russia. There is only one exception in the South Caucasus that is Armenia –a state appeared with expansionist claims from the beginning of its independence.

While concluding this section it should be noted that Mastanduno also mentions about the difference between revisionist and status quo states, while testing balance-of-threat theory in the global context of the post-Cold war. He suggests that if balance-of-threat theory is correct, the only superpower –USA of which aim is preserving the unipolarity, is expected “to avoid behaviors that would be perceived as threatening by status quo states; to help to deter or deflect other threats to the security of the status quo states.”<sup>108</sup> He observes other regional powers’ behavior and infers that “one would expect Russia to seek, in the wake of the collapse, to restore some elements of its former great power status and exercise influence as a regional power”.<sup>109</sup> Considering all aforementioned one should easily predict, if Russia strains

---

Concert. Balance-of-interest theory, by focusing on variations in actors' preferences, can account for this change; structural balance-of-power theory and balance-of-threat theory cannot.” p. 106

<sup>106</sup> For the types of ‘bandwagoning for profit’ defined by Schweller, see Schweller, 1994, pp. 93-99

<sup>107</sup> *ibid.*, p. 89

<sup>108</sup> Michael Mastanduno, “Preserving...”, 1997, p. 62

<sup>109</sup> Mastanduno, 1997, p.. 65

the status quo in its 'near abroad' it will likely to motivate a security cooperation between USA and the regional states located there.

After examining the main theories of alignment, now we can turn to the questions which were posed at the beginning of this chapter. Considering all the main theories for alliance formation which are summarized above, it would be argued that balance-of-threat is the most suitable theory for understanding Georgia's alignment preferences. Georgia is a unique case of which alignment seems to be resulted from an external threat solidified by its geographic proximity, offensive power and aggressive intentions. However, as discussed above, the study will take into account the tenets of the contending theories above to analyze as much accurate as the Georgian case, since it is thought that their individual contributions helped from different aspects and perspectives in the complementation of general theoretical work on states' alliance behavior.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE GEORGIAN STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND GAMSAKHURDIA'S PERIOD

*After Soviet Russia occupied and annexed Georgia [in 1921], the government of the Georgian Democratic Republic did not sign an act of capitulation, which means that legally the independent state of Georgia and its Constitution still exist. Georgia is an annexed country that began liquidating the results of annexation and is restoring its independent statehood... We should raise the question at the international legal level of withdrawal of the Soviet occupation forces from Georgia. We should start negotiations with the Center and the Western countries.*

Zviad Gamsakhurdia, November 1990<sup>110</sup>

Examining Georgian national struggle for independence against the Soviet Union is essential for a theoretical analysis of this country's alignment against Russia. In this chapter, I demonstrate that the story of Georgian national response against the hegemonic power -the Soviet Union -in the wake of its collapse contains many significant evidences through which the motives for Georgian alignment preferences can be realized. Since the main theory employed by this study is balance-of-threat, principally it is tried to unfold how the four factors -aggregate power, proximity, offensive power and aggressive intentions functioned in the case of Georgia. Therefore, this first chapter of the case study aims to expose the content and shape of these four factors. This chapter continues as follows: First a brief overview of the history of Georgian nation is given; because it could facilitate to figure out threat perceptions. Then, the important developments in Gamsakhurdia period are to be examined with reference to the alignment tendency, the evolution of Russian threat and its implications. In the following section, the dimensions of Russian threat are to be formulated under the subtitles that Walt proposes. And finally, the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia are to be introduced emphasizing their natural causes and the external involvements.

---

<sup>110</sup> Addressed at a Supreme Soviet of Georgia session, quoted in Malkhaz Matsaberidze, *Russia and Georgia: Post-Soviet Metamorphoses of Mutual Relations*, CA&CC Press, 2007, [fn] 2, Retrieved from: [http://www.ca-c.org/online/2008/journal\\_eng/cac-05/14.shtml](http://www.ca-c.org/online/2008/journal_eng/cac-05/14.shtml) (accessed on 14 April 2010)



## 2.1. THE HISTORY OF GEORGIA

Russians take the major place in the threat perceptions of Georgians, not surprisingly, because the history of Georgia has been interwoven by its relations with Russia for more than 200 years. Although the relationship was initiated in a friendly way, increasing Russian control in the Caucasus has brought a subordinate role for Georgians. In the eighteenth century, when Russian Empire penetrated in the Caucasus, Georgians accepted a Russian protectorate which they saw as a safeguard of Christians against the influence of Muslim Ottoman and Persian empires.<sup>111</sup> In 1783 Treaty of Georgievsk signed between Russia and Georgia that gave Georgians the “sovereign rights in the management of its internal affairs under the suzerainty of the Russian Empire.”<sup>112</sup> However, in 1801 Georgia fully incorporated in Russia and in Georgian perspective, the annexation of country was a flagrant violation of the agreement.<sup>113</sup>

At the end of First World War, Georgia had an opportunity to restore its independence in the turmoil of Caucasus. After the October revolution, Russia withdrew from the WWI in March 1918, leaving a vacuum in Transcaucasia. At the first stage, in April 1918 the ‘Democratic Federal Republic of the Transcaucasus’ was proclaimed by Georgia Armenia and Azerbaijan, but this composition did not survive for more than a month. The reason for dissolution was divergent alignment tendencies of the three states.<sup>114</sup> After the split Georgia declared independence on 26 May 1918. Between 1918 and 1921, the Georgian state experienced three years of independent rule. In this period, the Georgian Democratic Republic was converted to a well integrated social, political, economic entity.<sup>115</sup> Georgian provinces were integrated in the Republic without any internal strife and “the nation building was by

---

<sup>111</sup> David Gillard, **Struggle for Asia, 1828-1914: A Study in British and Russian Imperialism**, Butler & Tanner Ltd., London, 1978, p. 11

<sup>112</sup> G. Z. Intskirveli, “Constitution of Independent Georgia”, **22 Review of Central and East European Law** (1996), No. 1, p. 1

<sup>113</sup> Malkhaz Matsaberidze, “Georgia and Russia: In Search of Civilized Relations”, **CA&CC Press**, 2007, [http://www.ca-c.org/online/2007/journal\\_eng/cac-05/07.shtml](http://www.ca-c.org/online/2007/journal_eng/cac-05/07.shtml) (accessed on 26 Feb 2010)

<sup>114</sup> Coene suggests that Georgia oriented toward Germany and Azerbaijan sided with Ottomans while Armenians appealed to British and Russian support. Frederik Coene, **The Caucasus: an Introduction**, Routledge, New York, 2010, p. 132

<sup>115</sup> J. W. R Parson, “National Integration in Soviet Georgia”, **Soviet Studies**, Vol. 34, No. 4, (Oct., 1982), p. 550

and large completed.”<sup>116</sup> Moreover the state obtained a Russian recognition with the Russian-Georgian Treaty of Moscow in May, 1920.<sup>117</sup>

However the defeat of the White army shifted the balance in Caucasus leaving Georgia open to the conquest of the Bolsheviks. After the occupation, Georgia incorporated in the Soviet Union and Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia came into existence in February 1921. Although Georgia was considered to be independent as a member of the Union, in reality its territory were occupied by the Russian army and the state fell under the strict rule of Moscow.<sup>118</sup>

To consolidate its rule the Soviet Union carried out divide and rule tactics using territorial-administrative arrangements. In Georgia, Abkhaz with a small minority population, obtained the status of a large autonomous republic, while the predominantly Muslim Georgians in Ajaria were allocated the same status. The Ossetes, on the other hand, were given a “sizable” autonomous region.<sup>119</sup> (See map 1, p. 4). Because Ossetes had given support to Bolshevik invasion in Georgia in 1920, they attained special privileges and status in the Soviet Georgia as a reward for its loyalty.<sup>120</sup> Although hierarchically ordered, this structure created many problems for Georgia, since the autonomous units often turned to Moscow for demanding greater autonomy. Against the policies of ‘forced Georgianization’, both Abkhazia and Ossetia promoted a nationalist discourse that was bitterly opposed to the Georgian rule and they moved closer to a pro-Russian position.<sup>121</sup> In fact, this situation is

---

<sup>116</sup> Revaz Gachechiladze, “National Idea, State-Building and Boundaries in the Post-Soviet Space (the case of Georgia)”, *GeoJournal*, Vol. 43, No. 1, (Sep. 1997), p. 56

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid* p. 57

<sup>118</sup> Frederik Coene, *The Caucasus: an Introduction*, 2010, p. 133.

<sup>119</sup> Paul B. Henze, “Russia and the Caucasus”, *Perceptions* (SAM), June-August 1996, p. 56. In 1921 Abkhazia joined Soviet Union in an equal status with Georgia as a Soviet Socialist Republic.. This status codified in Abkhazia’s Constitution of 1925. However in 1931, its status was downgraded to an autonomous republic within the Georgian SSR. See Robert M. Cutler, “Georgia/Abkhazia”, *Self-Determination Conflict Profile*, p. 2 Retrieved from: <http://selfdetermine.irc-online.org/pdf/overview/OVabkhaz.pdf> (accessed on 30 March 2010) and Monica D. Toft, “Multinationality, Regions and State-Building: The Failed Transition in Georgia”, *Regional & Federal Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 3, (Autumn, 2001), p. 129

<sup>120</sup> Dinah Jansen, “The Conflict between Self-Determination and Territorial Integrity: The South Ossetian Paradigm”, 2008. p. 1, <http://centreforforeignpolicystudies.dal.ca/pdf/gradsymp09/Jansen.pdf> (accessed on 27 Feb 2010)

<sup>121</sup> Spyros Demetriou, “Rising From the Ashes? The Difficult (Re)Birth of the Georgian State”, *Development and Change*, Vol. 33, No. 5, 2002, p. 866.

closely associated with the geographic position and make-up of the Caucasus which saw a number of interference by powerful states in the region in the past. As Demetriou argues, since the region often changed hands the complex populations had learned how to manipulate the regional interests and politics of foreign powers with the aim of gaining a protected autonomy.<sup>122</sup> Taking it as an opportunity, Russia always utilized this ethnic unrest in Georgia, holding the ember of exacerbating ethnic disobedience and violence to compel Georgia for acting according to Russian interest.

Along with the ethnic unrest, Georgians were also uncomfortable with the Soviet nationalism policy which opposed nationalism in any kind to create a society that is 'national in form socialist in content'. Yet, ironically the official ideology of the Soviet Union provided the elevation of the Russian national form above the smaller nationalities.<sup>123</sup> Under these conditions Georgian national identity evolved as national self-protection prompted by the fear of russification.<sup>124</sup> Georgians remained conservative for their culture and language through the Soviet period.<sup>125</sup> Being labeled as a nationalist, on the other hand, was very dangerous in a totalitarian state like the USSR.<sup>126</sup> For example, Gamsakhurdia who became the first president of independent Georgia, was arrested several times due to his association with national liberation movement.<sup>127</sup> However in the process of disintegration of the Union, the coalition of the Georgian nationalist leaders all who adopted an anti-Soviet rhetoric captured power in the Georgian parliament and government.<sup>128</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> **Ibid.** p. 865

<sup>123</sup> Veljko Vujačić, "Historical Legacies, Nationalist Mobilization, and Political Outcomes in Russia and Serbia: A Weberian View", **Theory and Society**, Vol. 25, No. 6, (Dec., 1996), p. 779.

<sup>124</sup> J. W. R. Parson, "National Integration in Soviet Georgia", **Soviet Studies**, Vol. 34, No. 4, (Oct., 1982), p. 125

<sup>125</sup> Two major demonstrations experienced in 1978 and 1981. The former aimed to protect the status of Georgian as the state language of the republic, the latter demanded the introduction of courses dealing specifically with Georgian history in the schools. **Ibid.** pp. 556-557

<sup>126</sup> Revaz Gachechiladze, "National Idea, State-Building...", 1997, p. 52.

<sup>127</sup> He was arrested in 1956, 1977 and in Tbilisi demonstrations, 1989. See his biography on <http://www.georgianbiography.com/bios/g/gamsakhurdia2.htm> (accessed on 5 March 2010)

<sup>128</sup> For the content of the nationalist coalition See Jaba Devdariani, "Georgia: Rise and Fall of the Façade Democracy", **Demokratizatsiya**, Vol. 12, No: 1, 2004, pp. 84-89.

Theoretically, the political developments in this period seems to have belied Larson who criticized Walt by claiming that a threatening power can manipulate the political struggle in a weak state, so that the vulnerable political leaders decide bandwagon with it. In Georgia case it was not possible, because none of the Georgian nationalists could tie with Russia for reaching the power -after the collapse of Communist Party rule. Since the mid-1980's the populist-nationalist groups in Georgia became stronger and nationalism surfaced by taking advantages of glasnost and perestroika in Russia.

Particularly the reinterpretation of the Georgian history regarding the period of 1918-21 was remarkable..<sup>129</sup> Rejecting the Soviet histories which drew a picture of friendly relations between Russian and non-Russian people<sup>130</sup> became the linchpin of the Georgian national identity. The new pluralist system emerged in the Soviet Union furnished the nationalist groups with the opportunity to organize parties and movements which were soon to challenge the Communist Party of Georgia. They worked for the revival of the Georgian identity and started a pro-independence movement which aimed to 'reincarnate the former 1918-1921 Republic.'<sup>131</sup> After the harsh repression of Tbilisi demonstrations on 9 April 1989, the legitimacy of the Communist Party of Georgia was fully destroyed. In such a political climate, the Round Table of National Liberation Alliance lead by Zviad Gamsakhurdia attained a landslide victory, in the first fair and free elections in October 1990.<sup>132</sup>

## 2.2. THE GAMSAKHURDIA PERIOD

After the coalition of nationalist parties led by the former dissident Gamsakhurdia came to power, Georgia appeared as one of the most independent-minded republics in the Soviet Union. Georgia was the first state that declared

---

<sup>129</sup> Svante E. Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus**, RoutledgeCurzon, London, 2001, p. 148

<sup>130</sup> Soviet histories claimed that the periphery countries around Russia joined voluntarily in Soviet Union and they benefited political stability and a higher standard of living through industrialization within the Union. See Margot Light, "Russia and Transcaucasia", In **Transcaucasian Boundaries** (eds.), John F.R.Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield, UCL Press, London, 1996, p. 44

<sup>131</sup> Spyros Demetriou, 2002, p. 867.

<sup>132</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 149.

independence from the Soviet Union –in April 1991, much before the others.<sup>133</sup> Gamsakhurdia’s main goal was to secure his country’s independence against the Soviet Union. Therefore he followed an anti-Russian line, seeking to balance this major threat with the US and European states.<sup>134</sup> However, those states were reluctant to establish diplomatic relations due to the existing continuity of Soviet Union. The USSR was officially dissolved in December 1991 and a few weeks later, Gamsakhurdia was ousted from power.<sup>135</sup>

Even in the absence of available allies, Gamsakhurdia strictly avoided any cooperative arrangement with the Soviet Union, fearing that it could destroy Georgian sovereignty and independence. For example, in August 1991 when Gorbachev’s new Union treaty was scheduled to sign by the Union republics, Gamsakhurdia declared that “Georgia would not be signing any document that preserved his republic’s subservient status *vis-à-vis* Moscow.”<sup>136</sup> On the other hand, as Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) being created, Georgia under Gamsakhurdia government did not show any willingness to participate the Russian-led organization, “terming it as nothing but a revived Soviet Empire.”<sup>137</sup>

Here it must be noted that, in the framework of this study there are many impediments to treat the CIS as an alliance. After the failed efforts for the new Union treaty by Gorbachev, Russian leaders had still a desire to prevent severing ties with the member states even after the collapse of the Soviet Union was looking inevitable. The eventual resort has become the formation of the CIS, however this time Russia avoided any suggestion of recreating a directive political structure within the

---

<sup>133</sup> The others declared independence in the aftermath of failed August coup against Gorbachev in 1991. See *ibid*, p. 334

<sup>134</sup> See Leila Alieva, “Reshaping Eurasia: Foreign Policy Strategies and Leadership Assets in Post-Soviet South Caucasus”, **UC Berkeley: Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies.**, Winter 1999-2000, p. 17. Retrieved from: <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/53q654p5> (accessed on 6 March 2010) and Frederik Coene, **The Caucasus: an Introduction**, 2010, p. 171.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid*. For example, US announced that it had decided to enter into diplomatic relations with Georgia in 24 March 1992, after Shevardnadze took the government. Rolan Reach, “Recognition of States: The collapse of Yugoslavia and Soviet Union”, **European Journal of International Law**, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1993, p. 47.

<sup>136</sup> B.G.Hewitt, “Abkhazia: A Problem of Identity and Ownership”, In **Transcaucasian Boundaries** (eds.), John F.R.Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield, UCL Press, London, 1996, p. 214.

<sup>137</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 334.

framework of the organization.<sup>138</sup> On 21 December 1991, the eleven members of Soviet Union -except Georgia- signed the CIS agreement transforming the Union to the new commonwealth.<sup>139</sup> Rather than being a body of security cooperation, CIS particularly emphasized the functional necessity of policy coordination and cooperation in several areas such as “the ‘common economic space’, transport and communications systems, environmental protection, migration policy and the suppression of organized crime”<sup>140</sup> [an issue counted within soft security].

In the following years, as Sakwa and Webber argue, divergent alignment tendencies of the CIS members and the polarization of opinion among those states clearly debilitated the organization, yet it did not result in its disappearance.<sup>141</sup> What promoted the security cooperation between Russian Federation and former Soviet Union states, on the other hand, were the Collective Security Treaty (CST) of May 1992 signed under the auspices of CIS and additional bilateral security agreements signed with the newly independent states.<sup>142</sup> The security cooperation between Georgia and Russia initiated in Shevardnadze period by signing the CIS agreements including CST and some other bilateral ones with Russia (which are examined in the

---

<sup>138</sup> Richard Sakwa and Mark Webber, “The Commonwealth of Independent States, 1991-1998: Stagnation and Survival”, **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol. 51, No. 3, (May, 1999), p. 381

<sup>139</sup> Sergei A. Voitovich “The Commonwealth of Independent States: An Emerging Institutional Model”, **European Journal of International Law**, Vol. 4, No. 1, (1993), p. 405

<sup>140</sup> Richard Sakwa and Mark Webber, 1999, p. 381. In 2005, Russian president Vladimir Putin also acknowledged that CIS did not promote cooperation in military and political spheres. He argued that despite declared aims, “in reality the CIS was established so as to make the process of the USSR’s dissolution the most civilized and smooth one, with the fewest losses in the economic and humanitarian spheres” Quoted in Irina Kobrinskaya, “The Post-Soviet Space: From the USSR to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Beyond”, In **The CIS, the EU and Russia: The Challenges of Integration** (eds.), Katlijn Malfliet, Lien Verpoest, Evgeny Vinokurov, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2007. pp. 14-15.

<sup>141</sup> See Richard Sakwa and Mark Webber, 1999, pp. 79,80.

<sup>142</sup> See Gregory Gleason and Marat E. Shaihtudinov, “Collective Security and Non-State Actors in Eurasia”, **International Studies Perspectives**, (2005), 6, p. 281 Collective Security Treaty was signed in May 1992, by the presidents of six of the twelve CIS nations Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. “It provided for the formation of a Collective Security Council in the CIS to jointly coordinate defense policies, and rapidly led to additional agreements in the following months, such as a framework for the assembly of multinational peacekeeping forces and a protocol that defined the borders covered by the Collective Security Treaty as those of the CIS.” Most importantly, the treaty also “echoed Article 5 of the NATO agreement: aggression or threat of aggression against one country would be regarded as aggression against all participants in the treaty.” Adam Weinstein, “Russian Phoenix: The Collective Security Treaty Organization”, **The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations**, 8, (2007), p. 169. Georgia signed CST in Shevardnadze period. In 2002, CST was transformed to Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) which still exists. **Ibid.**, p. 167.

next section). In Gamsakhurdia period, however, Georgia avoided any relationship that might lead to an alliance with Russia.

In fact, during the short-ended Gamsakhurdia rule, both Georgian internal structure and the external conjuncture could not permit a coherent alignment strategy to follow. Therefore, this period may be defined as reckless fight against Soviet rule directed by a leader who lacked the necessary experience and foresight. His power was based on his personal charisma and populist nationalism which he used extensively both before and after coming to power, therefore he accelerated the ethnic conflicts among the minorities.<sup>143</sup> Backed by enthusiastic nationalist militias Gamsakhurdia faced an almost impossible task: running a country with no tradition of statehood and even no secure borders since the Abkhaz and Ossetians were not eager to be a part of his independent Georgia.<sup>144</sup> On the other hand, the ruling coalition of nationalist parties -the Round Table- which had been formed for the pragmatic aim of winning the elections, was fragmented in a short-time because of Gamsakhurdia's autocratic policies including arrest of opposition leaders.<sup>145</sup> He was confident in paramilitary support, but these forces prepared his end in early January 1992. Nevertheless, examining Gamsakhurdia's period seems significant for exposing different factors that shape the external threat of Russia over Georgia. An overview for the content of these factors is given below. In the following chapters, I only suggest the changes in the level of Russian threat.

### **2.2.1. The Sources of Russian Threat**

First of all, when aggregate power is taken into consideration, Georgia was looking as a fledging state that was born with many disadvantages against Soviet Union (and Russian Federation as well). Central management of economy in Soviet era had served to the Russian economic, industrial and technological supremacy after

---

<sup>143</sup> Mithat Çelikpala, "From a Failed State to a Weak One: Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations", **The Turkish Yearbook**, Vol. 36., 2006, p. 165.

<sup>144</sup> Edward Lucas, **The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West**, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008, p. 139

<sup>145</sup> Lucan Way, "State power and Autocratic Stability: Armenia and Georgia Compared", In **The Politics of Transition in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Enduring Legacies and Emerging Challenges** (eds.), Amanda E. Wooden and Christoph H. Stefes, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 114

the dissolution of the USSR. For example after the independence, Georgia appeared as a state that was fully dependent on Russian energy and electricity and well integrated with the Soviet economic infrastructure.<sup>146</sup>

Geographic proximity of Georgia, consolidates the Russian threat excessively not solely because they have a common border (see map 2, p. 5). Although Russia and Georgia were severed by the chain of Caucasus Mountains, the most important passes; Darial gorge and Roki pass, opened into the then rebellious South Ossetia Autonomous Region.- later the separatist movement was to use this passes in transferring arms from Russia.<sup>147</sup> Given the fact that Russian army would be welcomed by the Ossetians during a military intervention, Russia had always an opportunity reach to southern edge of Ossetia easily – a few hours away from Tbilisi.<sup>148</sup> On the other side, the only rail link from Russia to Georgia was through Abkhazia which constituted vital supply route for Russia, and indeed a good pretext for the future Russian interventions in this region.<sup>149</sup>

When declared its independence, Georgia emerged as a post-Soviet country that is under de-facto occupation of the Soviet Union. Tbilisi was the Headquarters of the Transcaucasus Army Group of the Soviet Army and Russia as the inheritor had large military bases all over Georgia.<sup>150</sup> After 1991, Russia assumed a direct control of all the former Soviet forces in Georgia.<sup>151</sup> In September 1991, the

---

<sup>146</sup> Russia has advantaged the situation using energy supply as a tool of leverage and the energy supplied by Russia was cut in troubled times of relations See Esra Hatipoğlu, “After Empire: Georgia-Russia Relations and the Prospects for Stability in the South Caucasus”, **Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies**, Annual 2004-4, p. 14-15 Retrieved from: <http://www.obiv.org.tr/2005/avrasya/ehatipoglu.pdf> (accessed on 12 March 2010)

<sup>147</sup> See Revaz Gachechiladze, **The New Georgia: Space, Society, Politics**, UCL Press, London, 1995, p. 9.

<sup>148</sup> As noted above Ossetians plays an important role in facilitating the Bolshevik invasion in 1920. On the other hand, in August 2008 war; Roki pass played the major role in carrying Russian forces into Georgia. See “Road to War in Georgia: The Chronical of a Caucasian Tragedy”, **Spiegel Online**; (08/25/2008), <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,574812-3,00.html> (accessed on 12 March 2010)

<sup>149</sup> John F. R. Wright, “The Geopolitics of Georgia”, In **Transcaucasian Boundaries** (eds.), John F.R.Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield, UCL Press, London, 1996, p. 143.

<sup>150</sup> Dennis Sammut, “Love and Hate in Russian-Georgian Relations”, **Helsinki Monitor**, Vol. 14, No. 1, (Jan. 2003), p. 29

<sup>151</sup> Nicole J. Jackson, **Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates, Actions**, Routledge, London, 2003, p. 120.



Georgian parliament declared all Soviet troops to be an occupation force<sup>152</sup>, while Russia was unwilling to withdraw these forces from such an important country that had borders with Turkey and the Black Sea. Since then the presence of Russian military forces in Georgia, -directly or indirectly influenced all the problematic relationship between the two countries.

At the beginning, the independent Georgia had no army of its own, and internal balancing actions by Gamsakhurdia was solely limited to accommodation of strong paramilitary organizations such as Mkhedrioni (Horsemen) led by Jaba Ioseliani, a well-known criminal, and the troops loyal to Tengiz Kitovani.<sup>153- 154</sup> The latter was transformed into the National Guard by Gamsakhurdia which was planned to be the nucleus for the future army.<sup>155</sup> However, these paramilitary forces which were loyal to their personal leaders rather than the government had neither capacity nor intent to fight against Russian troops. In fact, they were created by anti-Soviet political groups to deal particularly with ethnic conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.<sup>156</sup> After the independence, these outlawed local forces ‘nationalized’ or ‘privatized’ many conventional Soviet weapons and military equipment by plundering Soviet army depots. Georgian officers who had formerly served in the Soviet military also joined these units.<sup>157</sup> Being aware that they could not be controlled by the state, Gamsakhurdia supported these warlords in fighting against separatist movements. However, it did not result in formation of an effective and

---

<sup>152</sup> New Strait Times, September, 17, 1991; p. 24.

<sup>153</sup> See Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 150. That is, in fact, questionable whether these forces can be included in internal balancing category since the motive for their creation is only dealing with ethnic conflicts rather than Russian unbalanced military power. And it is very logical that, if all state activities to increase military capabilities of their own would be defined as internal balancing, that makes balance-of-power theory senseless. However, my suggestion is that, given the fact that Georgian leaders tried to protect territorial integrity of Georgia against secessionist movements with these forces, and Russia intervened to the ethnic conflicts supporting them at the backstage, there is a possibility to treat them as internal balancing units.

<sup>154</sup> For Ioseliani’s criminal biography that is also shared by Kitovani, see Alexandre Kukhianidze, “Corruption and organized crime in Georgia before and after the ‘Rose Revolution’”, **Central Asian Survey**, Vol: 28, No: 2, 2009, p. 219.

<sup>155</sup> See David Darchiasvili, “Georgian Defense Policy and Military Reform”, In **Statehood and Security: Georgia after the Rose Revolution**, (eds.), Bruno Coppieters and Robert Legvold, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 124

<sup>156</sup> **Ibid.** p. 122

<sup>157</sup> See Margot Light, “Russia and Transcaucasia”, 1996, p. 51, Dov Lynch, **Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan**, Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 2000, pp. 132,135 and David Darchiasvili, 2005, p. 127.

organized national army in Georgia which was very crucial for the survival of a state with no potential allies.

Aggressive intentions of Russia were realized by a growing number of Georgians as they re-discovered their past and further solidified when they faced with the ethnic turmoil since the dissolution of the USSR. From then on, Georgians interpreted ethnic conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia as the inheritance from Soviet rule which was used by Russia, as an instrument in its attempts to destabilize Georgia in order to prevent its full independence. After all, Georgian nationalists claimed that the autonomous units were artificially created by the Russian Empire to prevent Georgia to create a unified entity, with no domestic roots of their own.<sup>158</sup> In their perceptions, the domestic instability was fanned by Russia to create the necessary situation that would provide a pretext for intervening directly in Georgia and maintaining its military presence. Gamsakhurdia, for example, explicitly suggested that in Georgia, “Moscow was consciously trying to create anarchy so it can restore order.”<sup>159</sup> In fact this view was shared by all the successive presidents of Georgia.<sup>160</sup> Since the aggressive intentions of Russia was associated with the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, it is not possible to treat them solely as internal threats, as argued in the previous chapter. The following section, therefore, tries to elaborate the implications of these threats and gives an overview of both conflicts.

### **2.2.2. Conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia: Internal Threats or Not?<sup>161</sup>**

Ethnic strife in Georgia aroused, when it was clear that USSR was breaking up to smaller political pieces. In that period, Georgian majority and the other

---

<sup>158</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 151.

<sup>159</sup> Julian Birch, “The Georgian/South Ossetian Territorial and Boundary Dispute” In **Transcaucasian Boundaries** (eds), John F.R.Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield, UCL Press, London, 1996, p. 172.

<sup>160</sup> See Svante E. Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 339.

<sup>161</sup> As noted above, beside Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Georgia has another autonomous republic with that it has maintained problematic relations too. Ajaria has secured its autonomy since Georgia’s independence, however, it has not shown a tendency towards separation. Thus, there has never been any direct military confrontation between Ajaria and Tbilisi and the problem of autonomy has not created a direct threat to Georgia’s survival and territorial integrity. As a result, Ajaria has not played a significant role in Georgia’s alignment preferences. That is why Ajaria is excluded from the analysis.

politically autonomous units had divergent agendas for building their future political status, because they were all under the control of pro-independence movements. Abkhaz and Ossetians, during this process, were more disadvantageous than Georgians since their status were lower than Georgia. They quickly realized that if they were subordinated to Tbilisi government, they could lose their autonomy, cultural rights and some local political privileges which they had enjoyed in the Soviet Union. What caused to conflicts, on the other hand, was mainly the national territoriality of the political system of USSR which had been based on the division of states and autonomous units within them, using the name of titular nations. Since the late 1980s, all these units combined their ethnic identity with the governance of the state and mobilized their majority group against the minorities.<sup>162</sup> Titular ethnic groups aimed at controlling their territory to realize their political goals. Therefore in some cases including Georgia, state building processes became a zero-sum national mobilization with real territorial and political divisions and that promoted separatism as one clear political alternative.<sup>163</sup>

Most interestingly, during this struggle, Abkhazia and South Ossetia played some kind of alignment games as if they were sovereign states. For example, the solidarity between the two against the Georgian nationalism had been observed even since 1989, when Ossetian leader Ademon Nykhas sent an open letter to Abkhazia that declared his support for their secessionist claims.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, as Birch argues, in the view of Ossetian leaders Georgia was an external threat that conducted a chauvinist policy against their people.<sup>165</sup> In accordance with their perceptions, in the last years of the Soviet Union both Abkhaz and Ossetians took a side with Moscow. For example, they participated to the referendum for Gorbachev's new Union Treaty which was boycotted by Georgian government and voted

---

<sup>162</sup> Julie A. George, "Expecting ethnic conflict The Soviet Legacy and Ethnic Politics in the Caucasus and Central Asia", In **The Politics of Transition in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Enduring Legacies and Emerging Challenges** (eds.), Amanda E. Wooden and Christoph H. Stefes, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 80

<sup>163</sup> **Ibid.** p. 81

<sup>164</sup> See Frederik Coene, **The Caucasus: an Introduction**, 2010, p. 152.

<sup>165</sup> Julian Birch, 1996, pp. 178, 180. The Author's citation from Khuagev, an Ossetian leader, is a good illustration for the perceptions: "We are much more worried by Georgian imperialism than Russian imperialism..." See p. 178.

overwhelmingly in favor of the preservation of the USSR.<sup>166</sup> Not surprisingly, their pro-Moscow position continued after 1991, by providing Russia with a significant tool to extend its sphere of influence beyond its retreated borders. The former occupier did not avoid intervening new state building projects and manipulating the conflicts, because it sought to reintegrate the newly independent state under its control.<sup>167</sup>

However, an effective Russian involvement to the conflicts was not observed until the late 1992. At the first stage, Russia under Yeltsin government was building its own institutions and securing control over its territory, therefore, it seemed to be more in-ward looking. More importantly, in foreign relations, Yeltsin government had a pro-Western line which gave the peripheral countries little priority<sup>168</sup> and it provided more free-space for Georgia. Conflicts in Abkhazia appeared in the late-1980s. In 1988, the ethnic-nationalist organization -the Abkhazian Forum, demanded from Soviet leadership for restoring Abkhazia's status as a Union Republic, and then ethnic clashes began in the summer of 1989 through Abkhazia.<sup>169</sup> In August 1990, the Abkhazian Supreme Soviet declared sovereignty. Only few months after, the government changed in Georgia with the election of nationalist coalition led by Gamsakhurdia. The new Georgian leadership perceived Abkhazia as a threat to the state's territorial integrity. In August 1992, Abkhazia's decision for the restoration of 1925 constitution which defined Abkhazia as an independent republic transformed the clashes into a real ethnic war.<sup>170</sup> During the first phase of war, Russia did not assist Abkhazians, therefore, troops led by Kitovani and Georgian police were able to

---

<sup>166</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 152.

<sup>167</sup> M. R. Beissinger, "State building in the Shadow of an Empire-State: The Soviet Legacy in post-Soviet Politics", in **The End of Empire? The Transformation of the USSR in Comparative Perspective** (eds.), Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrot, M. E. Sharpe, New York, 1996, p. 161

<sup>168</sup> See Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, pp. 325-326.

<sup>169</sup> Maura Morandi, "Approaching the Conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia: Different Perceptions", **IICP Working Paper Series**, 2008/3, p. 13

<sup>170</sup> Natalie Sabanadze, International Involvement in the South Caucasus, **ECMI Working Paper**, No 15 February 2002, p. 12 Although Abkhazia declared de-facto independence with this act, 1925 constitution had united Abkhazian SSR with Georgian SSR through a special treaty. See Small 158 and Abkhazia left the possibility of a federation with Georgia in 1992 and Ardzinba proposed a solution involving a federation or confederation See Frederik E. Coene, **The Caucasus: an Introduction**, 2010, p. 150.

took Sukhumi –the Abkhazian capital- and restore order in most of Abkhazia only in few days.<sup>171</sup>

Georgian nationalist stance was been harsher and more hostile towards Ossetians, as they maneuvered toward secession. In 1988, South Ossetia demanded from Moscow for upgrading of its status to an autonomous republic and one year later, Ossetian leadership sent another petition which asked for unification of their oblast with North Ossetian Autonomous Republic within Russia, seceding from Georgian SSR.<sup>172</sup> Gamsakhurdia explicitly proclaimed the separatists in South Ossetia as agents of Moscow.<sup>173</sup> He was also insensitive to the Ossetian demands for preserving their autonomous cultural and linguistic rights. The hostile position of Gamsakhurdia against Ossetian minority was very clear in his declaration that “Georgia's Ossetians are unwanted ‘guests’ who should ‘go back’ to North Ossetia”<sup>174</sup> One of the first decisions he made, after coming to power was to abolish the autonomous status of Ossetia and it resulted in another ethnic war in Georgia.<sup>175</sup> In the early 1991, the Georgian paramilitary forces entered the oblast and the Ossetians fought back with the weapons they supplied from Soviet Army. The war continued particularly in Tskhinvali, the Ossetian capital, as Georgians blockaded the city. The blockade lasted for more than eighteen months.<sup>176</sup>

All these events proved that Georgian nationalist forces were able to secure the order in Abkhazia and could counter Ossetian separatist by the early 1992. However the balance shifted in favor separatist forces since then. In the late 1992, Abkhaz forces re-consolidated their position in the northern side of the region and they started a counter-attack. Abkhaz re-took Gagra in October 1992 and eventually

---

<sup>171</sup> **Ibid.**

<sup>172</sup> Natalie Sabanadze, 2002, p. 15. After the dissolution of USSR, Ossetians has continued to demand the unification but this time participating into Russian Federation.

<sup>173</sup> **NY Times**, “Soviet Turmoil; Soviet Georgia Chief, In Quest of Freedom, Sees Only Enemies”, Sep., 9,1991 <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/09/09/world/soviet-turmoil-soviet-georgia-chief-in-quest-of-freedom-sees-only-enemies.html?pagewanted=all> (accessed on 15 April 2010)

<sup>174</sup> **NY Times**, “As Centralized Rule Wanes, Ethnic Tension Rises Anew in Soviet Georgia”, Oct., 2, 1991, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/10/02/world/as-centralized-rule-wanes-ethnic-tension-rises-anew-in-soviet-georgia.html?pagewanted=all> (accessed on 15 April 2010)

<sup>175</sup> Natalie Sabanadze, 2002, p. 15.

<sup>176</sup> Frederik E. Coene, **The Caucasus: an Introduction**, 2010, p. 152.

advanced to Sukhumi by the mid 1993.<sup>177</sup> One of the reason for Georgian retreat was weakening Georgia due to the civil-war in Tbilisi, starting in the late 1991 against Gamsakhurdia's leadership. In addition, after the coup d'etat against himself, Gamsakhurdia returned his homeland Mingleria in western Georgia and commanded a rebellion there.<sup>178</sup> Therefore some part of paramilitary forces was sent here to deal with the insurgency. According to some scholars Gamsakhurdia, ironically, contributed to the ensuing triumph of separatists in Abkhazia.<sup>179</sup>

Yet, another important reason for losing Abkhazia and South Ossetia by 1993, was intensive involvement of Russia to the conflicts. Since 1992, when the balance in Russian state between Russian nationalists and pro-Western politicians changed in favor of the former, Russian approach toward peripheral countries shifted from the disengagement policy to an assertive and coercive strategy.<sup>180</sup> This change was also registered in official documents. For example, 1993 security doctrine approved by Yeltsin government implied the return of imperial attitudes for Russia. The doctrine identified the main threats for Russia arising from its 'near abroad' such as local wars and expansion of military alliances. Its provisions also made it clear that the new approach was mild to the idea of deployment of troops on the territories of all former USSR countries.<sup>181</sup> Furthermore, between 1992 and 1996, the structure of civil-military relations in Russia permitted the Ministry of Defense and Russian army a free-hand to act in the near abroad.<sup>182</sup> All these developments indicated that a more coercive policy toward Georgia was on the way.

As the nationalists reinforced their position in the state organizations, Russian Federation gradually adhered in the conflicts within its neighbors. The assistance of

---

<sup>177</sup> S. Neil Macfarlane, "On the Front Lines in the Near Abroad: the CIS and the OSCE in Georgia's Civil Wars", **Third World Quarterly**, Vol 18, No 3, 1997, p.513.

<sup>178</sup> See **NY Times**, "Soviet Turmoil..." Gamsakhurdia claimed that the civil-war in Tbilisi was triggered by Moscow and the extra-parliamentary opposition wanted to make Georgia a colony of Russia.

<sup>179</sup> See Svetlana Akkueva, "The Caucasus: One or Many? A View from the Region", **Nationalities Papers**, Vol. 36, No. 2, 2008, p. 266. Macfarlane further claimed that Zviadists –the followers of Gamsakhurdia, used Abkhazia as a sanctuary in resisting Georgian forces directed against themselves. See Macfarlane, 1997, p.514.

<sup>180</sup> Dov Lynch, **Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS**, 2000, p. 2.

<sup>181</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 330.

<sup>182</sup> Dov Lynch, **Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS**, 2000, p. 3.

Russian units was crucial in the Abkhaz advancement toward the south. Both Abkhaz and Ossetians utilized Russian heavy military equipment.<sup>183</sup> In 1992, Russian air force attacked Georgian troops in Ossetia and threatened Georgia to bomb Tbilisi.<sup>184</sup> As a result of the Russian involvement, Georgia seemed to have lost two wars of secession by 1993. All these developments occurred in Shevardnadze period and they are examined in more detail within the next section. However what should be noted here is that although it is questionable whether the secessionist wars initiated by Russia deliberately,<sup>185</sup> the role of Russia in their loss is clear. They may be threats arising from domestic roots, yet Russia as an external threat made use of this situation in order to subdue Georgia. Thus, for the Georgian state, to counter the secessionist movements meant resisting Russia -the major external threat. It can be concluded that the ethnic conflicts inside were in reality a part of a visible external threat.

On the other side, the ultimate internal threat that Zviad Gamsakhurdia faced, raised not from the north but in Tbilisi, among his former fellows. Gamsakhurdia prepared the end of his government in August 1991 when he had ordered that the newly-established army –the National Guard be subordinated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This decision costed him the loss of his childhood friend and Defense Minister Tengiz Kitovani. Resented now, Kitovani acted independently from any state organization, preserving the military force that was loyal only to him.<sup>186</sup> In the following months, Gamsakhurdia permanently refused to compromise with the rising parliamentary opposition. However, the opposition leader Tchanturia managed to manipulate streets of Tbilisi, and after two weeks of civil war Gamsakhurdia was driven out of the capital on 6 January 1992.

---

<sup>183</sup> See Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, pp. 156-162.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid*, p. 157

<sup>185</sup> For example, despite Gamsakhurdia's accusation of Russia, Cornell suggests that the conflict in Ossetia "in fact developed during 1991 and early 1992, that is before the Russian policy shift." *Ibid*. p. 336.

<sup>186</sup> Jonathan Wheatley, "Elections and Democratic Governance in the Former Soviet Union: The Case of Georgia", **Berliner Osteurope Info**, 2004, p. 4 Retrieved from: [http://www.oei.fu-berlin.de/en/projekte/cscqa/downloads/jw\\_pub\\_boi.pdf](http://www.oei.fu-berlin.de/en/projekte/cscqa/downloads/jw_pub_boi.pdf) (accessed on 15 April 2010)

When Gamsakhurdia was besieged by opposition forces, the president interestingly turned to Russia for support by declaring his readiness to see Georgia's joining to the CIS.<sup>187</sup> Indeed, this setting proves true what the omnibalancing approach envisages. As noted in the previous chapter, David emphasizes the violent coups as the most common form of regime change in those states. After the president understood that he could not get any support from the Western states, he eventually yielded to Russia which he might view as the last available external power capable to keep him in force. Yet, Russia turned a blind eye to Gamsakhurdia's request whose sincerity was in fact very questionable by declaring that Georgia had first to settle its internal problems before such membership could be envisaged. Hence, Russia demonstrated it had no interest in maintenance of his presidency and Gamsakhurdia had to flee and seek asylum in Chechnya.

After the military takeover, the coup leaders Kitovani and Ioseliani were about to lead the country. They were quick to realize that they could not gain even an international recognition which was a precondition for reaching vital foreign assistance, since they both were paramilitary leaders.<sup>188</sup> In such a troubled period they invited Eduard Shevardnadze –the last Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs who had a Georgian origin and was indeed, prominent with his role in the ending the Cold War.<sup>189</sup> Shevardnadze who had personal connections with Western policy-makers possessed eminent advantages.<sup>190</sup> But he must have known that he would face many insurmountable obstacles while trying to ensure the survival of his country.

In short, the Gamsakhurdia period exposed high level of Russian threat and the deep problems of security. It was interesting that Georgia chose the balancing option when there were no potential allies available. Although it did not seem to be possible and rational to balance against Russia only by internal balancing acts, the

---

<sup>187</sup> "Georgia wants to join new group", *New Strait Times*, December 25, 1991, p. 11 and Bruno Coppieters, "Western Security Policies and the Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict" in **Federal Practice: Exploring Alternatives for Georgia and Abkhazia** (eds.), Bruno Coppieters, David Darchiashvili, and Natella Akaba, Vub Brussels University Press, 2001, p. 22.

<sup>188</sup> Jonathan Wheatley, "Elections and Democratic Governance...", 2004, p. 5

<sup>189</sup> John F. R. Wright, "The Geopolitics of Georgia", 1996, p. 137.

<sup>190</sup> Shevardnadze turned to Georgia as the Chairman of State Council and Parliament. He was later elected as the president in October 1995 elections.



nationalist leaders in Tbilisi did not avoid a confrontation with Russia. At the same time the Gamsakhurdia government, along with the paramilitary forces who might have behaved at their will, started ethnic wars with the Abkhaz and Ossetians. These policies of ethnic antagonism had profound effects on these minorities' perception of Georgia, further fomenting their reliance on the Russia. Hence, Gamsakhurdia's policies became a factor that complicated the resolution the ethnic conflicts in Georgia.

**CHAPTER THREE**  
**FROM THE BANDWAGONING DECISION TO THE BALANCING**  
**STRATEGY: GEORGIA UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF**  
**SHEVARDNADZE**

*Every small nation or nation state, throughout human history and the history of international relations, has sought the best possible mechanisms for survival and the best possible destination toward which to direct its development. Georgia is no exception to this rule...*<sup>191</sup>

This chapter undertakes the most uneasy part of our task -explaining alignment choices of Georgia. Because it deals with the almost eleven-year long Shevardnadze period which was marked with a formal security cooperation between Russia and Georgia (after the latter joined the CIS) in its early years, however ended a short time after Georgia declared its aspirations to NATO membership.<sup>192</sup> A Georgian scholar, Matsaberidze, defines the period partly as maneuvering between Russia and the West.<sup>193</sup> To capture the real causes of opposite alignment strategies (bandwagoning with Russia and balancing against it), on the other hand requires an evaluation of the events with the guidance of the theoretical background of alliance formation represented in chapter one. What is done in this chapter, therefore, is an attempt to put forward the real causes for and consequences of Georgia's alignment under the Shevardnadze administration, using the suggestions and predictions of mainly balance-of-threat theory.

The first section underlines the role of the coercive strategy by Russia in Georgia's entering into the CIS. The second one deals with the questions of whether that move can be regarded as a bandwagoning act, and if so which theory can explain it better. Later the international developments in Georgia's around are elaborated for understanding the conditions that made the state align with Russia and the others

---

<sup>191</sup> Temuri Yakobashvili, "Georgia's Path to Nato", in **Next Steps in Forging a Euroatlantic Strategy for the Wider Black Sea** (eds.) Ronald D. Asmus, The German Marshall Fund of United States, Washington, 2006, p. 185

<sup>192</sup> See, NATO's relations with Georgia, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_38988.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm) (accessed on 14 May 2010)

<sup>193</sup> Malkhaz Matsaberidze, "Georgia and Russia: In Search of Civilized Relations", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 5 (47), 2007, [http://www.ca-c.org/online/2007/journal\\_eng/cac-05/07.shtml](http://www.ca-c.org/online/2007/journal_eng/cac-05/07.shtml) (accessed on 26 Feb 2010)

which induced this alignment to shift. And the last section puts forward the pillars of Georgia's strategy to balance Russia that was followed by Shevardnadze from the late 1990s onwards.

In the previous chapter, the account of the high level Russian threat is summarized. Having those in mind, one might suggest that omni-balancing theory and balance-of-threat theory, in principle, favor balancing on the basis of an external threat. Because, in Tbilisi, the control was mainly in the hands of the coup leaders which were in fact warlords, inherently with an anti-Russian rhetoric since they thought that they were fighting against the Moscow-backed separatists. Aligning with Russia, in this conjuncture might have caused to irritate the paramilitary forces and leave the country's destiny to the former occupier's will. However, Shevardnadze, in December 1993 turned to bandwagoning with Russia, because it was 'the best possible mechanism for survival'. To endorse this argument, the policy of subjugating Georgia must be analyzed at first.

### **3.1. RUSSIAN ABILITY TO COMPEL OBEIDENCE**

As cited in chapter one, Walt suggests that "small states bordering a great power may be so vulnerable that they choose to bandwagon rather than balance, especially if a powerful neighbor has demonstrated its ability to compel obedience."<sup>194</sup> Scholars often make attempts to link Russian support to Abkhazia and South Ossetia with its aim to drive Georgia into an alliance and to restore its sphere of influence over maybe the most pro-independent minded former Soviet state. However this policy was neither totally official nor a result of coherent planning with predetermined goals, and in fact went through an evolution under the effects of the political debates and the balance of power within domestic politics in Russia itself. The main actors which played central role in policy making against Georgia can be distinguished as Russian military units in Georgia, Ministry of Defense (MoD), Ministry of Foreign Relations (MFA), and president Yeltsin.<sup>195</sup> Russian military forces have all been active in Georgia, while the MoD, the assumed controller of

---

<sup>194</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 1987, p. 24.

<sup>195</sup> See Dov Lynch, *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS*, 2000, pp. 1-16.

them, had a free hand in the near abroad, between 1992 and 1996. The MFA, on the other hand, turned to near abroad after 1992, with a more assertive policy. Interwoven by the relationship among these agents, therefore, the policy of compelling obedience has not been constant from Gamsakhurdia's years to December 1993 when Shevardnadze submitted to Russian demands. To understand how this policy reached the peak thereby increasing Georgian vulnerability as a small state, one should look to the events before and after the policy shift in Moscow which favored Russia's vital interests in the near abroad.

As stated in the previous chapter, until late 1992, Georgia, free from Russian military sanctions had a relative success in ethnic conflicts especially in Abkhazia. Yet, as Jackson argues, the Russian troops located in the areas of conflict were not always neutral in this period.<sup>196</sup> Initially, when Georgian forces entered the Abkhazia, the Abkhaz called for Russian protection. In this first phase of ethnic war, when there was a confusion and disharmonious stances among Russian political constituencies, local Russian forces that acted independently from the orders of their military superiors in Moscow backed the separatists as they encouraged by local population.<sup>197</sup> On the other hand, in South Ossetia, as the agenda of building of a unified nation state in Georgia became apparent, local population viewed Russian forces as their defenders. Those forces autonomously began to supply weapons and assist Ossetians.<sup>198</sup> Although there is no documented evidence that they acted according to a strategic plan which would guarantee Russian military presence in Georgia, Mackinlay and Sharov argues that their actions fitted perfectly to Russian political and strategic interest. Jackson, on the other hand, makes another point that, the Russian army always favored the separatists -but unofficially before the adoption of

---

<sup>196</sup> Nicole J. Jackson, **Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates, Actions**, 2003, p. 114

<sup>197</sup> Ibid. Mörike further unfolds the decision making autonomy of Russian troops as he suggests that in Georgia case they sold arms to and fought beside the highest bidder. Andrea Mörike, "The military as a political actor in Russia: The cases of Moldova and Georgia", **The International Spectator**, Vol. 33, No: 3, 1998, p. 129.

<sup>198</sup> John Mackinlay and Evgenii Sharov, "Russian peacekeeping Operations in Georgia", in **Regional Peacekeepers: The Paradox of Russian Peacekeeping** (eds.), John Mackinlay and Peter Cross, United Nations University Press, New York, 2003, p. 75

“near abroad policy”, however their actions fell in line with government policy as the new policies developed.<sup>199</sup>

Since the March 1992 in which Shevardnadze turned to Georgia as the chairman of the State Council, debates in Russia about what kind of a policy should be followed against Georgia intensified.<sup>200</sup> As the popularity of Atlanticist foreign policy began to dry out,<sup>201</sup> radicals and fundamentalist nationalists among Russian political elite started to criticize loudly the Yeltsin government for not concerning enough on the ethnic crisis in Georgia. In both press and the parliament, some radicals began to advocate supporting the Abkhaz and even the use of military force against Georgia. For them, siding with Abkhazians was a mean of reinstating Russian influence in the region.<sup>202</sup> Radicals such as Ruslan Khasbulatov, the Chairman of Supreme Soviet of Russia, were not indifferent to the war in South Ossetia too. In June 1992, Khasbulatov defined Georgian offensive in Ossetia as genocide while pressuring on the Russian government to assess South Ossetian demands for joining Russian Federation.<sup>203</sup>

In addition to that, the support for separatists was not limited to diplomatic and political realm. Although Yeltsin sought a negotiated solution in the South Ossetia, the disparity in Russian policy became again evident, when Russian helicopters attacked Georgian forces in South Ossetia and Russian forces were stockpiled into the North Ossetia bordering the conflict zone.<sup>204</sup> In the culmination of conflict, Khasbulatov stated that “Russia prepared to take urgent measure to defend its citizens from criminal attempts on their lives” therefore, he implied that South

---

<sup>199</sup> Nicole J. Jackson, **Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates, Actions**, 2003, p. 114.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>201</sup> For an explanation for Atlanticism and Eurasianism in Russian foreign policy and a summary of the debate between them see Graham Smith, “The Masks of Proteus: Russia, Geopolitical Shift and the New Eurasianism”, **Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers**, New Series, Vol. 24, No. 4, 1999.

<sup>202</sup> Nicole J. Jackson, **Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates, Actions**, 2003, p. 124

<sup>203</sup> Mackinlay and Sharov, 2003, p. 77

<sup>204</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 157.

Ossetians were Russian citizens.<sup>205</sup> Furthermore, he directly threatened to bomb Tbilisi in telephone conversation with Shevardnadze, hence Russia and Georgia seriously rolled down to the edge of war.<sup>206</sup> Yet, this threat forced Georgia to submit Russian demands. On 24 June 1992, Shevardnadze and Yeltsin signed the Sochi Agreement on the Settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian Conflict which called for the deployment of Russian peacekeeping forces and ordered Georgia to retreat from roughly half of the South Ossetia's territory. Russian peacekeeping units deployed on South Ossetian-Georgian border that is hours away from Tbilisi. Since then the region has been out of control by Georgian government and the setting provided Ossetians with de-facto independence.<sup>207</sup>

While the ceasefire was reached in South Ossetia, the major trouble was only awaiting in Abkhazia. As stated in the previous chapter, ethnic war had broken out in August 1992, when the forces of National Guard entered in the autonomous republic. Yet, in the early times of conflict Yeltsin expressed his support to Georgian position.<sup>208</sup> On 3 September, he brokered a ceasefire between Shevardnadze and Ardzinba (the president of Abkhazia), but it was broken by the Abkhaz side in October.<sup>209</sup> This violation was followed by Abkhaz advance towards south while simultaneously radical voices dominated political debates in Moscow. Following the violation of the ceasefire, especially the Supreme Soviet of Russia intervened more closely into the conflict, asking to stop the transfer of Russian weaponry in Georgia to the Shevardnadze government.<sup>210</sup> After that, Yeltsin also inevitably began tilting in a pro-Abkhaz way.

---

<sup>205</sup> Ömer Kocaman, "Russia's Relations with Georgia within the Context of the Russian National Interests towards the South Caucasus in the Post-Soviet Era", **Journal of Central Asian and Caucasian Studies** (USAK), Vol. 2, No. 3, (2007), p. 9.

<sup>206</sup> Svante E. Cornell, "Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective", **World Politics**, Vol. 54, No. 2 (Jan., 2002), p. 268

<sup>207</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 336.

<sup>208</sup> See Melanie Youell, "The Peculiarities of Fourth-Party Intervention: The Cases of South Ossetia, Transnistria and Abkhazia", **Bologna Center Journal of International Affairs**, 2009. Retrieved from: <http://bcjournal.org/2007/the-peculiarities-of-fourth-party-intervention/> (accessed on 21 May 2010)

<sup>209</sup> See Alexandros Petersen, "The 1992-93 Georgia-Abkhazia War: A Forgotten Conflict", **Caucasian Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 2 No: 4 (Autumn 2008) , p. 18. and Susan Stewart, "The Role of the United Nations in the Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict, **Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe**, 2003, No: 2 p. 9.

<sup>210</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 338.

Lynch defines the one-year-long period after October 1992, for Russia as the promotion of a carrot-and-stick approach which aimed to drive Georgia into the CIS and make it bandwagon with Russia.<sup>211</sup> What represented the ‘carrot’ in this approach was to grant Georgia military aid and the location of Russian peacekeeping forces in the conflict zone, but only if Georgia would make the necessary concessions to secure Russian vital interest and allow to maintain its military presence.<sup>212</sup> To compel Georgia submitting its demands, Russia played all cards available without showing any concern for the peril of disintegration of this tiny Caucasian state. As in the case of South Ossetia, Georgian forces also encountered Russian units on the front line, in Abkhazia.

Georgian-Russian military relations sharply deteriorated in the late 1992. In November, MoD ordered two SU-25 ground-attack-aircraft to defend Russian positions in Abkhazia with permission of shoot without warning. And it was followed by a Georgian declaration that all Russian combat planes would be shot down.<sup>213</sup> The involvement of the Russian aircraft provided a great advantage for Abkhaz fighters which did not have their own air forces. On the other hand, there was a remarkable (12.000-person) flow of volunteer fighters into Abkhazia from Russian-Georgian border and the Confederation of Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus who had an ethnic kinship with Abkhaz (mainly Chechens).<sup>214</sup> Russia did not interfere the flow, furthermore advocated that they were Russian citizens. Backed by volunteers, the Abkhaz forces began to retake the control of the region. Abkhaz troops were armed with T-72 Tanks, grad rocket launchers and other heavy equipment - all driven the Georgian government to suspect of clandestine Russian assistance to the rebels.<sup>215</sup> Abkhaz forces eventually retook Sukhumi and consolidated their control over Abkhazia totally, in the late 1993.<sup>216</sup> Eduard Shevardnadze, directly blamed Russia

---

<sup>211</sup> Dov Lynch, **Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS**, 2000, p. 134.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid, p. 135

<sup>213</sup> Ibid, p. 137

<sup>214</sup> Mackinlay and Sharov, 2008, p. 89.

<sup>215</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 159.

<sup>216</sup> Before retaking Sukhumi, the Abkhazian capital, Russian helicopters supported the offensive as they bombed Georgian controlled city. Furthermore Abkhaz and Russian forces retook the city despite

for the loss of Abkhazia, as he stated that “My conviction is that the plan for the occupation of Sukhumi has been drawn up in Russian headquarters.”<sup>217</sup> He also did not abstain from warning the Western world which let him down when he spoke to the Western media stating that “nobody should doubt that the mentality and reflexes of Russian imperialism are not dead.”<sup>218</sup>

Concurrently, the policy of compel obedience was adopted as official. In October 1993 the MoD and MFA agreed that Russia should use its military influence in order to persuade Georgia to join the Russia-centered collective security system and to guarantee the presence of Russian military troops and bases in this country.<sup>219</sup> After that, Minister of Defence, Grachev, openly linked the removal of Russian forces to resolution of the conflict, in September 1993, but he refused to donate Georgia military aid until it joined to the CIS.<sup>220</sup> Under these conditions, Shevardnadze seemed to have no other alternative than bandwagoning with the most threatening power.

### 3.2. GEORGIA JOINS THE CIS

A picture from Georgia taken in the autumn of 1993, may easily unfold that the Georgian state was on the edge of a total collapse. First and foremost, South Ossetia and Abkhazia were out of the state control holding their de-facto independence. The Abkhaz who constituted only 1.8 percent of the total population in Georgia had taken one-twelfth of Georgian territory located at the strategic Black Sea coast.<sup>221</sup> Moreover, Zviadists who had started a rebellion against the Shevardnadze regime, in the province of Mingrelia bordering Abkhazia, made use of this anarchic situation. By the November of 1993, Zviadists captured the Black Sea

---

the existence of the second Russian brokored cease fire agreement signed on 27 July 1993. See Mackinlay and Sharov, 2003, p. 89.

<sup>217</sup> “Georgian Leader Blames City's Fall On Russia”, **Moscow-Pullman Daily News**, September 28, 1993, p. 4

<sup>218</sup> Quoted in Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, p. 341

<sup>219</sup> Nicole J. Jackson, **Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates, Actions**, 2003, p. 133

<sup>220</sup> **Ibid.** p. 134

<sup>221</sup> Stephanie Fain, “Russian Power Brokering, Peacemaking and Meddling in the Georgian Abkhaz Conflict”, **LBJ Journal of Public Affairs**, Vol. 18, (Spring 2006), p. 31



Port of Poti, began to impose a blockade to Tbilisi by preventing even food supplies.<sup>222</sup> (See map 1, p. 4). Facing the threat of total dismemberment of Georgia Shevardnadze flew to Moscow for asking military aid for encountering both ethnic separatism and Zviadist rebellion. Russia's conditions were already spelled out and simple: Georgia must join the CIS and allow Russia to maintain its military presence as well as the military bases in this country.<sup>223</sup>

On November 10, Shevardnadze publicly declared that “We have to cooperate with Russia ... otherwise Georgia will collapse and disintegrate.”<sup>224</sup> Eventually Shevardnadze issued a decree on joining the CIS on 23 October, and in December he signed the CIS initial documents, economic union agreement, Charter and Collective Security Treaty. In addition to joining the collective security system of Russia, Georgia also agreed to lease the port of Poti and the Bobmara airfield to Russia. In turn, Russia began to transfer military equipment for Georgia and Russian peacekeeping forces were deployed to Abkhazia. Russia also aided to neutralize the Zviadist rebellion as Russian troops were located through the region providing Poti-Tbilisi connection. The rebellion was repressed and in December 1993, Gamsakhurdia died in mysterious circumstances - leaving his behind widespread speculations of suicide.<sup>225</sup> On the other hand the control of the Poti port was retaken by Russian Black Sea Fleet Marines.<sup>226</sup> Thus the survival of Georgians could by and large be ensured, but it was done at the expense of entering into an alliance with Russia based on strict security cooperation.

At this point, Walt's definition of bandwagoning utterly matches the case. Because, Georgia's alignment which brought a 'subordinate role' for itself, includes an 'unequal exchange with asymmetrical concessions to the dominant power.'

---

<sup>222</sup> Alexandros Petersen, “The 1992-93 Georgia-Abkhazia War: A Forgotten Conflict”, **Caucasian Review of International Affairs**, Vol: 2, No: 4, (Autmn 2008), p. 19 Interestingly they were fighting against both Abkhaz and Georgian regular forces from time to time. See **ibid.** Fain further suggest that Gamsakhurdia also decided to began an attack in order to take the Tbilisi. Fain, p. 31

<sup>223</sup> **Ibid.**

<sup>224</sup> Quoted in Dov Lynch, **Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS**, 2000, p. 139.

<sup>225</sup> David C. Brooker, “How They Leave: a Comparison of How the First Presidents of the Soviet Successor States Left Office”, **Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics**, Vol. 20, No. 4, 2004, p. 67.

<sup>226</sup> Dov Lynch, **Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS**, 2000, p. 139.

Georgia made the necessary concessions as Shevardnadze legally delayed the withdrawing of Russian troops. What can cause confusion here is that, after joining CIS, some Russian troops remained as peacekeeping forces thereby providing the Russian presence in Georgia with solemn legal pretexts. Besides, the conceptualization of the Russian troops as peacekeepers implied rather a limited initiative with predetermined goals, such as assisting the implementation of a ceasefire, delivering humanitarian aid or verifying human rights, rather than a security alliance with strategic targets. However Russian peacekeeping activities under the CIS developed outside the UN peacekeeping framework therefore they had some other implications.<sup>227</sup> First of all, unlike the UN peacekeeping, the activities of the CIS were not based on the consent of all sides. During the ethnic conflicts in Georgia, Russian troops always behaved at their and Moscow's will. Peacekeeping operations in Georgia also tended to ignore some other principles of the UN peacekeeping particularly of impartiality and minimum use of force. In Russian peacekeeping, furthermore, rules of engagement were never spelled out. Therefore, Russian forces were able to freely act for restoring Russian influence over Georgia on the way toward establishing Russia's own security objectives.<sup>228</sup> The deployment of peacekeeping forces in Georgia, thus, indicated that Georgia was 'willing to tolerate the illegitimate actions of the dominant ally' as Walt suggested in the definition of bandwagoning.

The bandwagoning manifested itself in varied forms until 1996. In February 1994, Russia and Georgia signed the Treaty of Friendship, Neighborliness and Cooperation which culminated the security cooperation. Apart from the CIS mechanisms, security cooperation advanced mostly at the bilateral level. Georgia, for example, signed 24 other agreements of which provisions included the rights for

---

<sup>227</sup> See Domitilla Sagramaso, "Russian Peacekeeping Policies", in **Regional Peacekeepers: The Paradox of Russian Peacekeeping** (eds.), John Mackinlay and Peter Cross, United Nations University Press, New York, 2008. pp. 13-33.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.* p. 14 In fact, Russian peacekeeping strategies developed as a tool of power projection after the adoption of near abroad policy. In 1993, President Yeltsin emphasized Russia's special responsibility for stopping the violence in the former Soviet space and demanded that the United Nations grant Russia special powers to become the guarantor of peace and stability in post-Soviet space. *Ibid.* p. 18. Then Russia welcomed a UN decision to recognize the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States as a regional organization capable of conducting its own peacekeeping and related missions. Martin A. Smith, **Russia and NATO since 1991: From Cold War through Cold Peace to Partnership**, Routledge, New York, 2006, p. 11

Russia to establish several military bases and the stationing of Russian guards along the borderline with Turkey.<sup>229</sup> In 1995, Russia's MoD began to conduct joint military exercises with the Georgian and Armenian forces. Within the same year, Russia also initiated to a process for establishing a joint air defense system with Georgia.<sup>230</sup>

Georgia benefited from this rapprochement process too. First of all, Russia transferred military equipment to Georgia and began to help it build a new army. In Abkhazian problem, on the other hand, Russia increased political and economic pressure on Abkhazia, allowed the return of Georgian refugees who had left the region during the war and decided to force Abkhazia to agree on some type of federation within Georgia.<sup>231</sup> In addition to that, after Russia agreed with Georgia's request, the CIS imposed an economic blockade on Abkhazia.<sup>232</sup>

After introducing the bandwagoning behavior with those evidence and its content, it is now important to discuss which theory can explain this strategic move by Georgia in a more clear and comprehensive way. Did Georgia bandwagon with the incentive of ensuring its territorial integrity or was it mostly motivated by Shevardnadze's reflex to ensure the security of his position against rising internal threats? I would like to suggest that balance-of-threat theory has much to tell about

---

<sup>229</sup> Nicole J. Jackson, **Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates, Actions**, Routledge, London, 2003. p. 136. Notably a 1995 agreement, provisioned the organization of Russian troops on Georgian territory into military bases in Batumi, Akhalkalaki, Vaziani and Gudauta for a 25 year-long period. Though it was never ratified by the Georgian parliament, the bases were established. Johanna Popjanevski, "Russian troop-withdrawal in light of international law", **Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies**, 2005, p. 2. Retrieved from: [http://gfsis.net/pub/files/publications\\_security/Popjanevski\\_Russian%20Troop-withdrawal%20in%20Light%20of%20International%20Law.doc](http://gfsis.net/pub/files/publications_security/Popjanevski_Russian%20Troop-withdrawal%20in%20Light%20of%20International%20Law.doc) (accessed on 17.07.2010)

<sup>230</sup> Dov Lynch, **Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS**, 2000, p. 140. To understand Russian leverage over Georgia within this alliance, it has to be noted that after Russian special envoy to Georgia, Kovalev, declared that Russia had no intention of considering the ratification of the friendship treaty of 1994 at the end of that year, Georgian Ambassador to Russia, Avdadze's response was that "Georgia's independence depends to a great extent on Russia's position. Georgia will be independent, if Russia wants it [to be]". Cited in Nicole J. Jackson, 2003, p. 137.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., pp. 136,137.

<sup>232</sup> Rick Fawn, "Russia's reluctant retreat from the Caucasus: Abkhazia, Georgia and the US after 11 September 2001", **European Security**, Vol: 11, No: 4, 2002. p. 142. Yet, Mirimanova argues, this blockade did not facilitated the political solution of the conflict as had a negative impact by solidifying the political positions of both sides. See Natalia Mirimanova, "Between pragmatism and idealism: businesses coping with conflict in the South Caucasus", **L. Business L. Peace D.P. Sector**, 2006, p. 524. Retrieved from: [http://www.international-alert.org/pdfs/lblp\\_South\\_Caucasus.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/pdfs/lblp_South_Caucasus.pdf) (accessed on 14.07.2010)

Georgia's moves of alignment not only because it mostly focuses on the external threats and their functions, but also that Walt's hypotheses make some clearer predictions about under which conditions states do bandwagon. To be sure, some interpretation of the picture of Georgia in the October 1993 is required. The state, with no effective institutions and limited influence centered in Tbilisi was contained by three conflict zone (occupied with Abkhazian, Osset, Russian forces and Zviadist rebels), two of which severed its connection with Black Sea coast thereby crippling even food and medicine supply to the capital. Situation was critical now that the Georgian state was on the verge of total collapse that manifested itself with "the break down or disintegration of centralized political institutions, the system of authority that underlies them, and the unraveling of the complex relationships between state and society."<sup>233</sup> The Georgian state with no security for the people who lived in conflict zones had been fragmented by ethnic wars. Under these conditions, the security of the regime should have been of secondary importance against the survival of Georgian individuals and the threat of total disintegration which was foreseen by Shevardnadze in case of he would not cooperate with Russia.

Furthermore, Shevardnadze allied with Russia despite its negative reflections on his domestic political position. It was Shevardnadze's own decision even though he antagonized the opposition in the parliament. In an interview he told that:<sup>234</sup>

There are certainly difficult times in history when one person has to take all the responsibility; today, I took this responsibility. Parliament might disagree. I must say that it will not be without reason, but I saw in this decision the last chance to rescue my people and my country while preventing its disintegration, preventing civil war, and enabling justice to emerge again in Abkhazia.

The decision promoted a vehement protest by the opposition and the Georgian public interpreted Georgia's CIS membership as another period of occupation.<sup>235</sup> In Matsaberidze's words "from the very beginning the Georgian public accused Eduard Shevardnadze of serving Russia's interests and bringing the

---

<sup>233</sup> Spyros Demetriou, 2002, p. 860.

<sup>234</sup> See the president's interview at ARTE Television Network (Strasbourg), on 8 October 1993, in Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, **Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States : Documents, Data, and Analysis**, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, New York, 1997, p. 237

<sup>235</sup> Matsaberidze, "Russia and Georgia: Post-Soviet...", 2007.

country to defeat in order to return it to the RF's orbit."<sup>236</sup> However, Shevardnadze's political power was in fact coming from the lack of an alternative leader, his internationally well-known character, experience and the failures by the previous president. For that reason, he could use adeptly the threat of quitting and managed to convince the parliament to approve the agreement on deploying Russian peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia.<sup>237</sup>

However it is unlikely to suggest that balance of power within the domestic political realm, namely the parliament, can be taken as a guarantee in such a country like Georgia in which all the regime changes has taken place either by a military takeover or the so-called revolution. On the other side, if one takes into account the other factors such as Gamsakhurdia's armed confrontation with Shevardnadze regime, the latter's decision to bandwagon with Russia can be evaluated through the omnibalancing perspective as well. Because, this theory gives priority to the role of internal threats in the alignment motives of Third World regimes which primarily seek self-preservation. Other important factor was the Zviadist rebellion that weaken Tbilisi authority by a blockade, planned an offensive to retake the capital and demolish the Shevardnadze regime.<sup>238</sup> Even though it is questionable that whether Russian forces would permit such a nationalist leader like Gamsakhurdia to reach the control of Georgian government again, it seems to be a verifiable contention that Shevardnadze should have calculated that only Russia could keep him in power against the looming civil war. Therefore, it has to be noted that omnibalancing theory also captures some part of the essence in Georgia's bandwagoning behavior in 1993. That is to say, the collapse of the state's territorial sovereignty and an armed opposition to the Shevardnadze regime appearing at the same time, enable both omnibalancing and balance-of-threat theories to explain this alignment preference. Nevertheless, to understand multidimensional reasons and the changing route of Georgia's alignment in the following years, we need to examine some other hypotheses in balance-of-threat theory too.

---

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid*, <fn> 5

<sup>237</sup> John F. R. Wright, "The Geopolitics of Georgia", 1996, p.146.

<sup>238</sup> Stephanie Fain, "Russian Power Brokering, Peacemaking...", 2006, p. 31.

### **3.3. THE REASONS FOR GEORGIA'S BANDWAGONING IN BALANCE-OF-THREAT PERSPECTIVE**

As quoted in the first chapter, Walt introduced three conditions that increase the generally low tendency towards bandwagon for states which face an external threat. The first condition suggesting that weak states are more likely to bandwagon than strong states is here not to be discussed. Georgia pushed its very limits in order to deal with ethnic insurgencies and capitulated to Russia in the face of total collapse of the state. At the end 'the weakness' determined the result. The other conditions, i.e. the belief in that bandwagoning may provide an appeasement on the threatening side and the availability of possible allies, also played decisive roles in Shevardnadze's choice.

#### **3.3.1. The Impact of Intentions (The possibility of Appeasement)**

The hypothesis of balance-of-threat theory on the impact of intentions suggests that when the most threatening power is perceived to be appeasable, incentives for bandwagoning increase.<sup>239</sup> It is probable that Shevardnadze might have sought to appease Russia with his bandwagoning decision, since Georgian side had many logical reasons to perceive Russia to be appeasable. First of all, Russia had interest in keeping Georgia stable for preventing the spread of insecurity towards North Caucasus which may destabilize Chechnya and other autonomous republics within the RF.<sup>240</sup> However, Moscow hoped that manipulating the events would serve its interest. At this point, Russia faced a crucial dilemma; i.e., further destabilizing in the Caucasus or abandoning to utilize its imperial legacies to preserve its sphere of influence. Georgian state, on the other hand, tried to convince Russia to provide the security of the state by accepting to remain in the Russian sphere of influence. In order to provide that the stability of Georgia is a key for the peace in the whole

---

<sup>239</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 176.

<sup>240</sup> See David L. Phillips, "Stability, Security and Sovereignty in the Republic of Georgia"; The Report by **the Council on Foreign Relations-Center for Preventive Action**, 2004, pp. 1,2. Retrieved from:

[http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/RESSpecNet/14821/ipublicationdocument\\_singledocument/EB8A4495-D15D-40AC-8BC5-9B6832FE53F5/en/2004-01\\_Georgia.pdf](http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/RESSpecNet/14821/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/EB8A4495-D15D-40AC-8BC5-9B6832FE53F5/en/2004-01_Georgia.pdf) (accessed on 14.07.2010); Natalie Sabanadze, 2002, p. 21, and Margot Light, "Russia and Transcaucasia", 1996, p. 47.

Caucasus to be perceived, Shevardnadze firstly appealed to Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani governments to assign military contingents together.<sup>241</sup> Then Georgia broke its intransigency on rejecting the CIS membership. On the other side, Shevardnadze's decree on joining CIS had many converse reactions in Georgian parliament. Unlike the radicals who even suggested any member of the parliament voting for joining the CIS as deserving capital punishment, more moderate ones carried some hopeful implications in their interpretations. For example, Gogoberidze, a Shevardnadze loyalist, stated that "there was no choice...We really thought we could be independent, but independence is nothing if we don't have economic development and stability. Being a member of CIS can help us to develop."<sup>242</sup>

In the fresh start of the rapprochement to Russia, Georgians primarily expected Russia to abandon the separatist regimes to their fate, to help Georgia's building its national army and to provide economic aid. However, the four years following the alignment which is defined by Matsaberidze as 'an attempt to restore territorial integrity with Russia's help' proved the pessimists who had distrusted Russia to be true.<sup>243</sup> In Matsaberidze's words the result of this period was that:

Russia did nothing to help the republic build up its armed forces, nor did it promote talks with the separatists...Moscow did not deem it necessary to take Georgia's interests into account, or it was convinced that restored territorial integrity would deprive it of its manipulation tools. Everything the Russian politicians and analysts were saying at that time showed that they never regarded Georgia as a factor to be reckoned with; Russian geopoliticians never discussed the territorial integrity issue, but instead looked forward to the republic's further fragmentation.

Matsaberidze concludes that since Russia chose to ignore the republic's interest, it undermined Georgia's pro-Russian orientation. Mouravi, on the other side, points out that Georgian politicians hoped that the first Chechnya war (1994-1996) would lead to a change in the Russian attitude towards the Abkhaz conflict, but they disappointed as they received only symbolic support through the CIS mechanisms,<sup>244</sup> even though Shevardnadze gave unconditional support to the Russian military

---

<sup>241</sup> **New Straits Times**, 20 Oct 1993.

<sup>242</sup> **NY Times**, "Pact with Russia Bedevils Georgians", December 9, 1993.

<sup>243</sup> See Matsaberidze, "Russia and Georgia: Post-Soviet...", 2007.

<sup>244</sup> George Tarkhan-Mouravi, "The Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict in a Regional Context", **Institute for Policy Studies**, 1998, p. 4.

Retrieved from: [http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002157/01/IPS\\_Abkhaz\\_paper\\_jav.pdf](http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002157/01/IPS_Abkhaz_paper_jav.pdf) (accessed on 14.07.2010).

intervention in Chechnya.<sup>245</sup> In Russian approach to maintain the Georgian dependency on itself over the Abkhazia problem was determinant. As argued by Coppieters, for Russia the current status quo that emerged after the war had some advantages for a peace agreement in Abkhazia.<sup>246</sup> The resolution of the problem would mean Russia's loss of an important leverage over Georgia, because it would no longer impede rapprochement between Georgia and the West. Facing those developments, Georgia as a reluctant bandwagoner had to seek alternative alignment opportunities to provide its ultimate security. In fact, understandably, in shifting from bandwagoning to alignment or balancing positions the availability of potential allies', rather than the possibility of an appeasement played a pivotal role.

### 3.3.2. The Availability of Allies

Georgia with no secure borders and constantly threatened by the unappeasable neighbor, always had difficulties in finding reliable allies which would balance Russia or help solving the problems of domestic security. Georgia's isolation in the international politics, namely from the Western world, was obvious in Gamsakhurdia's period. It continued for a while in the Shevardnadze years but never diminished clearly to a negligible degree that the Georgian leaders expected. In the early times of independence, Gamsakhurdia's nationalist extremism towards the ethnic conflicts which reminded radical discourses emerging in the Balkans was entirely irritated the Western governments.<sup>247</sup> Although his replacement by Shevardnadze, in March 1992, brought an international recognition and memberships to both the UN and the OSCE, within two months, Western governments were still reluctant to take a responsibility in helping Georgia for securing its statehood or grant some support in dealing with ethnic conflicts.<sup>248</sup> At the first stage, the Western capitals -neither Washington nor Brussels favored an active engagement in this

---

<sup>245</sup> Bruno Coppieters, "Locating Georgian Security", in **Statehood and Security: Georgia after the Rose Revolution** (eds.), Bruno Coppieters, Robert Legvold, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, New York, 2005. p. 373.

<sup>246</sup> Bruno Coppieters, "Western Security Policies and the Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict" in **Federal Practice: Exploring Alternatives for Georgia and Abkhazia** (eds.), Bruno Coppieters, David Darchiashvili, and Natella Akaba, Vub Brussels University Press, 2001, p. 41

<sup>247</sup> Coppieters, "Locating Georgian Security", 2001, p. 372.

<sup>248</sup> David Gudiashvili, "Nato Membership as Georgia's Foreign Policy Priority", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 4 (22), 2003.



unknown and troublesome area.<sup>249</sup> The lack of international support drove Georgia to enter the CIS, in a time any realistic and military alternative did not seem to exist. As Shevardnadze's himself explicitly stated why he maneuvered towards Russia in 1993: "it was because America refused to assist in restoring the territorial integrity of Georgia"<sup>250</sup>. That can simply be taken as a verification of Walt's argument that unavailability of allies discourages small states from balancing.

Although US supported the state building processes through democratization in the post-Soviet space in the early 1990s, in principle, its policies were completely cautious with respect to Russian interest. Even after Russia declared the near abroad doctrine and began to deploy peacekeeping forces in the conflict areas, Bill Clinton, for example, welcomed Russian demand on recognition of its stabilizer role in the Caucasus comparing Russia's potential to the US policies in Panama and Grenada.<sup>251</sup> Accordingly, in Abkhazia case, the West sought to avoid tensions with Russia and deferred the main responsibility to Russia.<sup>252</sup> Hence the concern for the Russian integration into the international system by the reforms through democratization and transition to market economy, overweighed the issue of new republics' sovereignty.

However, Russia's intervention to Chechnya initiated in December 1994 and the general disappointment for Russia's democratization process by Western governments, resulted in changing the nature of the relationship the West and Russia since the mid-1990s.<sup>253</sup> At the same time, failures of Russia's stabilizer role was

---

<sup>249</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 362.

<sup>250</sup> Leila Alieva, "Reshaping Eurasia: Foreign Policy Strategies and Leadership Assets in Post-Soviet South Caucasus", 1999-2000, p. 19.

<sup>251</sup> Coppieters, "Western Security Policies...", 2001, p. 26.

<sup>252</sup> The West only supported the establishment of a UN observer mission in Abkhazia [UNOMIG], which included military from several Western countries and had only observer functions of which security was depend on Russia's forces. See Coppieters, "Locating Georgian Security", 2005, p. 374. For a detailed information visit the website: <http://www.unomig.org>

<sup>253</sup> Mouravi-Tarkhan, 1998, p. 8. The First Chechnya War had many implications for the rupturing strategic partnership between the West and Russia, since the mid-1990s. Russian invasion "aimed at crushing with arms the secessionist regime that had been ruling the North Caucasian Autonomous Republic of Chechnya since late 1991", seeking independence. The invasion bring along major human right violations as the army mostly targeted civil populations where rebels located rather than military units separately. Hence there was to a certain degree the blurring distinctions between combatants and non-combatants. Consequently the war aroused major criticism by the Western governments and strong suspicions about Russia's democratization process. Svante E. Cornell, "International Reactions to Massive Human Rights Violations: The Case of Chechnya", **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Jan., 1999), pp. 85-100

evident, as the developments triggered the fear of ‘failed states’ in Caucasus that might have negative effects on the wider Eurasian security.<sup>254</sup> Beginning in the mid-1990s, therefore, USA and Europe appealed to a more assertive policy regarding Russia.

The lack of some material interest also can be taken as a reason for the West’s ignorance of Georgia’s security in the beginning of the 1990s. Destroyed by civil wars, the Georgian economy, for example, was not very attractive as a consumer or investment market.<sup>255</sup> Yet, in September 1994, signing of the so-called ‘contract of the century’ between the consortium of some Western oil companies and the state of Azerbaijan, over the exploitation and exportation of Caspian oil, increased Western attention towards the region and Georgia as a potential route for oil transportation.<sup>256</sup> As Western companies directed their investment projects towards Azerbaijan, the lack of any transportation route as an alternative of Soviet pipeline infrastructure revealed major financial risks that were only bearable if freedom of transit from the land-locked countries of the Caspian region could be secured.<sup>257</sup> When the struggle over the geopolitics of oil through the multiple pipeline projects started, Georgia’s willingness to take part with the Western states and its favorable location that allowed by-pass of Russia boosted the country’s strategic importance.

In 1995, the geopolitical and economic interest of the EU in the Caucasus region was reported in a Commission Communication entitled “Towards a European Union strategy for relations with the Transcaucasian Republics.” To provide energy security against the increasing dependence on Russia, it was declared that;

[the EU] will need to ensure that it will play a key role in the negotiations for contracts for the exploitation of the remaining huge reserves (in the Caspian region, B.C.); in determining the routing of pipelines; and in ensuring that the outcome of the debate on maritime jurisdiction over the Caspian will not prevent the successful extraction of offshore oil.<sup>258</sup>

---

<sup>254</sup> Coppieters, “Locating Georgian Security”, 2005, p. 374.

<sup>255</sup> Coppieters, “Western Security Policies...”, 2001, p. 27.

<sup>256</sup> For more information and the contract’s effects on geopolitical rivalry see Suha Bolukbasi, “The Controversy over the Caspian Sea Mineral Resources: Conflicting Perceptions, Clashing Interest”, **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol. 50, No. 3, 1998, pp. 397-414.

<sup>257</sup> Coppieters, Western Security Policies...”, 2001, p. 28.

<sup>258</sup> **Ibid.** 29

In this sense, two important programs –TRACECA and INOGATE, were launched by the EU under the framework of TACIS, for promoting a secure transportation corridor through the Caucasus and Central and boosting trade relations, international communication, oil and gas exportation.<sup>259</sup> Shevardnadze put a great emphasis on those projects based on the geopolitical ties between Europe and Central Asia and tried to make full use of Georgia's strategic position at the crossroads to attract potential allies.<sup>260</sup> Between 1992 and 2000, the EU allocated €317.78 million in grants to Georgia through the TACIS and some other programs.<sup>261</sup> In addition, the EU's relations with Georgia were institutionalized with a Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA) signed in April 1996.<sup>262</sup>

The so-called new great game over the Caspian energy sources naturally invited the US also as a great player. The US had multinational oil companies in the region even before the dissolution of the USSR.<sup>263</sup> In the mid-1990s US' initiatives in energy politics mainly aimed at diversifying energy sources in order to break the dependency to the Persian Gulf where the occasional problems of instability had negative implications on its energy security. At the same time, fabulous estimates of the hydrocarbon richness of the Caspian Sea by the Western media, government officials and academics as well, suggested that the sources was comparable to Middle

---

<sup>259</sup> TACIS (Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States) is a programme launched by the EU in the beginning of 1990s, in order to sustain the economic reform and development process in the CIS countries and to support their integration to the world economy. Two projects were initiated under the framework of TACIS: TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia) is a project that aims "at facilitating the countries' access to world markets by developing a transport and transit corridor. It is in fact the revitalisation of the ancient Silk Road." INOGATE, on the other hand, aims "to create a favourable environment for attracting private investment in the field of oil and gas and facilitating their transportation through the provision of technical assistance." The two projects "provides an alternative to the traditional and widely used Moscow route and hence bears strategic importance to present an alternative transportation route to Europe." Yelda Demirağ, "EU Policy towards South Caucasus and Turkey", *Perceptions*, 4 (IX), Winter 2004, p. 92

<sup>260</sup> Archil Gegeshidze, "The New Silk Road: A Georgian Perspective." *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (March-May 2000), p. 5.

<sup>261</sup> Yelda Demirağ, 2004, p.92.

<sup>262</sup> See Mark Leonard and Charles Grant, "Georgia and the EU: Can Europe's Neighbourhood Policy Deliver?" *Centre for European Reform: Policy Brief*, September 2005, p. 6. Retrieved from: <http://www.cer.org.uk/pdf/policybrief%5Fgeorgia%5Fsept05.pdf> and European Commission, "External relations; Georgia", [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/georgia/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/georgia/index_en.htm) (accessed on 24.06.2010)

<sup>263</sup> Cornell, *Small Nations and Great Powers*, 2001, p. 363.

Eastern oil, therefore encouraged the investments towards this region.<sup>264</sup> Despite American politicians' early negligence of South Caucasus, Cornell suggests, the importance of the region was discovered in Houston, the center of the private oil sector, not in Washington.<sup>265</sup>

Of course, the engagement of the Western oil companies in the Caucasus brought some novelties in the strategic attitudes of national governments towards the region. First of all, the concept of pipeline security that aims at preserving the stability through the transportation routes in order to secure the uninterrupted flow of oil and natural gas gained parlance. Since Washington and the EU sought alternative pipeline systems from Caspian basin to Europe and Mediterranean Sea that should have passed not through Russia or Iran, the most important alternative pipeline projects (Baku-Supsa, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) for oil; Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) for natural gas; and Trans Caspian Project (TCP) for oil and natural gas) planned to be build directly indicated Georgia's territory as a transit country.<sup>266</sup> Those projects aroused hopes in both Georgia and Azerbaijan as their politicians saw the pipeline projects as guarantors of their economic and political viability.<sup>267</sup> The two states expected more support from the West for the solution of their problems of domestic instability at least with the motive of securing the future of foreign investments. The prospect for an imminent prosperity from an 'oil and gas boom' also enhanced.<sup>268</sup> Even though, it is very questionable whether those hopes has been fulfilled, as discussed later in this study, politics of oil somehow motivated the US for a more active political and military involvement in the Caucasus to balance

---

<sup>264</sup> Shrin Akiner, "Caspian Intersections: Contextual Introduction", in **The Caspian: Politics, Energy and Security** (eds.), Shirin Akiner, RoutledgeCurzon, New York, 2004, p. 8 For an introduction of the list of multinationals from the US, UK, Italy and Russia etc. that were active in the region and the agreements signed by them see **ibid.** pp. 7-8

<sup>265</sup> Cornell, **Small Nations and Great Powers**, 2001, p. 363.

<sup>266</sup> Baku-Supsa pipeline was completed in 1999 and became the first alternative route to Russian pipelines namely Baku-Novorossiysk, for Azerbaijani oil. On the other hand, BTC became operational in 2006 along with BTE and that increased Georgia's strategic position dramatically. Yet TCP remains still as project that aims the Kazakh petrol and Turkmenistan oil to be transported under the Caspian Sea, via Caucasus to Europe. See Pinar İpek, "The Aftermath of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline: Challenges ahead for Turkey", **Perceptions**, XI, 2006, pp. 3-4

<sup>267</sup> Natalie Sabanadze, 2002, p. 23.

<sup>268</sup> Urs Gerber, "Whither South Caucasus: to prosperity or to conflict?", in **The Caspian: Politics, Energy and Security** (eds.), Shirin Akiner, RoutledgeCurzon, New York, 2004, p. 298.

Russia's dominant position in the region.<sup>269</sup> The increasing Western involvement in Caucasus due to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project had a decisive impact on Georgia's alignment in the following years.<sup>270</sup> As Coppieters indicates, Georgia intensified its cooperation with NATO in 1998. One year later, it withdrew from the CIS Collective Treaty and became a member of the Council of Europe. However it has to be noted that, the geopolitical struggle over the energy brought about some troubles for Georgia too. Because Russia has stiffened its policy towards the region as a counter-measurement against the increasing influence of the West thereby exacerbating political divisions within Georgia and turning the Caucasus into a scene of intensified regional and great power rivalry.<sup>271</sup>

In the following years some other key events like the second Chechnya war and post 9/11 developments, as milestones, reshaped the potential allies' strategies towards Georgia. Especially after 2001, US' entering in Eurasia by military invasions and enforced military cooperation with Central Asian states enriched geo-strategic implications for Georgia. Using those developments as an opportunity, Georgia as a reluctant bandwagoner sought all the ways to enhance its security collaboration with the Western powers to balance the Russian threat.

### **3.4. TOWARDS THE BALANCING STRATEGY**

It has to be reminded here what Schweller suggests that "relying on force to coerce states to bandwagon involuntarily often backfires for the dominant partner. Seeking revenge, the unwilling bandwagoner becomes a treacherous ally that will

---

<sup>269</sup> Sabanadze indicates that the change in US policy has been notably observed in the year of 1997. For him, the US Deputy State Secretary Talbott marked the turning point in a 1997 speech, suggesting that: "It matters profoundly to the United States, what will happen in an area that sits on as much as two hundred billion barrels of oil. That is yet another reason why conflict-resolution must be the job one for US policy in the region: it is both the prerequisite for, and an accompaniment to, energy development." Natalie Sabanadze, 2002, p. 22.

<sup>270</sup> Bruno Coppieters, "Locating Georgian Security", 2005, p. 375.

<sup>271</sup> Natalie Sabanadze, 2002, pp. 22,23. The struggle promoted two opposite axes in the region as suggested in many sources: On the one hand, the US and pro-Western regional countries; Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia grouped together, on the other hand, Armenia which excluded from the regional projects due to problems with Azerbaijan and Turkey took a side with the US' main rivals in the region: Russia and Iran.

bolt from the alliance the first chance it gets.”<sup>272</sup> Georgia’s maneuver towards the West in the mid-1990s can certainly be interpreted within this perspective. Even in the bandwagoning period, Georgia tried to obtain as more comprehensive connections as possible with the Western powers. It is not to be forgotten that in Georgia there was no coherent support for the CIS membership in Georgian public and the parliament. Georgians defined themselves culturally kin to the Europeans and was willing to integrate the country to the Euro-Atlantic political and economic structures.<sup>273</sup> The president whose life was threatened by several assassination attempts attributed to Russia sought new partners to change the route of the state’s as well.<sup>274</sup> The rest of this chapter deals with the fundamentals of this balancing strategy.

### 3.4.1. Georgia’s Acquaintance with NATO through the PfP Program

Although Walt’s proposal about the assumed independent effects of foreign aid and transnational penetrations on alliance formation undermines the importance of those means, suggesting that they can only be operational after the motive that is opposing a common external threat is emerged, this argument does not correspond with some exceptions of the post-Cold war era. These exceptions, in fact, were the results of the transformation of the international system from the bi-polarity of the Cold War and consequently the attempts by NATO and the US for the adaptation of their security policies to the new conjuncture. In 1991, when a new institution, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) (then succeeded by Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council-EAPC), was introduced within NATO as a forum grouping NATO members with the non-Soviet members of the former Warsaw Pact, an advanced communication towards the former communist countries was initiated.<sup>275</sup> Then, the Council promoted Partnership for Peace programme (PfP), in January 1994, that covers military contact, co-operation even joint military training and exercise

---

<sup>272</sup> Randall L. Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit...”, 1994, p. 89.

<sup>273</sup> See, Stephen Jones, “The Role of Cultural Paradigms in Georgian Foreign Policies”, **Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics**, Vol: 19, No: 3, 2003, pp. 90-93.

<sup>274</sup> Interestingly, Shevardnadze linked the repeated assassination attempts that were assumed ordered by Russian officials, with the oil ‘game’ in the Caucasus. See Coppieters, “Western Security Policies...”, 2001, p. 41.

<sup>275</sup> Martin A. Smith, **Russia and NATO since 1991**, 2006, p. 52. Georgia joined the NACC, in April 1992. See NATO Handbook, Chapter 2: The Transformation of the Alliance, <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb020201.htm> (accessed on 3 July 2010)

programmes between NATO members and non-members in Europe, promotes discursive principles such as democratic control of armed forces.<sup>276</sup> Through the PfP, NATO declared its willingness to assist in transforming the military establishments of participants (e.g., training, exercises, planning, doctrine) into forces better capable of operating alongside those of the Alliance.<sup>277</sup>

Georgia signed the PfP agreement on 23 March 1994 and joined the program as the other Caucasian republics did. Soon, Georgia became the most active participant in this region in terms of both the number of military exercises and the intensified dialogue it promoted with the Alliance -different from more neutral Azerbaijan and Armenia that mostly co-acted with Russia's priorities.<sup>278</sup> Georgia's motive for establishing ties with NATO as strongly as possible came from the belief that NATO could play an important role in bringing peace and stability to the country by helping to resolve the ethnic conflicts like in the Balkans. Furthermore the fact that NATO supported state building for newly independent states, raised the hopes for survival through the cooperation with the Alliance.<sup>279</sup> Georgia also saw the PfP as a mechanism that can be utilized in access to NATO as a full member. In sum being a full member turned out an ultimate aim for Georgia in terms of balancing Russia now that the prominent Article, 5 of the NATO might have provided Georgia with robust guarantee of security.

After the year 1995, as the Western states heavily involved in the Caucasian politics, the activities of the PfP intensified in the region. Georgia took part in 20 military events and training exercises events in 1996, while in 1997 it attained in 70 events out of the total 96; the figure for 1998 was 120; for 1999, 140. Increased

---

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid*, p. 57 For the list of goals and areas of cooperation, see John Borawski, "Partnership for Peace and beyond", **International Affairs**, (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 71, No. 2, (Apr., 1995), pp. 234,235.

<sup>277</sup> See William T. Johnsen and Thomas-Durell Young, "Partnership for Peace: Discerning Fact from Fiction" Working Paper, **Strategic Studies Institute**, U.S. Army War College, 1994, p.6. Retrieved from: <https://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/PUB172.pdf> (accessed on 15.07.2010)

<sup>278</sup> See Alberto Priego, "NATO cooperation towards South Caucasus", **Caucasian Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 2, (1), (Winter 2008), p. 2

<sup>279</sup> Temuri Yakobashvili, "Georgia's Path to Nato", 2006, p. 186.

quantity also brought along a greater scope and longer duration.<sup>280</sup> Some scholars attributed this proliferation in the number of activities in the Caucasus region to the boost of NATO members' interest over the security of oil fields and the transportation routes.<sup>281</sup> NATO's renewed interest in the region was also observed in the visits by Secretary-Generals of the Alliance to Tbilisi. Xavier Solana paid two official visits to Georgia, in 1997 and 1998.<sup>282</sup> He declared that NATO was especially interested in developing relations with the Republic of Georgia and that 'Europe would not be secure unless the Caucasus remained within its scope of attention.' Whatever the reason behind that was, Russia gradually began to react negatively against the increasing engagement of NATO in its near abroad, though Yeltsin had responded the PfP programme positively once he saw it as an alternative scheme to NATO's enlargement.<sup>283</sup> Russia had attained the program too, despite minimally and rather formally. Yet, since 1995, Russia decided to block any sort of cooperation with NATO, warning its allies not to cooperate with the Alliance through the PfP.<sup>284</sup>

---

<sup>280</sup> See, David Gudiashvili, "Nato Membership as Georgia's Foreign Policy Priority", 2003. Kuzio specifies some important points in the cooperation between Georgia and NATO, in the late 1990s: "[In the years towards 2000s] Georgia had been a major beneficiary of NATO, US and Turkish security cooperation...The United States has provided \$20 million in military assistance each year to provide helicopters and helicopter pilot training, coast guard vessels, and control and communications gear for Border Troops. Georgian officials have also benefited from training programs sponsored by both the United States and Turkey." Taras Kuzio, "NATO Reevaluates Strategic Considerations in Caucasus, Central Asia", **Eurasia Insight**, 2001. Retrieved from: [http://www.taraskuzio.net/media9\\_files/12.pdf](http://www.taraskuzio.net/media9_files/12.pdf) (accessed on 15.07.2010)

<sup>281</sup> See S. Neil Macfarlane, "The United States and Regionalism in Central Asia", **International Affairs** (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 80, No. 3, 2004. p. 452, Frederik Coene, "NATO and the South Caucasus: Much Ado About Nothing?", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 3 (21), 2003 and Revaz Adamia, "Nato: Caucasus in the Context of Partnership for Peace", **Perceptions**, Vol: 9, No: 1, March-May 1999. p. 3.

<sup>282</sup> The annual visits was the result of the new programme that Georgia attained within the framework of PfP. It was named PARP (the Planning and Review Process), a special program of cooperation between NATO and partner countries in the field of defense planning. See David Gudiashvili, 2003. Solanas successor, Robertson, also visited the Caucasus in September 2000, January 2001 and September 2001. See, Frederik Coene, "NATO and the South Caucasus", 2003.

<sup>283</sup> See Revaz Adamia, 1999, p. 2.

<sup>284</sup> Alberto Priego, 2008, p. 3 .



On the other side, Turkey became one of the Georgia's key ally in terms of providing training and assistance to the Georgian army through the PfP. As Lynch suggest:<sup>285</sup>

In 1997, Georgia and Turkey signed a military cooperation agreement, which has been the framework for Turkish military assistance. Since then, Turkish Assistance has included the provision of military equipment, the training of Georgian troops and officer, support to the reform of Georgia's National Defence Academy and, in particular, the modernization of the Vaziani air-base to NATO standards.

In short, the PfP programme provided a political and military bridge between Georgia and NATO members that guided transforming the state's security establishments based on either the Soviet background and professional skills or a paramilitary tradition, into modernized armed forces educated with modern knowledge produced in the West.<sup>286</sup> Georgia tried to lift the standards of its armed forces with a commitment to reforms for civilian control over military, transparency and democratization to that of Western European states. Leaving aside the discussion on how much Georgia did proceed on this way, however, the PfP programme alone cannot be taken as an element of alignment directly to balance Russia, since it promotes neither a responsibility to NATO members in defending Georgian land nor a certain prospect for a full membership. Furthermore, although Georgia has traditionally favored a peace-enforcement method like in the 'Bosnian Model' in separatist conflict zones, Georgian troops were not trained accordingly within the framework of PfP.<sup>287</sup> That was derived from the fact that there had been no open support for this kind of unilateral or multilateral initiative among the NATO members, as discussed in the following parts of the study.

### **3.4.2. The Emergence of GUAM: Anti-CIS?**

In the regional context, Georgia also sought to reinforce its position by participating to a joint political and diplomatic initiative with three other countries

---

<sup>285</sup> Dov Lynch, "Why Georgia matters?", *Chaillot Paper* 86 (2006), p. 56.

<sup>286</sup> See Revaz Adamia, 1999, p. 4. and Svante E. Cornell, "NATO's Role in South Caucasus Regional Security", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Uppsala 2004, p. 132.  
Retrieved from: <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/publications/2004/TPQ.pdf> 132 (accessed on 15.07.2010)

<sup>287</sup> Bruno Coppieters, "Western Security Policies...", 2001, p. 45.

within the CIS that shared similar concerns against the Russian hegemony in the region and the aggressive intentions it exposed. The GUAM group that consisted of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova was declared by the presidents of those countries, at the Council of Europe summit in Strasbourg (France) in 1997.<sup>288</sup> The founding states agreed to focus particularly on four policy areas: fighting separatism; establishing a joint peacekeeping capability; developing the trade corridor linking Europe to Central Asia through the Caucasus; and finally, facilitating the integration of the member states into 'Euro-Atlantic and Atlantic structures'.<sup>289</sup> Leaving aside their pro-Western orientation, it is not surprising that the four states came together with the concerns mentioned above. Because all the four countries have suffered from separatist movements that were assisted by Moscow either directly or covertly, while the peacekeeping actions of Russia did not promote a solution but rather maintained the status quo of fragmentation.<sup>290</sup> The participators of GUAM also saw their economic interest in cooperation for developing the hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian Sea and the export of raw materials via the TRACECA Eurasian transportation corridor.<sup>291</sup> Finally, GUAM appeared with a commitment to enforce stability in the region that encouraged by the West and especially the USA.

Splidsboel-Hansen contends that GUAM was also established to balance the influence of Russia over the post-Soviet space by the so-called 'dissident' group in the CIS.<sup>292</sup> Furthermore, he assesses GUAM in the balance-of-threat perspective by suggesting that the organization was formed against the aggressive policies of Russia

---

<sup>288</sup> Anatoli Barkovskiy and Rivanna Islamova, "Where is GUUAM Heading?" **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 2 (20), 2003. In 1999, Uzbekistan joined the group therefore it began to be abbreviated as GUUAM. Then in May 2005, it once again became GUAM due to Uzbekistan's withdrawal from the group. In May 2006, on the other hand, GUAM was transformed into an international formation called the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development— GUAM (ODED-GUAM). See Vladimir Papava, "On the Role of the Caucasian Tandem in GUAM", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 3-4 (51-52), 2008.

<sup>289</sup> Flemming Splidsboel-Hansen, "GUUAM and the Future of CIS Military Cooperation", **European Security**, Vol: 9, No: 4, 2000. p. 96.

<sup>290</sup> Besides Georgia, "Azerbaijan has its frozen conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh, Moldova cannot exercise sovereignty over its Trans-Dniester region, and Ukraine faces a latent separatist tendency in the Crimea." Alyson J. K. Bailes, Vladimir Branovsky and Pal Dunay, "Regional Security Cooperation in the Former Soviet Area" in **SIPRI Yearbook 2007: Armaments, Disarmament, and International Security**; (eds.), Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007. p. 180.

<sup>291</sup> See Anatoli Barkovskiy and Rivanna Islamova, 2003.

<sup>292</sup> See Flemming Splidsboel-Hansen, 2000, pp.97-99.

that sharpened by this state's willingness to dominate the CIS. It is certain that the main goals of GUAM and the commitments undertaken by the group indicated that the motive behind was to balance the Russian power, at least in the western flank of post-Soviet space. That was why some Russian politicians and experts viewed GUAM as an anti-Russian project orchestrated by the US and even a branch of NATO in the CIS.<sup>293</sup> Yet, it is rather disputable whether this multilateral organization can be taken as an alliance alone. In order to follow the evidence for the existence of such an alliance, one should look at the elements of security cooperation in the GUAM policies.

Even though GUAM members declared that they have no intent for transforming the organization into a military alliance, their commitments on establishing joint peacekeeping forces to secure transportation corridors -under the auspices of the universally recognized international organizations (i.e. UN, OSCE or even NATO) and the deepening military cooperation among the four participants under the framework of PfP unfolded the cooperation's military dimension.<sup>294</sup> Notably, in April 1999, Ukrainian, Georgian and Azeri units held their first joint military exercise in conjunction with the inauguration of Baku-Supsa oil pipeline. It was stated that the main goal was countering sabotage and commando attacks. The event was observed by Turkish and US officials also. This training was interpreted by Russia as 'a highly unfriendly move aimed at creating a new military alliance' backed by the US.<sup>295</sup> Within the same year, in September, Russian Foreign Minister, Ivanov, warned that Moscow would 'draw the appropriate conclusions' if GUAM 'became explicitly military by nature.'<sup>296</sup> As Splidsboel-Hansen suggests, Russia's counter reaction also stemmed from the fact that the collective security treaty signatories within the GUAM group (abbreviated GUUAM following Uzbekistan's

---

<sup>293</sup> Vladimit Papapava, "On the Role of the Caucasian Tandem in GUAM", 2008.

<sup>294</sup> See Taras Kuzio, "Geopolitical Pluralism in the CIS: The Emergence of GUUAM", **European Security**, Vol: 9, No: 2, 2000, pp. 86-89.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87. GUAM members on the other hand insist that it was not directed to any other state and military co-operation only stems from the coincidence of strategic interests (namely stability of the region and territorial sovereignty) of its member states. p. 86

<sup>296</sup> Flemming Splidsboel-Hansen, 2000, p. 103. The former signatories of CST within GUUAM consisted of Georgia, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. On the other hand, Ukraine and Moldova had never signed the CST.

adherence) made simultaneous announcements that they had no intention to renew the CST.

Although all these security commitments evoke Walt's definition of alliances, here it is suggested that treating GUAM alone as an alliance may promote some deficiencies. The increasing involvement of the West and NATO in the Caucasus especially in the late 1990s was the real factor promoting renewed security cooperation among the regional states under the aegis of the PfP program. At this point, GUAM as a political and diplomatic bloc had a facilitating effect rather than an independent one. It is accurate to say that it unfolded regional states' pro-Western orientation and coordinated their policy against the Russian threatening power. Yet it should be viewed rather as a tool in both attracting the Western allies and combining the regional states together to promote 'an effective system of diplomatic communication' which is needed, as argued by Walt, both for understanding the common interests and coordinating the responses.<sup>297</sup> Providing a channel for the West to penetrate into the Russia's sphere of influence, GUAM was granted large amounts of aid by the US.<sup>298</sup> However, as indicated by some authors, though the idea of establishing GUAM peacekeeping forces had been under discussion since its early times, no concrete step were taken to form this kind of a battalion.<sup>299</sup> In addition, it was unlikely for GUAM alone, to undertake the responsibility of securing pipelines and transportation corridors without the NATO support.<sup>300</sup>

---

<sup>297</sup> As quoted in the first chapter, Walt suggests those processes as essential in alliance formation in between the potential allies. See Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 30.

<sup>298</sup> GUAM-US cooperation accelerated, especially after the 9/11. In May 2002, the United States agreed to allocate \$46 million to GUAM to support joint projects. See Taras Kuzio and Sergei Blagov, "GUAM Makes Comeback Bid With US Support", **Eurasia Insight**, 2003, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav070703.shtml> (accessed on 16.07.2010)

<sup>299</sup> See Bailes, Branovsky and Dunay, 2007, p. 180.

<sup>300</sup> See Marcel de Haas, "Current Geostrategy in the South Caucasus", Power and Interest News Report, December 15, 2006, pp. 2-5. Retrieved from: <http://gees.org/documentos/Documen-01905.pdf> (accessed on 16.07.2010).

### 3.4.3. Demands on the Withdrawal of Russian Bases and the End of Bandwagoning Period

During the years that carried the state's alignment strategy from bandwagoning to balancing, Georgia also strived to get rid of Russian military bases, all over its space that symbolized the dependency on Russia's security policies. The four military bases that located 'at Vaziani (near Tbilisi); Gudauta (in the breakaway republic of Abkhazia); Batumi (in the Ajarian Autonomous Republic); and Akhalkalaki (in South Georgia's Armenian-populated Samtskhe-Javakheti region near the border with Turkey)' were established by a 1995 treaty, despite it was never ratified by the Georgian parliament.<sup>301</sup> Georgian officials expressed their deep concern on the issue of Russian military bases in the following years because of their location at the ethnically-complex zones. They served as grounds for supporting either the separatist regimes or providing the isolation of local populations without healthy relations with the Georgian state.<sup>302</sup> In 1998, as Nygren argues, the Georgian opposition to the military presence became particularly acute. During that year Russia was also accused of a military involvement in an assassination attempt to Shevardnadze, of the military actions that forced the returning Georgian refugees from Abkhazia to flee once again, and of the involvement in an coup d'état attempt.<sup>303</sup> Georgian opposition, in this sense, attained its first success in forcing Russia to withdraw its border-guard troops through the CIS frontiers within Georgia, by the early 1999.<sup>304</sup>

---

<sup>301</sup> IISS Editorial Board, "Russian bases in Georgia", **Strategic Comments**, Vol: 7, No: 4, 2001. p.1.

<sup>302</sup> Besides the Guadata base in Abkhazia, Russia's military presence in Batumi has helped to strengthen Ajarian opposition against Georgia's authority.. Ajaria that has secured autonomy without direct military confrontation with Tbilisi, viewed the Batumi base as a valuable lever over Tbilisi. On the other side, the removal of Akhalkalaki base had potential for a social and economic unrest in Javakheti where it has provided the main source for economic activity by local Armenians. Moreover they have seen Russian military as their defenders against the threat of losing their ethnic identity and further marginalization within Georgia. Ibid. pp. 1-2.

<sup>303</sup> Bertil Nygren, "Russia's Relations with Georgia under Putin: The Impact of 11 September", in **Russia as a Great Power: Dimensions of Security under Putin** eds; Jakob Hedenskog, Vilhelm Konnander, Bertil Nygren, Ingmar Oldberg and Christer Pursiainen, Routledge, New York, 2005, p.161

<sup>304</sup> IISS Editorial Board "Russian Bases in Georgia", 2001, p. 1.

The turning point for the military bases, on the other hand, was the November 1999 OSCE Istanbul summit, in which Russia demanded for the amendments to the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty that raised limits on Russian deployments in the ‘flank zone’ of the Baltic and North Caucasus.<sup>305</sup> The changes in the limits necessitated ratification by all the signatory countries of the CFE Treaty including Georgia as well. Consequently, the OSCE summit produced both the agreement on the CFE amendments and the Russia–Georgia Joint Statement on the future of Russian bases that declared Russian commitments on closing Vaziani and Gudauta bases by July 2001 and negotiating the status of the remaining two bases during the year 2000. It has to be noted that USA also supported Georgia’s position by conditioning the ratification of the Adapted CFE treaty on Russia’s compliance with its Istanbul commitments.<sup>306</sup>

However, in implementation some problems that delayed the gradual withdrawal and promoted some suspicions about Russia’s compliance to the agreement were observed. The Vaziani military base has been liquidated by 1 July 2001, but only weaponry and military machinery restricted by the CFE Treaty have been removed from the Gudauta base.<sup>307</sup> The Georgian side has protested the situation because the base located in Abkhazia, out of the reach of the Tbilisi government. The situation exasperated when the withdrawal was blocked by the local Abkhaz resistance. Before the events, the Russian side had suggested the transforming of the base into a training centre of CIS peacekeeping force. After further talks a compromise was reached between the two states that allowed Russia to leave some 100 troops to guard the equipment at the base, while the peacekeeping forces continued to do their job in Abkhazia.<sup>308</sup>

---

<sup>305</sup> Russia requested the amendments in response to NATO’s eastward enlargement and the emergence of new security problems in the Caucasus. **Ibid.** p. 2

<sup>306</sup> Johanna Popjanevski, “Russian troop-withdrawal...”, 2005, p. 4.

<sup>307</sup> See Kornely K. Kakachia, “End of Russian Military Bases in Georgia: Social, Political and Security Implications of Withdrawal”, **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 2 (50), 2008 and Colin Robinson, “Update on the Russian Ground Troops”, **The Journal of Slavic Military Studies**, Vol:19, No: 1, 2006. p. 28.

<sup>308</sup> Bertil Nygren, “Russia’s Relations with Georgia under Putin”, 2005, p. 161.

There had been some other negotiations -as anticipated in the OSCE summit, over how to manage the withdrawal from the other two remaining bases in Akhalkalaki and Batumi between Georgia and Russia, but no official plan was made public for guiding this process within the Shevardnadze years. Russia has balked in several ways, e.g. by demanding at least another decade to close these two bases and hundreds of millions of dollars as compensation for relocating the troops and materiel in Russia.<sup>309</sup> Hence, the problems of remaining bases extended in the Saakashvili period too, becoming one of the much debated problems in the Georgia-Russia relations that are examined in the next chapter. Georgia's firm position and insistence on the withdrawal of Russian military bases was a clear sign of the adaptation of the new balancing strategy of which ground has been established in several ways within the late 1990s. The bandwagoning period formally ended in the spring of 1999, when Georgia did not renew its participation in the CIS collective security treaty. The developments, following this landmark also reinforced the evidence that Georgia's alignment had shifted from bandwagoning to balance the most threatening power.

#### **3.4.4. The Second Chechnya War and Georgia's Position in the post-9/11 Security Environment**

After the arrival of Putin to the presidency of RF in the early 2000, the problems in the Russia-Georgia relations have deepened due to both some crucial changes in Russia's political attitude toward the breakaway regions in Georgia and the spillover effects of the second Chechnya war. Russia under the management of Putin did not hesitate to increase its assistance to the secessionist regimes through a number of policies although it continued to hold its formal support to the territorial integrity of Georgia.<sup>310</sup> In political sphere, Putin promoted a de-facto states-centered approach by providing assistance for the state and institution building in the secessionist regions under the guidance of Russian officials while the president

---

<sup>309</sup> Kornely K. Kakachia, "End of Russian Military Bases..." 2008.

<sup>310</sup> See Nicu Popescu, "'Outsourcing' de facto Statehood: Russia and the Secessionist Entities in Georgia and Moldova", **CEPS Policy Briefs**, issue: 112 / 2006. Retrieved from: <http://www.ceeol.com/aspx/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=adf0c7e85b4349a1b60d17cf295ee0a7> (accessed on 17.07.2010).

himself hold high level meetings with the leaders of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. More importantly, Russia began to grant citizenship to the residents of the unrecognized entities, after Putin promoted the “passportisation” as the state policy. Most of the residents in Abkhazia and South Ossetia attained Russian passports through that policy that aims to secure a legitimate right for Russia to represent the interests of these entities. Therefore Russia prepared some political and even legal ground for future interventions for the sake of protecting its own ‘citizens’.<sup>311</sup> That the process of “de-facto annexation” -as some analysis called, of the breakaway regions of Georgia gathered pace was certainly a counter-measurement against Georgia’s realignment with the West.<sup>312</sup>

Another problem in bilateral relations that generated threat of a new military intervention by Russia was related to Georgia’s position during and after the second military intervention to Chechnya since August 1999. A Chechen-Georgian rapprochement process that reflected the common understanding of ‘the enemy of my enemy is my friend, according to Sammut, was observed even in 1996’.<sup>313</sup> Then, at the outset of the war, Georgia -as the only country bordering Chechnya, gave a negative respond to the demands of Russia for permission to use the Vaziani military airfield and other Russian bases on Georgian territory in the military operation. Yet, the major trouble for Georgia that stemmed from the conflict, was related to the refugee flow into the region of Pankisi Gorge within Georgia (that populated mainly by the Kists who were ethnic-Chechens and predominantly Muslim), from the 50 mile-long and mountainous border that was difficult to control.<sup>314</sup> (See map 1, p. 4 and map 2, p. 5).The Kists welcomed some 7000 refugees including 1500 Chechen

---

<sup>311</sup> By 2006, some 90% of the residents of South Ossetia and Abkhazia were said to have Russian passports See **Ibid.** p. 5 and David Gudiashvili, “Nato Membership as Georgia’s Foreign Policy Priority”, 2003.

<sup>312</sup> See David Gudiashvili, 2003. The state of de-facto annexation has some other grounds in economic sphere too. Russia, as the major trade partner and investor to the separatist regimes provided economic support for securing the economic sustainability of them, while it promote an economic pressure on Georgia by applying quota and visa regimes. But, the residents of South Ossetia and Abkhazia were exempted from the visa regime. Nicu Popescu, 2006. pp. 5-8. On the other side, Russia in Putin years did not avoid restoring the railway communication to Abkhazia, in violation of the U.N. and CIS decisions and resolutions. See David Gudiashvili, 2003.

<sup>313</sup> Dennis Sammut, “Love and Hate in Russian-Georgian Relations”, 2003. p. 33.

<sup>314</sup> Tracey German, “David and Goliath: Georgia and Russia’s Coercive Diplomacy”, **Defence Studies**, Vol: 9, No: 2, 2009, p. 230.



warriors and consequently the valley was riddled with organized crime. Moscow was quick to claim that Georgia has provided Chechen warriors safe havens to be utilized in military actions into Chechnya within the RF, by establishing some 20 military bases in the Gorge.<sup>315</sup>

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the USA, the Russian claims gained some other implications. Soon Moscow started to support the US led war against international terrorism and Putin openly linked Chechen warriors with the Islamist terrorist organizations, namely Al-Qaeda.<sup>316</sup> In the new conjuncture, Moscow redefined the problem as ‘an acute threat to the national security of Russia’ emanated from the region that became ‘a stronghold of international terrorists’. Since Russia was not convinced that Georgia alone was capable or willing to establish order in the Pankisi Gorge, it insisted on the possibility of a joint Russian-Georgian military operation. However, the Georgian side objected to the plans of Moscow. To divert the concern of Russia on this issue, Georgia took some military initiatives in the late 2002, by sending troops to the region, and enforcing patrol forces through the Chechnya border, but these acts did not satisfied Moscow at all. In September 2002 at the anniversary of the 9/11, Putin explicitly threatened to order military strikes in Georgia, in order to stop cross-border attacks on Russian territory by the international terrorists who were claimed to be complicit in planning the terrorist attacks in the US by him.<sup>317</sup> Furthermore one year later, in October 2003, Russia adapted a new military doctrine that proclaiming the Russian right to launch pre-emptive military strikes within the CIS.<sup>318</sup> However the problem did not removed by a unilateral Russian action but began to be disregarded by the mid 2000s after the US involvement in the issue that also provided military presence in Georgia for the latter.

---

<sup>315</sup> Bertil Nygren, **The Rebuilding of Greater Russia: Putin’s Foreign Policy towards the CIS Countries**, Routledge, New York, 2008. p. 125.

<sup>316</sup> His Minister of Defence, Sergei Ivanov, on the other hand, suggested that “Afghanistan and Chechnya were ‘two branches of one tree ... the roots of [which] are in Afghanistan” Quoted in Nygren, **ibid.**, p. 126.

<sup>317</sup> Mikhail Filippov, “Diversionary Role of the Georgia-Russia Conflict: International Constraints and Domestic Appeal”, **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol: 61, No: 10, 2009, pp. 1833 -1834. This threat somehow forced Shevardnadze to made several concessions to Russian demands and to agree creating joint border patrols.

<sup>318</sup> Nygren, **The Rebuilding of Greater Russia**, 2008, p. 130.

The US stance towards the Pankisi issue needs to be mentioned here in order to demonstrate how Georgia radiated the signals of alignment with the Western powers. Unlike in the beginning of the 1990s, this time, the US gave strong support to Georgia's independence and territorial integrity. The US made its point clear by protesting the violations of the Georgian airfield by the Russian aircraft since the fall of 1999 and sharing Georgia's suspicions over the Russian intent for a new military invasion. In August 2002, the crisis between Russia and Georgia was ensued, after some unmarked (presumably Russian) aircraft shelled some targets within the Georgian territory and caused some casualties. While Moscow denied the responsibility, the US stated its 'deeply concern' and offered its 'strong support' for Georgia's independence. Furthermore, Washington officially called the Russian military 'liars'.<sup>319</sup> In addition, during the crisis the US president George W. Bush "urged Putin to give Georgia time to clear the Pankisi Gorge, and the EU external relations commissioner, Chris Patten advised Russia against unilateral military action."<sup>320</sup>

The attitudes of both sides in the crisis, namely the linkage of the Chechen warriors with Al-Qaeda and Georgia's fear of the Russian invasion gave way to a de-facto invitation of the US. In the spring of 2002, Washington launched Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP), through which 200 US military personnel were deployed in Georgia in order to train the Georgian military in anti-terrorist operations. The military personnel had strictly training and advisory functions, yet they were not to be engaged in combat.<sup>321</sup> Georgia's Defense Minister stated in March 2002 that US instructors would remain in Georgia 'as long as necessary.' By this way, the Pankisi issue has brought a lasting US military presence in Georgia for the first time. In the press release for GTEP program, the US Department of Defense (DoD) stated

---

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.* p, 128

<sup>320</sup> Bertil Nygren, "Russia's Relations with Georgia...", 2005, p. 170.

<sup>321</sup> Devdariani and Hancilova give some information on the content of this program. "Up to 200 US military instructors from elite forces are due to train up to 2000 Georgian troops. About 1500 men of the ministry of defence are trained as rapid deployment forces with special accent on anti-terrorist skills and 500 soldiers of the State Border Defence Department receive additional training as border guards. The American side also provides for the necessary equipment for these troops. The transfer of 10 UH-1H "Huey" transport helicopters to the Georgian army (6 by the US air force and 4 by the Turkish military) in October 2001 is part of the program." Jaba Devdariani and Blanka Hancilova, "Georgia's Pankisi Gorge: Russian, US and European Connections", **CEPS Policy Briefs**, No: 23 - June 2002, p. 6. Retrieved from: <http://aei.pitt.edu/1985/01/PB23.PDF> (accessed on 17.07.2010).

the US and Georgia as ‘solid partners’ dedicated to the promotion of peace and stability in the Caucasus region. Georgia’s ‘unequivocal support’ to the campaign against international terrorist was also welcomed by the DoD.<sup>322</sup>

In fact, Georgia has given clear support to the US and NATO military initiatives since the late 1990s. The first cooperation, in this sense, appeared in the Kosovo case, as Georgia did not hesitate to express his support and sent its troops albeit a small contingent, to participate in KFOR (Kosovo Force).<sup>323</sup> Later, Georgia firmly backed the US administration in its military operations to Afghanistan and Iraq. Tbilisi suggested a ‘certain air corridor’ to be used in those operations dispatched troops in both war zones.<sup>324</sup> Then as pointed out above, Georgia declared its aspirations to NATO membership in 2002. In the spring of 2003 the cooperation in the security realm was crowned with the signing of the bilateral security pact between the US and Georgia that gave broad privileges to US military personnel within Georgia.<sup>325</sup> Naturally it fired a great opposition and outcry among the Russian officials. Strictly speaking, by not avoiding signing this kind of pact that would provoke Moscow, the USA has showed that Georgia has been able to make a notable progress in forming an alliance with itself, from the early 1990s to 2000s.

### **3.4.5. The Account of the Balancing Period under Shevardnadze Administration**

Shevardnadze administration can be argued as successful to a notable degree in establishing significant political and military ties with its Western partners by

---

<sup>322</sup> See the News release by US Department of Defense: “Georgia Train and Equip Program Begins” at <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=3326> (accessed on 12.07.2010)

<sup>323</sup> See “NATO’s Relations with Georgia” at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_38988.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm) (accessed on 12.07.2010)

<sup>324</sup> See David Gudishvili, “Nato Membership as Georgia’s Foreign Policy Priority”, 2003. And “States in Central Asia, Caucasus Brace For Iraq Blitz Consequences”, **Eurasia Insight**, March <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav032003.shtml>. (accessed on 12.07.2010). In 2004 Georgian troops participated into ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in Afghanistan. See “NATO’S Relations with Georgia”, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_38988.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm) (accessed on 14 May 2010).

<sup>325</sup> “Under the agreement's provisions, US military personnel are allowed visa-free entry and exit from Georgia, are permitted to carry weapons and are immune from prosecution in Georgian courts. The agreement also grants the US military to deploy hardware without impediments on Georgian territory.” Sergei Blagov, “US-Georgian Security Cooperation Agreement Provokes Outcry in Russia”, **Eurasia Insight**, 2003. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav041603a.shtml> (accessed on 12.04.2010)

taking advantage of several political developments mentioned above. Enforcing diplomatic relations with NATO, Western powers and other regional states brought Georgia vital foreign assistance in economic and military terms along with some confidence for encountering Russia's coercive strategy. However aligning with Western security policies did not provide Georgia, as a weak state, any worthwhile influence in revising the priorities of the Western governments according to its national interest. The Western states stopped short to respond the Georgian calls for support in altering the status-quo in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the major troublesome issues for the latter, and to balance Russian influence in the breakaway regions, for instance, by replacing the Russia's peacekeeping forces with the international ones. The Western states within the EU and NATO primarily tried to preserve the delicate balance in Caucasus between Russian influence and their interest. In this sense, Georgia's alignment with them was limited with the regional projects launched by the West and some initiatives for securing the transportation routes that examined above.

The concern of the Western states on enhancement of stability in the region also promoted more intensive training and military aid for Georgian army through the PfP and GTEP. Yet, it has to be noted that these programs were not enough to solve deep-seated problems in the Georgian army. First and foremost, foreign military aid has not been complemented with a coherent defense policy by Georgia due to the lack of necessary funding and subdivided characteristic of the national army.<sup>326</sup> The problems in sharing the international assistance further fomented the tense relations among the different groups in the army. Worse still, in Shevardnadze period the Georgian army retained many characteristics of its paramilitary origins as volunteer militias.<sup>327</sup>

---

<sup>326</sup> In fact, the latter was the result of a deliberate policy applied by the president Shevardnadze who planned to establish a system of checks and balances among the three group of forces (police, ministry of interior's troops and troops of defense ministry) within in order to prevent them outmatching another. Because he thought that may lead a new coup d'état. See Devderiani and Hanciolva, 2010. p.5.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid. p. 5. See also "Pro-Russian Georgian Officers Impede US Military Training Program", **Eurasia Insight**, July 2002. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav072902b.shtml> (accessed on 12.07.2010)

On the other side, domestic political problems (the level of democracy, lack of healthy state institutions and transparency etc.) had also some effects in Shevardnadze's alignment policies. Because, as pointed out by Coppieters, when the president found it increasingly difficult to accept Western recommendations and critics based on these problems, he softened his opposition to Moscow even on some hard security issues like the future of Russian bases. It combined with some diplomatic maneuvers and concessions to appease Moscow in crisis times that were not tolerated by Georgian population at all who was fed up with Russia's attitude not regarding of Georgia's sovereign rights.<sup>328</sup> The Rose Revolution can sure also be evaluated regarding the disappointments among the Georgian nationals.

---

<sup>328</sup> For example, after the air raid with some casualties in August 2002, mentioned above, Shevardnadze tried to calm things down, arguing that Putin himself probably had not ordered the bombings. His attitude was much contrary to Georgian popular demands to shoot down Russian intruders that were plentiful. Nygren, **The Rebuilding of Greater Russia...**, 2008. p. 128. Then the establishment of joint border patrols with Russia regarding the Pankisi issue in October aroused a great protest by the opposition. It was defined as a diplomatic retreat of Georgia, while Saakasvili, soon to be president, defined the concession as Shevardnadze's 'own goal'. "Shevardnadze's Chisinau Concessions Shatter Georgia's Political Unity" **Eurasia Insight**, 2002. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav100902.shtml> (accessed on 12.07.2010)

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ROSE REVOLUTION AND AFTER

*The Rose Revolution demonstrators waved American flags while calling for the resignation of the Shevardnadze regime. Within weeks of Shevardnadze's resignation, a billboard was erected in downtown Tbilisi with the words "Thank you, USA" on it.<sup>329</sup>*

*[For the Rose Revolution] Americans helped us most by channeling support to free Georgian media....That was more powerful than 5,000 Marines.*

*Mikheil Saakashvili, the President of Georgia<sup>330</sup>*

The last chapter examines Georgia's alignment strategy since the Rose Revolution. The emphasis is on three important issues; the effects of the revolutionary regime change on Georgia's alignment, the reasons for and consequences of Georgia's aspirations for its EU and NATO membership and the implications of the 2008 Russia-Georgia war in its alignment preferences. The Rose Revolution that was manipulated by transnational penetration actions had profound effects in the acceleration of the process for Georgia's integration to the Western political economic structures. Yet, the hastening of this process promoted also a direct confrontation with Russia that eventually led to a war in 2008, between the two sides.

This chapter continues as follows: The first section, examines that whether the Rose Revolution can be evaluated as a transnational penetration act. The second one deals with the Saakashvili government's relations with external powers to expose the new governments' alignment behavior and its consequences. Then the following section discusses, Georgia's bid for NATO membership and questions if there is an asymmetry of motivation for an alliance between Georgia and the Western states.

---

<sup>329</sup> Lincoln A. Mitchell , "Democracy in Georgia Since the Rose Revolution", **Orbis, A Journal of World Affairs**, Vol. 50, No: 4, 2006. p. 671. Mitchell served as director of the National Democratic Institute in Georgia between 2002-2003, thus, involved in election monitoring activities in November 2003.

<sup>330</sup> Quoted in David Anable, "The Role of Georgia's Media--and Western Aid--in the Rose Revolution", **The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics**, Vol. 11, No: 7, 2006. p. 20.

The aim is at evaluating the possibility for such a membership and defining the problems in the nature of alliance between Georgia and the Western states. Finally, Russia-Georgia war in August 2008 is analyzed with its all implications for Georgia's alignment strategy. In addition, the Obama administration's new policies and their effects on US-Georgia alliance are examined in the final section.

#### **4.1. THE ROSE REVOLUTION: A TRANSNATIONAL PENETRATION ACT?**

The Rose Revolution became the first case of non-violent regime change within the CIS space by galvanizing opposition groups who practiced some means of civil disobedience. Elections on November 2, 2003 in Georgia were followed by an intense social protest that was embodied in thousands of people gathering in front of the Parliamentary building, against the official results which was thought as an indicator of a massive electoral fraud. Although it was parliamentary elections -not presidential, the protesters did not want to wait until 2005 for the latter and opposed to the formation of a pro-Shevardnadze parliament again. During the elections observers from international and local NGOs that undertook monitoring activities found out many illegalities such as rampant ballot stuffing, multiple voting, and voter lists that excluded thousands of live voters.<sup>331</sup> It was an inured situation under the CIS standards, where authoritarian ruling circles were reluctant to cede power and therefore prepared to take any measurements to achieve the desired results by falsifying the real ones.<sup>332</sup> What was extraordinary, however, was that the unified opposition leaders in Georgia were able to orchestrate the masses in order to stalemate the president and force him to resign.

The remarkably open attitude of Shevardnadze towards Georgia's civil society and free press prepared the ground for the success of the opposition in the so-called revolutionary regime change. Shevardnadze's regime was perhaps the most

---

<sup>331</sup> See Lincoln A. Mitchell, "Georgia's Rose Revolution", **Current History**, Vol. 103, No: 675, (October 2004), p. 343 and Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., "Georgia's Rose Revolution", **Journal of Democracy**, Vol: 15, No: 2, (April 2004), p. 115. Like Mitchell, Fairbanks also served with a monitoring team sent by the US based International Republican Institute in the November 2003 elections.

<sup>332</sup> Matsaberidze, thus, designates the system as decorative democracy. See Malkhaz Matsaberidze, "The Rose Revolution and the Southern Caucasus", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 2 (32), 2005

liberal one in the former Soviet states. In this sense, it was neither ‘a flat-out democracy’ nor ‘a full-blown autocracy’ and often denominated as ‘liberal autocracy’.<sup>333</sup> That was mainly the result of US democracy assistance granted to Georgia by American government directly or through the foreign NGOs, since the mid 1990s that aimed at enforcing civil society.<sup>334</sup> The democracy assistance programs made it possible for Georgia’s ISFED (International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy) and US based NDI (National Democratic Institute) to undertake election monitoring activities in 2003 elections. Foreign NGOs provided ISFED enough money to conduct a parallel vote and turnout tabulation, while they additionally funded an exit poll.<sup>335</sup>

The data from both sources showed that while the government continued election fraud, Mikheil Saakashvili’s National Movement, among the opposition parties, was the clear winner. Along with the proof provided by the voting monitors and exit polls, the opposition refused to accept the election’s outcome while Saakashvili called for the president’s resignation. On November 4, opposition parties initiated a protest and vigil in front of the Parliament and masses started to gather there.<sup>336</sup> The demonstrations intensified on 22 November when Shevardnadze sought to seat the new parliament according the official results. The protesters managed to take over the Parliamentary building peacefully, some handing out ‘roses’ to police. Saakashvili led the crowd into the chamber and disrupted the session while the bodyguards of Shevardnadze hustled him out of the building with unfinished speech in his hand. Shevardnadze draw back to his office and declared a state of emergency. It seems that he was willing to use force against the protestors but he could not find

---

<sup>333</sup> David Anable, “The Role of Georgia's Media--and Western Aid--in the Rose Revolution”, 2006. p. 13.

<sup>334</sup> See Lincoln A. Mitchell, **Uncertain Democracy: U.S. Foreign Policy and Georgia’s Rose Revolution**, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2009, pp. 115-116

<sup>335</sup> Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., “Georgia’s Rose Revolution”, 2004. p. 114 and Mitchell, “Georgia’s Rose Revolution”, 2004. p. 343.

<sup>336</sup> The vigil continued nine days including 500 to 5000 demonstrators. The biggest demonstration, on the other hand, took place on November 14 that mobilized 20.000 people. See Theodor Tudoroiu, “Rose, Orange, and Tulip: The Failed post-Soviet Revolutions”, **Communist and post-Communist Studies**, 40 (2007), p. 321.



supporters in the police and army as the memory of Soviet troops' 1989 attack of civilians in Tbilisi made this solution unworkable.<sup>337</sup>

According to Fairbanks, another factor that kept these forces neutral was strong Pentagon lobbying over them as they were subjected to the US military training and education programs.<sup>338</sup> Under these conditions, Shevardnadze's presidency endured only for another 30 hours, until the visit by the opposition leaders on the next day. In his office Shevardnadze handed them his resignation letter. That was the Rose Revolution.

#### 4.1.1. US-Western Involvement in the Rose Revolution

The chain of non-violent, 'velvet' revolutions in the former communist countries that followed each other; in Serbia (2000), Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004) and Kyrgyzstan (2005) aroused suspicions on the existence of the US plans that coherently seek to spread friendly regimes in the post-Soviet space. In the most extreme form, it is argued that these revolutions engineered directly by the US, for example by funding for opposition groups that would support its policies after taking power.<sup>339</sup> In Turkey also many people firmly believes that the US played a direct and decisive role in these revolutions.<sup>340</sup> Embracing such an argument would mean that the United States took changing regimes as a serious task in order to expand its sphere of influence by building reliable allies in the Eurasian continent. It would consequently exaggerate the role of transnational penetration's effects in alliance formation in its extreme form that aims at subversion of regimes. According to Walt, however, those kind of political penetration actions are more likely to be reacted

---

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., pp. 321-322. Yet, in his interview, Shevardnadze vindicated himself, stating that that he decided to resign to avoid violence, because he thought that dispersing demonstrators who were full angry and out of control would not be possible without bloodshed. See the interview on RFE/RL at: <http://origin.rferl.org/content/article/1051300.html> (accessed on 29.07.2010)

<sup>338</sup> Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., "Georgia's Rose Revolution", 2004. pp. 113,123. This suggestion may only enforce the military indoctrination programs' effect in transnational penetration.

<sup>339</sup> Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik, "International Diffusion and Postcommunist Electoral Revolutions", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 39 (2006), p. 298.

<sup>340</sup> See Zeyno Baran, "Turkey and the Wider Black Sea Region", in: **The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century**, Daniel Hamilton and Gerhard Mangott eds, Center for Transatlantic Relations, Washington, 2008. p. 95.

negatively, therefore, to fail.<sup>341</sup> In practice, his prediction was partly confirmed, as Russia and some Central Asian states began to take counter measures that limits the foreign and local civil society activities, particularly those of election monitoring.<sup>342</sup>

Yet, another view of the US democracy assistance suggests that it mostly aimed to promote democratic governmental institutions, open societies and fair elections, hence it played only an indirect role in ‘velvet’ revolutions by contributing people’s will to arise.<sup>343</sup> In Georgia case, this notion is verifiable as the ‘transnational effect’ in the regime change was framed within the US aim at spreading the Western style democracy throughout the world. The democracy ideal trailed the masses and most strongly, the young activist groups which were supported by Western NGOs and independent media.

To examine the content and limits of Western political penetration within the Rose Revolution one should begin with foreign funding of Georgian civil society. Since 1995, both the US and the EU have granted large amount of aid for democratic development of Georgian state and society.<sup>344</sup> By 2000, Georgia was granted 700 million US\$ by American government directly, while it was the fourth largest per capita recipient of US agency for International Development (USAID) aid in 2002-2003. The EU, on the other hand, provided 420 million Euro assistance between 1992 and 2004 that does not include contributions from separate member states. Most of the aid directed to democracy and governance i.e. election reform, local government, judicial reform and development of the NGOs. Many of the programs that carried the aid provided citizen mobilization and advocacy networks among the NGOs.

---

<sup>341</sup> Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 48.

<sup>342</sup> Carothers notes those states as Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Belarus, China, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. Thomas Carothers, “The Backlash Against Democracy Promotion,” **Foreign Affairs**, Vol. 85, No:2, 2006.

<sup>343</sup> Graeme P. Herd, Colorful Revolutions and the CIS: “Manufactured” versus “Managed” Democracy?”, **Problems of Post-Communism**, Vol. 52, No: 2, (March/April 2005), p. 14. and Alex Van Oss, “Georgia: Looking Back at the Rose Revolution”, **Eurasia Insight**, 2009, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav123009.shtml> (accessed on 30.07.2010)

<sup>344</sup> Theodor Tudoroiu, “Rose, Orange, and Tulip: The Failed post-Soviet Revolutions”, 2007, p. 323.

Foreign funding of Georgia's civil society was accompanied by the emergence new segments in the Georgian population that were in close communication with the West. As Mitchell suggest:

By 2003, these programs [of democracy assistance] had become a permanent part of Georgian society as well as its economy. A middle class, albeit a very small one, of English-speaking NGO professionals had emerged...Additionally, a parallel class of foreigners quickly emerged. These people, charged with the implementation of US funded programs, generally shared a commitment to trying to help strengthen democracy in Georgia, but had institutional loyalties and interests as well.<sup>345</sup>

Mitchell goes on stating that:

In addition to this work with civil society, exchange programs, including programs for high school, college, and graduate students, members of parliament, civic activists and other young leaders helped the Georgian government build a nucleus of leaders who spoke English, making it possible to communicate effectively with Western governments and seek support directly. Many of these people also understood Western political systems and strategies and developed a network of relationship with Western leaders and colleagues both inside and outside government.<sup>346</sup>

As noted in chapter one, although Walt downplays the role of elite exchange for education as an element of political penetration in alliance formation suggesting that the Middle Eastern authoritarian regimes impeded the Western educated officials to reach important positions,<sup>347</sup> this was not the case in Georgia after the Rose Revolution not to mention Saakashvili who received his law education in Ukraine and USA.<sup>348</sup> Shevardnadze, having favorable relations with US, felt also comfortable and supported the exchange programs like the Middle Eastern leaders observed by Walt. However, many of these people who were first brought into these programs through Shevardnadze and his government party CUG, used their communication skills for seeking support of the opposition when they split with the president.<sup>349</sup> After the revolution was achieved those Western-educated people held the key positions in the cabinet and Georgian state. Furthermore, Saakashvili, as the new

---

<sup>345</sup> Lincoln A. Mitchell, *Uncertain Democracy*..., 2009, p.116.

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118

<sup>347</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 1987, pp. 248-249.

<sup>348</sup> "Saakashvili graduated from the School of International Law of Kiev University in 1992 and continued his studies at the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg, Columbia University, where he earned his masters degree, and at George Washington University, where received his doctorate in law in 1995." <http://www.georgianbiography.com/bios/s/saakashvili.htm> (accessed on 28.07.2010)

<sup>349</sup> Lincoln A. Mitchell, *Uncertain Democracy*..., 2009, p. 118.

president, invited Western-educated Georgian people living in abroad, specifically to rebuild the state.<sup>350</sup> Hence after the revolution Shevardnadze's corrupt system of government, namely his own 'nomenklatura' that he able to well manage with his political capabilities was replaced by fresh cadres which are more open to political penetration by the West.

Along with their effect on the elite, democracy assistance programs were also crucial in promotion of an independent media and in its maintenance that was capable to influence the masses. Most notably, the popular television station, Rustavi-2, that was built up in part by Western development assistance and survived against governmental campaign of pressure with the support of foreign NGOs had become the voice and vision of Georgia's Rose Revolution.<sup>351</sup> Rustavi 2 influenced young activists, remarkably by broadcasting an American-produced documentary on Serbia revolution that goes in detail about non-violent tactics used by 'Otpor' (Resistance) student group which is often compared with Georgia's 'Kmara' (Enough!).<sup>352</sup> The TV channel which worked hand in hand with the young movements and foreign NGOs had an enormous impact in informing and galvanizing the public. After the elections and during the protests, Rustavi 2 run a scroll at the bottom of the screen 24 hours a day, that showed the official results compared to the NGOs' exit poll and parallel vote counting.<sup>353</sup>

All the major civil society leaders who made important contributions to the revolution were working either for the NGOs funded by the US government or the Open Society Institute (OSI) that was funded by George Soros, an American citizen.<sup>354</sup> The OSI has played maybe the most impressive and direct role in the revolution. Soros provided funding for the student organization, Kmara, and trained

---

<sup>350</sup> Lincoln A. Mitchell, "Democracy in Georgia Since the Rose Revolution", 2006, p. 671.

<sup>351</sup> See David Anable, "The Role of Georgia's Media--and Western Aid--in the Rose Revolution", 2006, pp. 7, 14-15.

<sup>352</sup> The experience of Otpor was utilized by Kmara. Then lessons from the both organizations were studied by Ukraine's 'Pora' (It's Time!) For the commonalities e.g. logos, slogans etc. and the close ties among them, see Graeme Herd, 2005, p. 4.

<sup>353</sup> That is why Saakashvili stated that "Rustavi-2 was extremely important. It was really instrumental... Most of the students who came out on the streets were brought out by Rustavi." David Anable, "The Role of Georgia's Media...", 2006, p. 15.

<sup>354</sup> For the names of this NGOs counted by Mitchell see Lincoln A. Mitchell, **Uncertain Democracy**..., 2009, p. 117.

more than one thousand Georgian students on ‘revolutionary techniques using humor and peaceful subversion’.<sup>355</sup> This training was crucial in keeping the revolutionary demonstrations nonviolent and, in turn, in preventing a violent reaction by the security forces thereby rendering the revolution successful. The OSI activities and its involvement in other cases of velvet revolutions thus became the main factor that underlined the suspects of the US aims at overthrowing unfriendly regimes for replacing them with the pro-American ones.<sup>356</sup>

#### 4.1.2. What was the Rose Revolution for?

The involvement of Western actors in the Rose Revolution summarized above, indicates that it represented nearly all the ways of the transnational penetration suggested by Walt.<sup>357</sup> Yet, it is rather disputable what the real goal of Western democracy assistance was. Was it only aimed to promote open society or did it targeted to change Georgia’s government directly? The scholars writing on this subject often proposes the limits of outside effect that prevent it from being capable for regime change and attribute it rather to the Georgian people’s will, of course by touching on the contributions of the aid to the people’s cause.<sup>358</sup> For example, a Georgian scholar, Matsaberidze, concludes that in the 1990s, the elections were repeatedly falsified but it did not promote social discontent among Georgians who preserved their belief in that only Shevardnadze could play a stabilizer role in the country.<sup>359</sup> However, the regime change occurred in 2003, because his credibility dried out by that time.

Mitchell, on the other hand, suggests that Shevardnadze personally preserved its popularity, still in the 2000s, among the Western politicians and particularly those

---

<sup>355</sup> David Anable, 2006, p. 11.

<sup>356</sup> Yet, in 2005, Soros stated that his role was exaggerated in the revolution and named it entirely as a work of Georgian society. “Soros downplays role in Georgia Revolution”, 2005, <http://archive.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2005/5/31/164945.shtml> (accessed on 30.07.2010)

<sup>357</sup> See Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, pp. 46-49

<sup>358</sup> At the same time most of them admit the revolution would not be possible without the foreign assistance. See Matsaberidze, “The Rose...”, Mitchell, **Uncertain Democracy...**, 2009. David Anable, 2006. Graeme Herd, 2005; Bunce and Wolchik, 2006.

<sup>359</sup> See Matsaberidze, “The Rose Revolution and the Southern Caucasus”, 2005.

in the US government, as being one of the closest supporters of the war in Iraq.<sup>360</sup> For that reason, he suggests, the US wanted to create civil society and a democratic system in Georgia, not a revolution, “but as Shevardnadze’s regime continued, this distinction became less possible and useful.”<sup>361</sup> At the same time, the activists in Georgia, watching the NATO and EU enlargement towards the Eastern Europe and Baltic states, viewed Shevardnadze’s corrupt regime that was unwilling to take the necessary reforms as an impediment to integration with the West.<sup>362</sup> At the end, the Rose Revolution brought many hopes in acceleration in this process. In January 2004, Georgians elected Saakashvili as the president, with %96 majority of the vote.

Whatever the main goal was, consequently the revolution promoted a new regime that seemed to be more ‘open’ for political penetration for several reasons mentioned above. In the aftermath of the revolution, the West’s criticism on Georgia’s problems on democracy declined, while the Rose Revolution was represented by the Bush administration as a brilliant success of democracy promotion policy.<sup>363</sup> In short, the transnational penetration had a strengthening effect in alliance formation between Georgia and Western states. Yet, as Walt argues, it followed the establishment of substantial contacts between the two sides, they were already allied.<sup>364</sup> In this sense, the programs of democracy assistance, exchange for education and maybe even military training that might have counseled neutrality to the Georgian army, all made it possible for Georgians to overthrow the Shevardnadze regime.

---

<sup>360</sup> Lincoln A. Mitchell, “Georgia’s Rose Revolution”, 2004, p. 342-343.

<sup>361</sup> Mitchell, **Uncertain Democracy...**, 2009, p. 117.

<sup>362</sup> Vicken Cheterian, “Georgia’s Rose Revolution: Change or Repetition? Tension between State-Building and Modernization Projects”, **Nationalities Papers**, Vol. 36, No:4, 2008, p. 695.

<sup>363</sup> This embracement with the new government by the US government, assuming it as capable and willing to bring more democracy to the country generated some results that disappointed the former NDI member Lincoln Mitchell. He suggests that in Saakashvili’s regime the central power of the presidency further strengthened in the state organization. On the other hand, NGOs activism has been restrained in terms of critics and watchdog activities, while the media has become far less independent in their reporting. Facing those developments, in his article published in 2006, he questions how serious the United States was about democracy-promotion, particularly in countries that have a semi-democratic but pro-American government. See Lincoln A. Mitchell, “Democracy in Georgia...”, 2006.

<sup>364</sup> See Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 67.

## **4.2. SAAKASHVILI'S RELATIONS WITH THE EXTERNAL POWERS: USA, EU AND RUSSIA**

The Saakashvili government has been clearly pro-Western oriented in its alignment behavior. The Rose Revolution soon defined Georgia's main foreign policy goals as gaining memberships to both the EU and NATO.<sup>365</sup> Saakashvili tried to use its popularity in the Western world to gain more support in this way. Below the Saakashvili government's relations with the major external powers are examined to explain the origins of Georgia's alignment strategy from 2004 onwards.

### **4.2.1. The Bush Administration and Saakashvili**

Having suggested that the United States played the major role in the political penetration that contributed Saakashvili's rise to power in Tbilisi, it is now important to discuss how the Rose Revolution influenced the alliance between Georgia and the USA. First of all, the regime change in Tbilisi brought some new novelties in the partnership between Georgia and US, since it emerged while the latter was maintaining its campaign of democracy promotion throughout the world. The Saakashvili regime with bold commitments to democracy and integration into the West, in this sense, fit in precisely with the picture that was sought by the Bush administration. Soon after the revolution, the US President George W. Bush and Saakashvili, sought to carry the content of alignment beyond the focus of neo-realism and stressed the shared values of freedom and democracy as the significant motive of the partnership between Georgia and the US.<sup>366</sup>

In 2005, Bush visited Georgia where he suggested as 'a beacon of liberty' for the post-Soviet region and the world. In Tbilisi, he appreciated the Georgian people struggle against Shevardnadze rule and suggested their success, as an important step in spreading democracy throughout the world; a valuable example for the cases

---

<sup>365</sup> See National Security Concept of Georgia, 2005, at [http://www.parliament.ge/files/292\\_880\\_927746\\_concept\\_en.pdf](http://www.parliament.ge/files/292_880_927746_concept_en.pdf) (accessed on 08.08.2010)

<sup>366</sup> See The White House Web Archive, "President and President Saakashvili Discuss NATO, Democracy", 2005, at <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050510.html> (accessed on 05.08.2010).

following Ukraine, Iraq and Lebanon, etc.<sup>367</sup> While Bush expressed the strong American support for Georgians struggle towards freedom, he also honored Georgia's support to the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>368</sup> Georgia's praise for Bush ran equally strong as Saakashvili said "[w]e welcome you as a freedom fighter", during the meeting with Bush in the Parliament<sup>369</sup> Then Georgia's President defined the converging strategic interest with the US in spreading democracy and freedom, 'more than oil pipelines, more than any kind of economic or military cooperation',<sup>370</sup>

The trend of the idealism in the rhetoric of the US policy towards Georgia was sure the reflection of the larger setting of the American strategy of democracy promotion. The US that heavily involved in two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq with many troubles within, needed to prove some success to legitimate its mission. As Mitchell suggest, the sinking popularity of Bush administration, both at home and abroad, led Washington and Tbilisi to develop a relationship of mutual dependency, albeit for different reasons.<sup>371</sup> The US promoted Georgia as a great democratic success and undertook a strong commitment for ensuring the survival of the Saakashvili regime; therefore, the consolidation of the new government and supporting its state-building project became a US priority. Washington, in this sense, expressed its support for Saakashvili's main goals involving with restoring the territorial integrity of Georgia and integration into NATO and EU. On the other hand, Saakashvili's reliance on Washington was critical in terms of maintaining the domestic support.

---

<sup>367</sup> Bush meant the Purple Revolution in Iraq, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and the Cedar Revolution in Lebanon. See Elizabeth Owen, "In Georgia, Bush Emphasizes Freedom, Conflict Resolution" **Eurasia Insight**, 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav051005.shtml> (accessed on 08.08.2010)

<sup>368</sup> See the White House Web Archive, "President Addresses and Thanks Citizens in Tbilisi, Georgia", 2005, at <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050510-2.html> (accessed on 08.08.2010)

<sup>369</sup> The Georgian leader also named Bush as the first recipient of the Order of St. George, an award created "for promotion of freedom in the world." See Elizabeth Owen, "In Georgia, Bush Emphasizes Freedom, Conflict Resolution" **Eurasia Insight**, 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav051005.shtml> (accessed on 08.08.2010)

<sup>370</sup> See the White House Web Archive, "President and President Saakashvili Discuss NATO, Democracy", 2005, at <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050510.html> (accessed on 05.08.2010).

<sup>371</sup> Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent U.S.-Georgian Relations", **The Washington Quarterly**, Vol. 32, No. 1, 2009. p. 30.



From the outset, Saakashvili has often reiterated his commitment to achieving Georgian reunification through negotiations. After the Rose Revolution the US put greater emphasis on the territorial integrity issue and tried to facilitate to resolution of the frozen conflicts through peaceful means.<sup>372</sup> The US officials maintained to view the conflicts in Tbilisi's eyes and framed the discussion in terms of restoring territorial integrity. The strong ties between Bush and Saakashvili government promoted more confidence and reliance on the United States in conflict resolution, as suggested by Mitchell,<sup>373</sup> but the extent to which US support translated in to a credible Security commitment remained unclear.<sup>374</sup> Yet US' siding with Georgia's position was very helpful to the Saakashvili regime politically.

The different motivations of both sides, promoted intense cooperation in other security issues too. In 2003, Georgia under the Shevardnadze administration was among the countries which pledged to support the U.S.-led Operation Iraqi Freedom. After Saakashvili reached to the power, in 2005, Tbilisi boosted its troops in Iraq from 69 to 850, making Georgia the second largest per capita contributor. Then, in 2007, Georgia increased them to 2,000.<sup>375</sup> Georgian troops also participated into ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in Afghanistan, in 2004.<sup>376</sup> The participation of Georgian army to missions abroad with the US, promoted a new \$64 million military training program named the Sustainment and Stability Operations Program (SSOP) that provided training for 2,000 troops, in part to support U.S.-led coalition operations. It was launched in 2005 and replaced GTEP after the latter formally ended in 2004.<sup>377</sup>

---

<sup>372</sup>Elizabeth Owen, "In Georgia, Bush Emphasizes Freedom, Conflict Resolution" **Eurasia Insight**, 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav051005.shtml> (accessed on 08.08.2010).

<sup>373</sup> Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat...", 2009. pp. 31-32..

<sup>374</sup> S. Neil MacFarlane, "Colliding state-building projects and regional insecurity in post-soviet space: Georgia versus Russia in South Ossetia" in **Troubled Regions and Failing States: The Clustering and Contagion of Armed Conflict** (Comparative Social Research, Vol. 27), (eds.), Kristian Berg Harpviken, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Bingley, UK., 2010. p. 116.

<sup>375</sup> Jim Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for US Interests", CRS Report for Congress, 1 February 2007, p. 2.

<sup>376</sup> See, NATO's relations with Georgia, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_38988.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm) (accessed on 14 May 2010).

<sup>377</sup> Jim Nichol "Georgia [Republic]: Recent Developments and U.S. Interest" CRS Report for Congress, 21 May 2008. p 3.

Besides the military cooperation, the USA became the main supporter of Georgia's membership to NATO. For example, before the NATO Bucharest summit in April 2008, in which Georgia expected an invitation to Membership Action Plan (MAP) –an important step towards the membership, President Bush signaled that the US would advocate Georgia's position in Bucharest.<sup>378</sup> The US' clear support to Georgia in the progress towards the NATO membership, however, was in contradiction with the stances of some cautious members of the Alliance which primarily regarded the negative reaction by the Russian Federation, as examined in the following section. This fact made Saakashvili more dependent on the US to fulfill its commitments to integration Euro-Atlantic political and security structures in order to maintain his domestic political support.

In short, the regime to regime relationship between Georgia and US, personalized with Saakashvili-Bush partnership was crucial in both balancing the Russian threat and consolidation of the regime in Georgia. Hence, it is suggested here that, besides balance-of-threat, omnibalancing theory also sheds light over the reasons for Saakashvili's reliance on the US and his government's pro-Western orientation. After the regime change in Tbilisi, the US democracy assistance turned to direct assistance to the government, a fact that may lead questioning the sincerity of the US aim of developing democracy in Georgia.<sup>379</sup> Even the domestic unrest of November 2007, in that the Georgian government declared a state of emergency and additionally used force against peaceful demonstrations by the opposition, did not affect the US views and its position towards the Saakashvili government. Yet, most of the European states took a different position by condemning the events.

#### **4.2.2. The European Union**

The Rose Revolution also aroused hopes for the acceleration of Georgia's integration to the EU. As stated in the National Security Concept of Georgia:

The Rose Revolution...once again demonstrated that democracy and liberty are part of the Georgian traditional values that are of vital necessity to the people of Georgia. Georgia, as an

---

<sup>378</sup> Kornely K. Kakachia, "End of Russian Military Bases in Georgia: Social, Political and Security Implications of Withdrawal", *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (50). 2008.

<sup>379</sup> See Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat...", 2009, p. 29.

integral part of the European political, economic and cultural area, whose fundamental national values are rooted in European values and traditions, aspires to achieve full-fledged integration into Europe's political, economic and security systems. Georgia aspires to return to its European tradition and remain an integral part of Europe.<sup>380</sup>

The Concept also declared Georgia's aspirations for the future membership to the EU. Along with the debates on the impediments for Georgia's joining the EU, the possibility of and the necessary conditions for such a membership are beyond the scope of study. However, here it is suggested that Georgia's relations with the members of the EU cannot be excluded from the analysis of its alignment preferences, at least for three reasons.

First, Georgia has established its security policies over its increasing strategic importance through the Europe-Asia transportation corridor that mainly supported by the EU projects; TACIS, TRACECA and INOGATE. As stated in the previous chapter, the pipeline security has been a concern of Western states, increasing the importance of regional security. In this sense the revival of the New Silk Road is 'connected to the maintenance of stability, economic growth and prosperity in Georgia.'<sup>381</sup> That forced Georgia and the EU to a close partnership in building transportation system against the increasing dependency of the both sides on the Russian energy supply.

Second, most of the EU members are also NATO members. And, because the decisions in NATO are taken with consensus, the membership of Georgia to NATO depends in part on the perceptions of European states about Georgia. Therefore Georgia has a huge interest in developing close political and economic relations with the EU states. The more integration into the EU, will bring the more credibility for Georgia in the eyes of Europeans. Since the EU and NATO enlargements have followed each other after the Cold War, the two processes seem in fact inseparable.

---

<sup>380</sup> See National Security Concept of Georgia, 2005 at [http://www.parliament.ge/files/292\\_880\\_927746\\_concept\\_en.pdf](http://www.parliament.ge/files/292_880_927746_concept_en.pdf) (accessed on 08.08.2010)

<sup>381</sup> See National Security Concept of Georgia, 2005 at [http://www.parliament.ge/files/292\\_880\\_927746\\_concept\\_en.pdf](http://www.parliament.ge/files/292_880_927746_concept_en.pdf) (accessed on 08.08.2010)

Third, the reforms to be undertaken for the EU membership are closely associated with those necessary for integration into NATO. For example, it is a precondition for the NATO membership to ensure the civilian and democratic control over the armed forces. In this respect, the reforms covered by the EU conditionality for the membership that aim to develop democratic state institutions, the rule of law and a functioning market economy could also provide progress in the way to conform to the NATO standards.<sup>382</sup> Furthermore, while the question of Abkhazia and South Ossetia seems to be as the main impediments to joining NATO for Georgia, the EU has traditionally insisted on peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts in its around. It is also obvious that the US too, favored the resolution of both conflicts through the peaceful means.

For all those reasons, the strategic alignment with the EU has been crucial in balancing the Russian threat. If the NATO membership is an end for Georgia in securing its survival and territorial integrity, this aim cannot be achieved without integration to Europe. In practice, Georgia and the European states have been able to coordinate their policy for creating alternative transportation infrastructure. But unfortunately, Georgia could not take the urgent steps to provide their support for its EU and NATO membership. Although EU's new Eastern European and Baltic states that shared Georgia's traditional security concern on balancing Russia and had more close relationship with the USA, defended Georgia's position in the EU, the older EU member states remained more sceptical.<sup>383</sup> For example, some members that joined the Union after May 2004, advocated an active EU and OSCE engagement towards the resolution of ethnic conflicts of Georgia and the launch of an EU operation to Russia-Georgia border, but it was blocked by other members which "argued that European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) had not been created to deploy operations on Russia's borders without the latter's cooperation."<sup>384</sup> It is also

---

<sup>382</sup> For the EU conditionality see Mustafa Aydın and Sinem Açıkmeşe, "Europeanization through EU conditionality: understanding the new era in Turkish foreign policy", **Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans**, Vol. 9, No: 3, 2007.

<sup>383</sup> See Dov Lynch, "Why Georgia matters?", **Chaillot Paper** 86 (2006)

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid*, p. 55

important to note that the leading European members of NATO, Germany and France have been opponents of Georgia's membership to NATO.<sup>385</sup>

The Georgian state's level of democracy also limited the hopes for a successful integration into Europe. Because the Western European states were considerably less optimistic than the Bush administration about the character of Georgia's democratization. Critics were increased after the November 2007 events in which Saakashvili declared a state of emergency against the demonstrations by opposition in Tbilisi and closed independent media outlets. While Washington maintained its support to Saakashvili, 'the European Parliament, issued a statement that expressed "its deep concern at recent developments that took place in Georgia" and warned Tbilisi that its policies "run counter to Euro-Atlantic values" and that "democracy, human rights and the rule of law were prerequisites for Euro-Atlantic integration."<sup>386</sup> Few days after the state of emergency was lifted, the presidential election was organized and Saakashvili won just exceeding the 50 percent mark in the first round. Yet, the OSCE election observation mission to this election declared "crass, negligent and deliberate falsification during the vote counting."<sup>387</sup>

On the other side, the failure of Saakashvili's attempts to resolve the frozen conflicts through negotiations impeded advancement in the way of Georgia's integration to the EU. In 2004, when Saakashvili unfolded his willingness to impose its will on South Ossetia, violent clashes began to emerge between the Georgian and South Ossetian forces. Then the pressure from the US and the EU to avoid violence, led him to seek a less aggressive methods.<sup>388</sup> Backed by Western states, Mikheil Saakashvili prepared a peace plan for South Ossetia and presented to the Council of Europe, in 2006. The plan granted the breakaway province broad guarantees of autonomy with the right to elect the province's government by Ossetian citizens. A

---

<sup>385</sup> See Zdenek Kriz and Zinaida Shevchuk, "Georgia on the Way to NATO after the Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict in 2008", Defense and Strategy EU., 2008, p. 107. Retrieved from <http://www.defenceandstrategy.eu/filemanager/files/file.php?file=20673> (accessed on 06.08.2010)

<sup>386</sup> Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No way to Treat..", 2009, p. 34.

<sup>387</sup> *ibid.* p. 34.

<sup>388</sup> Ivars Indans, "Relations of Russia and Georgia: Developments and Future Prospects", **Baltic Security & Defence Review**, No. 9, 2007, p. 135.

three-year transitional period was proposed for integration with the police of Georgia and South Ossetia. However, the plan was rejected by South Ossetia's President Kokoity who stated that the region has been independent since 1991, having no relations with Georgia. He also added that 95 percent of its population -Russian nationals- wants to unite with North Ossetia.<sup>389</sup> On the other side, in the Abkhaz issue, mediation efforts by Miles, the US Ambassador to Tbilisi, between the Abkhaz President Bagapsh and Saakashvili failed, as the former showed no sign of backing away the Abkhaz demand for outright independence.<sup>390</sup> Those failed efforts consequently fed the European States anxiety about Saakashvili's high level of nationalism that was increasing the possibility of adopting a military initiative. Indeed, he often honored The memory of Zviad Gamsakhurdia for Georgia's independence and state building project.<sup>391</sup> As Saakashvili's commitments to democracy decreased after 2007, the EU became disturbing in fear of the possibility of a military confrontation with the breakaway regions because of the rapid increase in state investment in the defense sector.<sup>392</sup>

#### 4.2.3. The Russian Federation: From Cooperation to Confrontation

After the regime change in November 2003 in Georgia, surprisingly, Tbilisi and Russia entered in a rapprochement period in which both recognized an opportunity to establish and improve relations for good neighborliness. Soon Moscow gave assistance to Georgia's attempt to restore its control over Ajaria by subjugating autonomous leader Aslan Abhashidze. In the spring of 2004, when the opposition groups to Abhashidze's rule began to take control of Batumi and Georgian forces started conducting military exercises near the region, Russia offered

---

<sup>389</sup> *ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>390</sup> Elizabeth Owen, "In Georgia, Bush Emphasizes Freedom, Conflict Resolution" **Eurasia Insight**, 2005; <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav051005.shtml> (accessed on 22.07.2010).

<sup>391</sup> Only days after coming to power, Saakashvili declared 2004 as the "year of Zviad Gamsakhurdia." His statements on a Georgian TV on Gamsakhurdia were also significant: "'Within these walls, [Gamsakhurdia and his] generation dreamt of Georgia's independence when others did not even dare thinking of such a thing," he said. "Here lies their main merit." Saakashvili then concluded by voicing the need to "consolidate the nation" and "end the division of Georgian society into rival camps.'" Vicken Cheterian, "Georgia's Rose Revolution: Change or Repetition? Tension between State-Building and Modernization Projects", **Nationalities Papers**, Vol. 36, No:4, 2008, p. 697.

<sup>392</sup> MacFarlane, "Colliding State Building...", 2010, p. 117 .

Abashidze a safe haven in Moscow that the latter accepted. Abashidze flew to Moscow, and Saakashvili declared presidential rule in Ajaria.<sup>393</sup> Then, Russian-Georgian diplomatic relations accelerated seeking to promote a framework treaty that would establish the ground for friendly relations and political, economic cooperation between the two sides. Yet this goal has never been achieved, as Russia opposed the new regime's pro-Western orientation in its security policies.<sup>394</sup> The divergence between Moscow and Tbilisi became obvious in April 2004, when Saakashvili announced that "he wanted eventually to join the EU; the NATO-Georgian courtship continued; the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline was proceeding according to plan."<sup>395</sup> This clear formulization of Western orientation again brought the traditional problems to the agenda.

Russian military presence in Georgia, in this sense, became the first issue of confrontation. In 2005, Russia and Georgia maintained negotiations on the withdrawal of two remaining Russian military bases in Akhalkalaki and Batumi. A deal was brokered in May 2005, as Georgia and Russia signed an agreement on the withdrawal of Russian military bases from Georgia by 2008.<sup>396</sup> By November 2007, Russia completed the withdrawal ahead of schedule; therefore, no Russian troops remained in Georgia except for peacekeepers in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.<sup>397</sup> However, as German suggests, only a matter of months after the completion of the withdrawal of bases that reduced the RF's capability to exert significant pressure on Tbilisi, its interference in the separatist regions increased dramatically.<sup>398</sup> In October 2007, after Russian soldiers allegedly apprehended and beat a group of Georgian police officers, Georgia declared its intention to formally end Russia's peacekeeping mandate in Abkhazia.<sup>399</sup> However Tbilisi could not

---

<sup>393</sup> Betril Nygren, **The Rebuilding of Greater Russia**, 2008. pp. 122-123.

<sup>394</sup> Matsaberidze, "Georgia-Russia: In Search of...", 2007.

<sup>395</sup> Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, "Duelling Honors: Power, Identity and the Russia-Georgia Divide", **Foreign Policy Analysis**, (2009) 5. p. 310.

<sup>396</sup> Colin Robinson, "Update on the Russian Ground Troops", **The Journal of Slavic Military Studies**, Vol:19, No: 1, 2006. p. 29.

<sup>397</sup> Kornely K. Kakachia, "End of Russian Military Bases in Georgia: Social, Political and Security Implications of Withdrawal", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 2 (50). 2008.

<sup>398</sup> Tracey German, "David and Goliath: Georgia and Russia's Coercive Diplomacy", **Defence Studies**, Vol: 9, No: 2, 2009. pp. 227-228.

<sup>399</sup> Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, 2009., p. 311.

manage to force Russian soldiers to withdraw from the breakaway regions where it was not able exert influence at all.

Yet Saakashvili's domestic national goal of reunification of Georgia's territorial integrity became the major source of confrontation between Georgia and Russia that eventually led a military conflict in August 2008. As Saakashvili was moving to regain control of the breakaway regions, he clearly knew that it would trigger a counter measurement by Russia. In September 2005, thus, he declared that "there is 'no Ossetian problem in Georgia', but 'a problem in Georgian-Russian relations with respect to certain territories'"<sup>400</sup>

As suggested in the previous chapter, during the 2000s, Russia's involvement to these regions went beyond the military realm. Besides granting the Russian citizenship to the Abkhaz and Ossetian people, the Putin administration put forth a significant effort for institution and state building in the separatist entities. For example the key security positions in the Abkhaz and South Ossetian administrations were occupied by ex- or current Russian officials who were de facto delegated by state institutions of the Russian Federation.<sup>401</sup> While Russia utilized the separatist governments for imposing pressure to Tbilisi, they were also important for the RF's relations with the Western world as a bargaining chip. In February 2008, when the US and Europe supported Kosovo's declaration of independence, Russia warned that it would retaliate by formally recognizing Georgia's separatists regions.<sup>402</sup> Hence, with all the security and political commitments on these regions that Moscow undertook, the survival of this entities transformed into a subject of prestige for Russia that sought to consolidate its great power status in international affairs.

While Tbilisi insisted on that the Russia's activities were evidence of Russian interference in Georgia's internal affairs, Moscow repeatedly warned Georgia that

---

<sup>400</sup> Tracey German, "David and Goliath: ...", 2009. p. 233.

<sup>401</sup> See Nicu Popescu, "'Outsourcing' de facto Statehood: Russia and the Secessionist Entities in Georgia and Moldova", **CEPS Policy Briefs**, issue: 112 / 2006. p. 6 Retrieved from: <http://www.ceeol.com/aspx/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=adf0c7e85b4349a1b60d17cf295ee0a7> (accessed on 17.07.2010)

<sup>402</sup> Tracey German, "David and Goliath ...", 2009. p. 235



they were Russian citizens and it will not remain indifferent towards the fate of these people. After 2007, the Russian Federation often expressed his concerns on the arms supply to Georgia from its Western allies.<sup>403</sup> Moscow charged Georgia that tried to increase its defense spending and foreign military aid, for preparing a military action towards the separatist regions. In September 2007, Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared that "in the case of aggravation of the situation around South Ossetia Russia will take all the necessary steps determined by its peacekeeping and mediation mission and by its responsibility for the security of Russian citizens"<sup>404</sup>

It is certain that Russia's direct support to the separatist regions of Georgia was also a counteraction to the latter's aspirations to the NATO membership. As the Saakashvili government moved closer towards NATO, it had a dramatic effect in worsening already tense relations between Georgia and Russia. After the April 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest, where it was declared that Georgia would eventually enter in NATO, Russian policy makers made it abundantly clear that further enlargement of the Alliance would be met with hostility.<sup>405</sup> Russia strongly opposed NATO's penetration towards the Caucasus, because the region has been historically the most instable and insecure edge of 'the near abroad'. As Lynch suggest, in Russian strategic thinking there is no separation between the North and South Caucasus that both located in the same security system.<sup>406</sup> Accordingly, since the developments in one area were seen to impact the other, the strengthening US presence in South Caucasus was interpreted as weakening Russian control over the North Caucasus. Fears of foreign encroachment increased, in this sense, by the hostage crisis in Beslan in September 2004. Russian side also believed that if Georgia is politically and militarily enforced, it may be transformed into a direct threat to Russia's stability in the North Caucasus.<sup>407</sup>

---

<sup>403</sup> Ivars Indans, "Relations of Russia and Georgia: Developments and Future Prospects", **Baltic Security & Defence Review**, Vol. 9 (2007). pp. 135-138.

<sup>404</sup> Tracey German, "David and Goliath...", 2009. p. 234.

<sup>405</sup> S. Neil Macfarlane, "Colliding State...", 2010. p. 118.

<sup>406</sup> Dov lynch, "Why Georgia matters?", 2006. p. 50.

<sup>407</sup> Along with the Pankisi issue, for the Beslan crisis, Russian people and some officials directly blame Georgia and the Western powers. Mikhail Filippov , "Diversionary Role of the Georgia-Russia Conflict: International Constraints and Domestic Appeal", **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol. 61, No: 10, 2009. pp.1835-1837.

### 4.3. GEORGIA'S BID FOR A NATO MEMBERSHIP: AN ASMMETRY OF MOTIVATION?

As suggested above, one of the main goals of the Saakashvili regime has been gaining a full membership for Georgia to NATO and the EU. The Saakashvili government tried to hasten the process to join the West that had been initiated by the former president Shevardnadze. However, the progress for joining NATO and the EU must be separated here. For several reasons examined above, the EU membership turned into a more distant target for Georgia. As Cheterian argues, by 2008, the idea of integration with the EU is dropped and being a NATO member became the priority.<sup>408</sup>

The Saakashvili government carried the relationship with NATO beyond the PfP after 2003. In October 2004, Georgia signed an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO that 'allowed the Alliance to provide more assistance on domestic reforms, including defense institutional and policy reforms and political reforms.'<sup>409</sup> In September 2006, NATO launched an "Intensified Dialogue" (ID) with Georgia on the reforms necessary for a possible NATO membership.<sup>410</sup> Then Georgia focused on gaining a MAP (Membership Action Plan) status. Tbilisi hoped that MAP would be granted at the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit. Yet, the summit did not offer Georgia a MAP, instead its communiqué included an unprecedented statement that "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO."<sup>411</sup>

As Kulick and Yakobashvili suggests, 'this carefully chosen language' transmitted 'a stronger commitment even than MAP while at the same time not

---

<sup>408</sup> Vicken Cheterian, "Georgia's Rose Revolution...", 2008. p. 696.

<sup>409</sup> Jim Nichol, "Georgia [Republic] and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications", CRS Report for Congress, 6 March 2009. p. 1.

<sup>410</sup> Jim Nichol, "Georgia [Republic ] Recent Developments...." 2008. p. 3

<sup>411</sup> Jim Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia...", 2007. p. 28.

binding NATO to any MAP timetable.’<sup>412</sup> In the following years also, NATO maintained its ‘open door’ policy, yet its commitments on Georgia’s security problems remained unclear. Here it is suggested that to understand the possibility of and impediments to the Georgia’s future membership to NATO, one should examine the motives of Georgia in its bid for entering the Alliance, and the reflections of those on the members’ side.

#### 4.3.1. Georgia’s Motives for its Accession to NATO

All the study’s findings up to this part, indicates that the main motive for Georgia’s alignment preferences has been securing its independence and territorial integrity against the major external threat by Russia and its functions in separatist ethnic conflicts in the country. Since its independence, Georgia as a small state needed external allies to guarantee its survival. Accordingly, Georgia’s appeal to NATO also followed the same logic. In this respect the Georgian state views the Alliance mainly ‘as collective defense organization’ and ‘the best way to gain deterrence capabilities.’<sup>413</sup> In fact, this inducement for joining NATO seems not flawed, considering that the Baltic States shared similar motives in entering the Alliance in 2004.

What made Georgia a unique case, on the other side, is that the state’s first security goal has been to restore its territorial integrity against Russian influence on Abkhazia and South Ossetia. To provide Russia’s neutrality on this issue, Georgia sought security commitments by Western states that would deter Russia from interference into its internal affairs. Georgia has seen the NATO membership as an instrument, in this sense, hoping that once it becomes part of the Alliance the resolution of conflict became easier for itself.<sup>414</sup> Yet it has been very disputable whether the NATO members prepared to take commitments to resolve these conflicts

---

<sup>412</sup> Jonathan Kulick and Temuri Yakobashvili, “Georgia and the Wider Black Sea”, in **The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and Energy Perspectives** eds, Daniel Hamilton, and Gerhard Mangott, Center for Transatlantic Relations Washington 2008, p. 28.

<sup>413</sup> Zdeněk Kriz and Zinaida Shevchuk, 2008. p. 105.

<sup>414</sup> Kakha Jibladze, “Russia’s Opposition to Georgia’s Quest for NATO Membership”, **China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly**, Volume 5, No. 1 (2007). p. 46.

and accept Georgia into the Alliance. Besides their bilateral relationships with Russia, the internal situation in Georgia also has been an impediment for that. Because Abkhazia and South Ossetia both harboring the Russian peacekeeping forces, have been clearly pro-Russian oriented and they oppose Georgia's NATO membership.<sup>415</sup> In Abkhaz and Ossetian perspective Georgia's relations with NATO create a security dilemma between Georgia and themselves who rely on only Russia. NATO certainly would avoid carrying Georgia's separatist problems inside the Alliance. That is why, NATO Secretary General Scheffer, in 2007, declared that "Georgia should try to settle its internal conflicts to become a member of the Atlantic Alliance."<sup>416</sup>

At this point, many observers consider Georgia's bid as a catch-22: "NATO won't accept Georgia until it resolves the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but Russia -which adamantly opposes Georgia's accession- won't allow their resolution."<sup>417</sup> For that reason, the primary motive of Saakashvili government's policies became to resolve its separatist conflicts by taking the necessary steps urgently. Tbilisi also ventured a confrontation with Russia to get rid of this paradox, through unification with the breakaway regions in order to join NATO.

#### **4.3.2. The Interests of the NATO Members in an Alliance with Georgia**

The Western states all expressed their concerns on the sovereignty and stability of Georgia since its independence. Georgia that located at the edge of the Black Sea and the Wider Europe has become a country which directly influenced the security interest of the European States. As Lynch suggests, a weak and failing Georgia might serve as a source of threats that might influence Europe as well.<sup>418</sup> On the other hand, the revival of the New Silk Road, after the demise of the Soviet Union, further boosted Georgia's strategic importance to the West. Yet, for the US and the EU states, the topics of interest over Georgia varied in some ways.

---

<sup>415</sup> Alberto Priego, "NATO cooperation towards South Caucasus", **Caucasian Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 2, (1), (Winter 2008), p. 5.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid, p.5

<sup>417</sup> Jonathan Kulick and Temuri Yakobashvili, "Georgia and the Wider Black Sea", 2008, p. 28..

<sup>418</sup> Dov Lynch, "Why Georgia Matters?", 2006. p. 67.

The main supporter of Georgia's NATO membership, the United States had the most improved strategic relations with Georgia. After the 9/11, Georgia's importance to the US raised more than to any other European country. Georgia welcomed the US campaign against international terrorism, participating coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the same time Georgia transformed into a certain air corridor and reliable station for USA in the Eurasia. The increasing cooperation brought significant military aid for Georgia. The GTEP and SSOP provided military training and equipment which notably enforced the capabilities of Georgia's national army.

The smooth relations between Saakashvili and Bush, resulted in Georgia's more relying on the US. However this partnership between two regimes could not translated in strong security commitments by Washington to resolve Georgia's ethnic conflicts. The US only engaged in several mediation efforts that failed, as mentioned above. In this respect, George Bush himself expressed the limits of Washington on this issue stating that "'The United States can't impose a solution...nor would [Georgians] want us to."<sup>419</sup> In fact, the US restrained itself from taking an active role in the resolution of conflicts because it did not want to provoke Russia. Through the 2000s, Washington tried to manage its relations with Russia prudently, especially when it needed to cooperate with Moscow in other issues like Iraq, Iran and North Korea.<sup>420</sup>

On the other hand, the partnership between the European States and Georgia became more important after the May 2004 EU enlargement. As the European concern on Georgia's stability and prosperity increased Georgia included in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in 2005. Along with the relationships with good neighborliness, Georgia's position as a transit country has been the reason for material and strategic interest of the European States. Together with the US, they supported NATO's activities through the PfP that aimed to ensure transportation

---

<sup>419</sup> Elizabeth Owen, "In Georgia, Bush Emphasizes Freedom, Conflict Resolution" **Eurasia Insight**, 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav051005.shtml> (accessed on 08.08.2010)

<sup>420</sup> See Kakha Jibladze, "Russia's Opposition to...", 2007. p. 50.

corridors and oil pipelines. From the outset, Georgia attributed a huge importance to oil transportation issue linking it with its national security.<sup>421</sup> It was assumed that the inauguration of the BTC pipeline would boost the Western security commitments on Georgia. However, the events observed since then did not prove these hopes. While the Western concerns on Georgia's stability increased to some extent, the geopolitics of oil also fanned regional rivalry between the opposite axes. Because Russia sharpened its policy more as retaliation for Georgia's support to Western projects. At the same time, the Western European countries with important energy interests in Russia, (i.e., Germany, France), ironically, maintained their rejection of the Georgia's NATO membership advocating that its unresolved conflicts were serious impediment.<sup>422</sup>

The comparison of the motives of NATO members and Georgia for establishing an alliance together indicates that there is a certain asymmetry of motivation. While Georgia's main motive has been restoring its territorial integrity in order to join NATO, the resolution of separatist conflicts of Georgia did not rank high in the Alliance members' agenda. As Coene suggests:

One of the biggest myths is definitely that the South Caucasus and its conflicts are high on NATO's priority list. Furthermore, NATO is often seen as a purely military bloc, some believe the Alliance will intervene in regional conflicts, and some see oil as the sole "NATO interest". Military-related involvement by one Ally is often misperceived or wrongly interpreted as a commitment from the entire Alliance.<sup>423</sup>

Even though the motives driving the alliance between the two sides were different the Western military aid continued to Georgia, mainly by the US. Yet, Georgia assessed the strong West support through the supply of military equipment in another perspective. As Lynch suggests, strengthening the military was an important component of the Saakashvili government's policies. Because Tbilisi viewed the strong armed forces as a leverage over Abkhazia and South Ossetia at

---

<sup>421</sup> See National Security Concept of Georgia, 2005 at [http://www.parliament.ge/files/292\\_880\\_927746\\_concept\\_en.pdf](http://www.parliament.ge/files/292_880_927746_concept_en.pdf) (accessed on 08.08.2010).

<sup>422</sup> Zdeněk Kriz and Zinaida Shevchuk, 2008. p. 109.

<sup>423</sup> Frederik Coene, "NATO and the South Caucasus: Much Ado About Nothing?", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 3 (21), 2003.

least to be entertained in peace talks.<sup>424</sup> At the same time the US and the European states insisted on peaceful means for resolution of the ethnic conflicts. For example after the violent clashes emerged in Ossetia's around, in 2004, they warned Saakashvili that "he would not receive any Western support and would be isolated if he used military force in this crisis."<sup>425</sup> However, Saakashvili pulled the trigger in August 2008 then the war broke out between Russia and Georgia.

Saakashvili's move in 2008, that was not approved by its allies, can sure be evaluated through Walt's hypothesis about the of foreign aid's effects on alliance formation. As stated in chapter one, Walt suggests three conditions that affects the degree of leverage by the state which supply the foreign aid over the recipient's behavior.<sup>426</sup> One condition suggested by Walt is that if there is an 'asymmetry of motivation' between two allies, in other words when the recipient cares more about a particular issue and the relative importance of that issue is lesser to the donor, the ability to influence decreases. For that reason, he suggests foreign aid may sometimes be self-defeating and the recipient, making its military powerful, can behave contrary to the donor's instructions. Even though Russia promoted some conspiracy theories that Saakashvili motivated by Washington to attack South Ossetia,<sup>427</sup> scholars does not credit this argument and suggest that the US did not approve this military action, insisting on peaceful resolution of Georgia's conflict.<sup>428</sup> In addition to that, Saakahsvili's unilateral behavior extended the divides between Tbilisi and its other allies in NATO. Consequently the 2008 South Ossetia War between Russia and Georgia had profound effects in the nature of alliance between Georgia and Western states.

#### **4.4. THE RUSSIA-GEORGIA WAR OF 2008 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS**

A renewed conflict in South Ossetia was, in fact, highly predictable after the second peace plan offered by Saakashvili failed in 2007. As the efforts for the

---

<sup>424</sup> Dov Lynch, "Why Georgia Matters?", 2006, p. 67.

<sup>425</sup> Bruno Coppieters, "Locating Georgian Security", 2005. p. 381.

<sup>426</sup> See Walt, **The Origins of Alliances**, 1987, p. 44.

<sup>427</sup> Karl Meyer, "After Georgia: Back to the Future", **World Policy Journal**, Vol. 25, No: 3, 2008. p. 119.

<sup>428</sup> For example see Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchel, "No Way to Treat..", 2009. p. 35.

reunification of Georgia failed, the Saakashvili government's domestic support weakened. Embattled by the opposition by both the parliament and the Georgian public, Cooley and Mitchell suggest, the Saakashvili administration felt a strong domestic imperative for military action in Abkhazia or South Ossetia in the summer of 2008.<sup>429</sup> In July and August 2008 the situation in South Ossetia sharply deteriorated. However both the Ossetian and Georgian paramilitary forces were responsible for the violence that escalated seriously in the last week of July 2008.<sup>430</sup> While Georgian positions and settlements in the region were targeted by Ossetian separatist militias, Georgia argued that Russia became involved in the conflict by allowing North Ossetian volunteer fighters to pass the Russia-Georgia border and supplying heavy arms to separatists through the Roki tunnel.<sup>431</sup> On the evening of 7 August, Saakashvili unilaterally declared a ceasefire and affirmed that Georgia would give South Ossetia maximum autonomy through a peace settlement. However on the next morning Georgian military decided to use of military force, arguing that South Ossetian forces did not end their shelling of Georgian villages. Soon Georgian forces controlled much of South Ossetia (pop. roughly 80,000), including the capital, Tskhinvali.<sup>432</sup>

In fact, during the tensions that lead the war in Ossetia, Russia had demonstrated that it would not be indifferent to the events if Georgia would use military force towards the breakaway regions. In the last week of July 2008, Russia held a large scale military exercise named 'Caucasus 2008' near the Georgia's border 'that included rehearsal of operations in the Roki district and the delivery of assistance to Russian peacekeepers stationed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.'<sup>433</sup> Russia was totally ready for such a war. After the exercise ended on 2 August, Allison suggests, it seemed that 'the forces remained concentrated and in high combat readiness.' As Georgian forces entered South Ossetia, Moscow arrived to the region in a few hours, changing the balance of power in the battle. At this point,

---

<sup>429</sup> Ibid., p. 34

<sup>430</sup> Mohammad Sajjadur Rahman, "Georgia and Russia: What Caused the August War", **Identity, Culture & Politics: An Afro-Asian Dialogue**. Vol. 10, No: 1, 2009. p. 136.

<sup>431</sup> Roy Allison, "Russia resurgent? Moscow's campaign to "coerce Georgia to peace"" **International Affairs**, Vol. 84, No. 6, 2008. p. 1147.

<sup>432</sup> Mohammad Sajjadur Rahman, 2009. p. 135.

<sup>433</sup> Roy Allison, 2008. p. 1150.



Georgia accused Ossetian forces and Russian troops of starting the war. For Tbilisi, the Georgian forces were ordered to the region after –but only after- Russian troops passed the border. Yet, this suggestion could not gain acceptance in most Western states.<sup>434</sup> It is believed that Georgia, once provoked through shelling by Ossetian forces, was responsible for starting the August war.

Then what did led Saakashvili to take this dangerous step against all the declarations by Russia about its commitments on the breakaway regions' security? Here, some scholars argue that most probably Georgian officials mistook the signals of American solidarity for a serious commitment to intervene.<sup>435</sup> As Antonenko suggests, Washington gave unconditional support to Georgia by 2008, most notably formulized in its efforts to push for Georgia to be granted NATO Membership Action Plan at the Bucharest in April 2008.<sup>436</sup> However, the limits of this alignment remained untested and ambiguous. Cooley and Mitchell, on the other hand, argue that “it is almost certain that Washington did not give a green light to this ill-chosen military action and equally likely that Saakashvili was warned against such a course of action”.<sup>437</sup> But at the same time, the authors indicate that there are various channels to send very different messages to Tbilisi, at any given day, from current and former government officials, lobbyists, and Georgia's supporters in Washington etc. Accordingly, Tbilisi hardliners may have ‘heard encouraging signals from the US sources, whether they came from official channels or not.’<sup>438</sup> This fact demonstrates that transnational penetration's effects may sometimes promote complications and deficiencies in alliances especially when there is an asymmetry of motivation on a particular issue. Because, one side which has more stake in the rising international and domestic problems could interpret the messages of its allies in terms of its own benefit. This is the reason why Cooley and Mitchell called for de-personalizing the relationship between Bush and Saakashvili in terms of promoting a

---

<sup>434</sup> Ibid, p. 1148

<sup>435</sup> See Karl Meyer, p. 119, Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchel, “No Way to Treat..”, 2009. p. 35 and Oksana Antonenko, “A War with No Winners”, *Survival*, Vol. 50, No: 5, 2008. p. 32.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid. p. 32

<sup>437</sup> Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchel, “No way to Treat..”, 2009. p. 35.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid, p. 35

more stable and institutionalized state-to-state relationship between Georgia and the US.<sup>439</sup>

#### **4.4.1. A Five-Day War**

The Georgian offensive to South Ossetia soon led a Russian massive counter attack. By 10 August, Russia deployed 10,000 troops in South Ossetia and over 150 armored vehicles. Furthermore Russian army opened a second front by deploying around 9,000 troops in Abkhazia and also enveloped Georgia from the north-west by sending units of the Black Sea Fleet to the Abkhazia coast.<sup>440</sup> It became the largest demonstration of Russia's military power since the end of the Cold war. However, Russia could not begin to dominate the Georgian forces until 11 August. The Georgian army, this time, proved a formidable enemy that had new technological advantages such as night-vision equipment, modern communication and effective air-defense systems.<sup>441</sup>

However, on 11 August, Russia captured the whole Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while its air planes destroyed Georgian air bases near the capital Tbilisi. Georgia retreated from the South Ossetian territory and requested the US State Secretary Rice to act as a mediator to settle the conflict.<sup>442</sup> Later Russia extended the attacks further to undisputed parts Georgian territory. Russian forces occupied the Gori city near Tbilisi, and advanced to Poti and Senaki on the western coast (see map 1, p. 4). In Poti, Russian army destroyed all of Georgia's key military bases and sank its naval vessels. On August 12, the Russian government declared that the aim of their military operation -coercing the Georgian side to peace- had been achieved and the war was formally ended. French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, played a leading role in the mediation efforts and in the conclusion of the cease-fire agreement on 12 August<sup>443</sup> On 26 August, Moscow officially recognized both Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states. To legitimate its mission in the war on humanitarian

---

<sup>439</sup> Ibid, p. 36-37

<sup>440</sup> Oksana Antonenko, "A War with No Winners", 2008. p. 26.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid, s. 26.

<sup>442</sup> Mohammad Sajjadur Rahman, 2009. p. 136.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid. 136

grounds, Russia took strong commitments for rehabilitation and development of these regions populated by people whom Moscow recognized as Russian citizens.<sup>444</sup>

#### 4.4.2. The Western Steps and Mediation

At the first stage, most Georgians expected that the West would intervene to defend them against the Russian aggression. But they disappointed as it took days for both Washington and Brussels to issue clear statements in support of their country. Only when Russian troops advanced beyond the breakaway regions, Western efforts for mediation accelerated.<sup>445</sup> On 12 August, Sarkozy arrived to Moscow to negotiate ceasefire plan with the Russian President Dmitri Medvedev. The initiative promoted a six-point Medvedev-Sarkozy plan that ruled out the use of force and envisaged that Russian and Georgian troops should return to the barracks while Russia should be withdrawn to the line preceding the hostilities.<sup>446</sup> Although the fighting did not stop immediately, the agreement ended the major-scaled war.

During and after the war, the Western states, suggested Russia's military actions as 'unacceptable' and criticized Russia's disproportionate use of force. The Western capitals also condemned Russia's decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and maintained their call for the peaceful solution of the separatists conflicts. But, as suggested by Mikhelidze, the EU states avoided sanctions towards Moscow, regarding their national interests with Russia on which they have been dependent for energy supply and trade relations<sup>447</sup> The EU only established a commission to evaluate the facts around the Georgia-Russia war<sup>448</sup> and provided a deal with Russia for the stationing of 20 observers from the OSCE to

---

<sup>444</sup> Ibid. p. 136-137.

<sup>445</sup> Oksana Antonenko, "A War with No Winners", 2008. p. 25.

<sup>446</sup> Alexander Skakov, "The August Crisis in the Caucasus and its Consequences", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, 1 (55) 2009. p. 25.

<sup>447</sup> Nona Mikhelidze, "After the 2008 Russia-Georgia War: Implications for the Wider Caucasus", **The International Spectator**, Vol. 44 No: 3, 2009. p. 38.

<sup>448</sup> At the end, the commission published a report on January 2009 that blamed Georgia for the war but also assign partial responsibility to Russia. "EU Investigators Debunk Saakashvili's Lies", **Spiegel Online**, 2009, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,652512,00.html>, (accessed on 10.08.2010)

South Ossetia for monitoring the ceasefire.<sup>449</sup> The European states also kept silent at the EU-Russia summit, in November 2008, about Moscow's military actions in Georgia.<sup>450</sup>

The US criticism on Russia promoted a much stronger wording. Officials from Washington directly indicated that Russia's attacks on Georgia may influence US-Russian relations negatively in the long term.<sup>451</sup> Washington also initiated so called 'naval diplomacy', by sending three warships with humanitarian assistance to Georgia.<sup>452</sup> But it stopped short of sending its own troops and limited its action to the use of diplomatic means. After the war, the US also became the main contributor to Georgia's post-conflict rehabilitation. In addition to the humanitarian assistance supplied through the USAID, the Secretary of State Rice announced a multi-year \$1 billion aid plan for Georgia, in September 2008.<sup>453</sup>

#### **4.4.3. The Post-War Situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia**

In an announcement on 26 August, president Medvedev suggested that "humanitarianism" dictated Russia to recognize the independence of the regions and called other nations also for recognizing these entities.<sup>454</sup> However this unilateral act by Moscow failed to gain support even from its closest allies. Only three days after Russian recognition of the separatist regions, the declaration from the summit of the heads of state of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (comprising Russia, China, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan), included references to territorial integrity and opposition to separatism while endorsing Sarkozy's six-point peace plan. By April 2011, only three other states officially recognized Abkhazia and

---

<sup>449</sup> Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S.", CRS Report for Congress, 24 October 2008. p.19

<sup>450</sup> Nona Mikhelidze, "After the 2008 Russia-Georgia War: Implications for the Wider Caucasus", 2009, 38.

<sup>451</sup> See *ibid* pp. 27-28

<sup>452</sup> Zdeněk Kriz and Zinaida Shevchuk, 2008. p. 104.

<sup>453</sup> Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia..", 2008. p. 30.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10

South Ossetia, apart from Russia; those are Venezuela, Nicaragua and Nauru - a tiny island in the South Pacific.<sup>455</sup>

However Russia continued to militarily engage to both regions. Moscow concluded friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance treaties with Abkhazia and South Ossetia that pledged 'to protect the two republics' borders in return for the right to establish military bases on their territories.'<sup>456</sup> Furthermore, contravening the six-point agreement that called Russian withdrawal to the positions it held before the August war, Moscow declared that it would increase the numbers of the Russian peacekeeper troops to around 3,800 in each separatist region<sup>457</sup> Gudauta base in Abkhazia that was disbanded in July 2001 re-opened and become fully operational in 2009. One year later, in August 2010, Russia declared that it had deployed high-precision S-300 air defense missiles in Abkhazia and other types of air defenses in South Ossetia to protect the breakaway regions' air space against violations.<sup>458</sup> Tbilisi rapidly protested the deployment and accused Russia of changing balance of power in the region, suggesting that it would worry not only Georgia but also the NATO.<sup>459</sup> To sum, the post-conflict military structure bolstered Russian military presence in Georgia and their withdrawal was postponed until an indefinite time.

#### 4.4.4. The Implications of the War on Georgia's Alignment Policies

Analyses over Russia's large-scale mobilized military action to Georgia suggest that one of the main goals of Moscow was undermine Georgia's chances of

---

<sup>455</sup> Rianovosti Online, "Abkhazian, S. Ossetian Leaders' visits to Nicaragua, Venezuela go bust", <http://en.rian.ru/world/20100717/159849958.html> (accessed on 10.08.2010); Michael B. Bishku, "The South Caucasus Republics and Russia's Growing Influence: Balancing on a Tightrope", **Middle East Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 15, No. 1 (March 2011), p. 9 and RFE/RL, "Georgian Minister Eyes EU Membership In 15 Years" [http://www.rferl.org/content/georgia\\_eu\\_membership\\_baramidze/9498036.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/georgia_eu_membership_baramidze/9498036.html) (accessed on 27.04.2011).

<sup>456</sup> Nona Mikhelidze, "After the 2008...", 2009. p. 29. Moscow also ended the CIS peacekeeping mission in Abkhazia, and suspended Georgia's membership in the organisation. The peacekeeping mission then was based on above-mentioned treaties.

<sup>457</sup> Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict...", 2008. p. 11.

<sup>458</sup> "Russia deploys missiles to protect Georgia rebels", **Reuters**, 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE67A26520100811> (accessed on 12 August 2010)

<sup>459</sup> "Russia deploys S-300 missiles in Abkhazia", **Defense News**, 2010, <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4742567&c=EUR&s=TOP> (accessed on 12 August 2010)

NATO accession.<sup>460</sup> Accordingly they argue that Russia tried to show that security in the Caucasus and the Wider Europe cannot be achieved contrary to Russia's interests. On the other hand, a message was sent to the CIS countries which sought NATO membership, namely Ukraine and Georgia, that Russia would not allow them to join NATO, using all the means available including use of force.<sup>461</sup> However the RF's policy of punishing Georgia seemed not to prove successful in terms of influencing alignment preferences of Georgia. Because Tbilisi continued to seek membership in NATO also in the aftermath of the war with Russia.

In fact the president Saakashvili partly confirmed this hypothesis above, on the real goal of Russia, in his interpretation of the August conflict. In September 2008, he stated that “the Russian invasion was aimed at frightening NATO off”, and his appeal to NATO not to show ‘signs of weakness’, which it would certainly do by giving in to the Russian pressure and opposing the Georgian entry.”<sup>462</sup> On the other side, NATO preserved its willingness to improve its partnership with Georgia, in the aftermath of the war. While maintaining the ‘open door’ policy and Intensified Dialogue with Georgia, NATO additionally took some measures against the RF's unlawful behavior.<sup>463</sup> On August 19, 2008 the Alliance declared that it temporarily suspended meetings of the NATO-Russia Council and decided to establish a NATO Georgia Commission to discuss Georgia's post-conflict democratic, economic, and defense needs. The commissions' decisions “stressed that NATO would continue to assist Georgia in carrying out the reform program set forth in Georgia's IPAP with NATO.”<sup>464</sup> At December 2008 NATO foreign ministerial meeting the Alliance members also promised “further assistance to Georgia in implementing needed reforms as it progresses towards NATO membership.”<sup>465</sup> Yet, the Alliance stopped short of offering Georgia a MAP and of proposing a certain process for its membership.

---

<sup>460</sup> See “Russia's Strategy in the War Against Georgia”, 2008, at <http://csis.org/publication/russias-strategy-war-against-georgia> (accessed on 07.08.2010)

<sup>461</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>462</sup> Zdeněk Kriz and Zinaida Shevchuk, 2008, p. 105.

<sup>463</sup> Jim Nichol, “Georgia [Republic] and NATO Enlargement...”, 2009, p. 3.

<sup>464</sup> *ibid.* p. 4

<sup>465</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4

The establishment of the commission was perceived in Georgia as an approval of its aspirations to NATO membership. However, as Kriz and Shevchuk argues, it is also likely that the commission have been created to give NATO enough time so that it could attain consensus about the issue of Georgian membership.<sup>466</sup> If the membership would not be possible for Georgia, the commission may also turn to an alternative special forum for cooperation with NATO. The fact that the Alliance has not offered Georgia a MAP in the following years enforces this possibility. The authors also argue that Georgian politicians tended to overlook the negative impact of the August war on perceptions of Georgia by the Western European states. It is true that some European members could not understand, why Saakashvili chose using force against South Ossetia and they are also doubtful on the factual ability of the country to meet the requirements of the Study on NATO Enlargement.<sup>467</sup> In addition to that, as Allison argues, further militarization of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by Russia, could polarize NATO views on offering Georgia the defense guarantee of article 5 of the NATO Charter. At the same time, Russian diplomacy has already tried to enforce the divisions between European NATO states, such as France, Italy and Germany, and Washington.<sup>468</sup>

While the disagreements on Georgia's membership continued, the US took another initiative to consolidate its partnership with Georgia following the war in 2008. On January 2009, the two states concluded "a new US-Georgia Security Pact, providing assistance in the areas as democracy, defense and security, economy, trade and energy, and cultural exchanges."<sup>469</sup> Yet, Washington, this time, affirmed that the Charter should not to be considered a security guarantee and that security guarantees will come along with NATO membership.

---

<sup>466</sup> Zdeněk Kriz and Zinaida Shevchuk, 2008., p.107.

<sup>467</sup> Ibid, p. 108

<sup>468</sup> Roy Allison, 2008, p. 1165.

<sup>469</sup> Nona Mikhelidze, "After the 2008 Russia-Georgia War...", 2009. p. 39.

#### 4.4.5. New Policies by the Obama Administration and Recent Developments

The government change in Washington in early 2009 certainly brought changes in the priorities of the US foreign policy that influenced the current US-Georgia relations. In fact, the August war between Georgia and Russia emerged as a major foreign policy issue while the election campaign by Barack Obama's Democrat Party was maintaining. At the first stage, Obama sharply responded Russian aggression in parallel with Republican Party's attitude. On 19 August, he warned Moscow that Russia's disobeying the cease-fire agreement would harm the future of NATO-Russia Council, the efforts for nuclear cooperation agreement between US and Russia and the latter's progress towards its memberships to WTO and OECD.<sup>470</sup> Yet, after coming into power on 20 January 2009, the new President exposed his willingness to improve constructive relations with Moscow regarding to take Russian support in other issues apart from Georgia. That indispensably disfavored Georgia's urgency in the Washington's new political agenda.

In February 2009, the Obama administration announced its intention to "reset" relations with Russia that had fallen to its lowest point since the Cold war due to Russia's intervention to Georgia.<sup>471</sup> In this sense, the US tried to settle the issues of Iran, energy, and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons together with Russia. Washington also tried to handle the anti-missile system in Central and Eastern European countries, preserving smooth relations with Russia.<sup>472</sup> The dialogue between Washington and Moscow to rekindle mutual relations began on 8 May 2009, when Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov met with President Obama and Secretary of State Hilary Clinton in Washington. During the meeting, both sides agreed to work on "such paramount international issues as terrorism; nuclear proliferation and the

---

<sup>470</sup> Ahmet Öztürk, "Obama Yönetiminin Gürcistan Politikası: 2008-2010", **Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları Dergisi** (USAK), Vol. 5, No. 9, 2010. pp. 10-11.

<sup>471</sup> Steven Pifer, "Squaring U.S. Policy Toward Russia with U.S. Interests in the Larger Post-Soviet Space", *U.S.-Russia Relations: Policy Challenges for the Congress*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2010. p. 29. Retrieved from: <http://www.amacad.org/russia/russiaConference.pdf#page=33> (accessed on 29.04.2011).

<sup>472</sup> Maia Edilashvili, "Washington's Changed Tone and Georgia's NATO hopes", **Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review**, No. 23 (2010). p 53.



situation in Afghanistan, North Korea, and Iran.”<sup>473</sup> Then in the presidential address to the Congress on May 10 -requesting support for a nuclear cooperation pact with Russia, Obama suggested that “the situation in Georgia need no longer be considered an obstacle to proceeding with the proposed Agreement”.<sup>474</sup> This agreement had been frozen by the Bush administration due to Russian aggression in the August War. Obama in this sense favored good relations with Russia, as he made his point clear suggesting that the level and content of US-Russia cooperation in the Iran issue was sufficient to restart the negotiations for the agreement.<sup>475</sup>

The changing US approach towards Russia led to cooling relations between Washington and Tbilisi. Unlike the Bush administration which suggested Georgia as ‘beacon of liberty’, Obama did not engage in an intensified dialogue with Tbilisi. It took almost two years to meet with Saakashvili at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in December 2010, while the latter expected it to be earlier.<sup>476</sup> On the other side, the US and Georgia relations were de-personalized after the Bush era in which personnel ties between Bush and Saakashvili was prevalent. In this respect, George Khelashvili suggests that the ideological collusion between the US neoconservatives and Saakashvili was over because Saakashvili had little to share with the current administration ideologically.<sup>477</sup> The Author further argues that Saakashvili’s credentials have been strongly shaken due to his mishandling of the military conflict with Russia in August 2008, and the US now could pursue a more prudent approach towards Georgian president, while seeking smooth relations with Russia.<sup>478</sup> In fact, there is some proof for this argument. In the recent years while aid for Georgian recovery after the war continued as before, the US stopped short of supplying new weapons to Tbilisi that would compensate the losses of the military

---

<sup>473</sup> Arthur R. Rachwald, “A ‘reset’ of NATO-Russia relations: real or imaginary?”, **European Security**, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2011. p. 121.

<sup>474</sup> Maia Edilashvili, “Washington’s Changed Tone...”, 2010. p. 65

<sup>475</sup> Ahmet Öztürk, 2010. p. 12.

<sup>476</sup> See RFE/RL, “Obama, Saakashvili Meet On NATO Sidelines”, 2010.

[http://www.rferl.org/content/Obama\\_Saakashvili\\_Meet\\_On\\_NATO\\_Sidelines/2225327.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Obama_Saakashvili_Meet_On_NATO_Sidelines/2225327.html)

(accessed on 25.04.2011).

<sup>477</sup> George Khelashvili, “Obama and Georgia: a Year-long Awkward Silence”, **Caucasus Analytical Digest**, No. 13 (2010). pp. 8-9.

<sup>478</sup> *ibid.* p. 9.

equipments in the war with Russia.<sup>479</sup> The US, worrying of offending Russia, also blocked some defense sales to Georgia by its companies. Tbilisi became disturbed by this situation and in September 2010, Saakashvili publicly asked “Washington to provide Georgia with “defensive” weapons, including anti-aircraft guns and anti-tank rocket-propelled grenades,” but US officials refused his demand, suggesting that the US does not believe that “Georgia is ready for that kind of defense acquisition.”<sup>480</sup> Then Saakashvili warned that, while Georgia could not attack Russia, leaving Georgia defenseless might be a big temptation for Russia to change its government through military means.

Another dimension of the break in US-Georgia relations in the Obama period was that Washington disfavored the policy democracy promotion that sought containing Russia with pro-American regimes supporting their rise to power through “colored revolutions”. As Khelashvili suggests, in the Obama period, the prospects for grand futures of the fledgling democracies began to crumble and strong hopes of rapid democratization in the post-Soviet space shrunk.<sup>481</sup> The ceasing grand strategy of democracy promotion in the CIS area “set Georgia again back to its original ‘geopolitical’ point of departure.” In this sense, Georgia continued to make sense in the context of wider US interests in the Caucasus, i.e. exploitation and transportation of regional energy resources to Europe and securing a stable peace in the region.<sup>482</sup> Mikheil Saakashvili criticized this comeback of the US regional strategy, in his interview to Newsweek that: “I used to idealize America under Bush, when ideas were above pragmatic politics. Now it is a new time, when pragmatic politics are in charge of ideas. That might spoil the America I know.”<sup>483</sup>

Yet, as Georgia preserved its significance in the traditional US interest, there have been some important points of continuity in the relations between Georgia and

---

<sup>479</sup> Maia Edilashvili, “Washington’s Changed Tone...”, 2010. p. 67.

<sup>480</sup> Eurasia Insight, “Tbilisi Pressing Washington to OK Defense Purchases”, September 15, 2010. <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/61934> (accessed on 26.04.2011).

<sup>481</sup> George Khelashvili, 2010. p. 9.

<sup>482</sup> *ibid.* p.9.

<sup>483</sup> Newsweek, “Mikheil Saakashvili : Where Are My Western Friends?”, April, 2009.

<http://www.newsweek.com/2009/04/10/mikheil-saakashvili-where-are-my-western-friends.html> (accessed on 26.04.2011)

Washington. First of all, the US–Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership concluded by the Bush administration was taken up in the Obama period. This charter provided “further US military training of the Georgian army and improvement of interoperability with NATO, as well as greater trade and economic assistance.”<sup>484</sup> On the other side, NATO-Georgia Council continued to function and Georgia hosted two NATO PfP exercises in May 2009.<sup>485</sup> Georgia also preserved its hopes and public support for its NATO membership. Tbilisi maintained its support to NATO’s international forces and US led Iraqi operation. Since 2009, Georgia sent approximately 1000 troops to ISAF in Afghanistan that made the state largest contributor per-capita, while the number of Georgian troops in Iraq reached to 2000.<sup>486</sup>

However, since 2009 the Obama administration’s new stance towards Russia resulted in a decreasing US support to Georgia’s NATO membership. In this respect, Rachwald argues that Washington’s intention to a ‘strategic reset’ in relations with Moscow led to some concessions to Russia i.e. acceptance of the new situation in the Caucasus and recognition Russia’s privileged interest in its near abroad for the sake of cooperation in other important global issues.<sup>487</sup> The Author also suggests that resetting the relations between the US and Russia in the aftermath the August war, means for Moscow that the Washington now approves Russia’s great power status in the global politics. Öztürk, on the other hand, suggests that Washington’s new stance towards Russia falls in line with Western European states positions that object to Georgia’s and Ukraine’s accession to NATO regarding their relations with Moscow.<sup>488</sup> For all these reasons above, in the Obama period, the US support to Georgia’s NATO membership has lost its impetus. In the near future, therefore, it seems not to be possible that the US support for Georgia’s accession to the Alliance

---

<sup>484</sup> James Nixey, “The South Caucasus: Drama on Three Stages”, in **America and a Changed World: a Question of Leadership**, (eds.), Robin Niblett, Chatham House, London, 2010. p.132.

<sup>485</sup> *ibid.* p. 132.

<sup>486</sup> Ahmet Öztürk, 2010. p. 15 and Zdeněk Kríz and Zinaida Shevchuk, “Georgian Readiness for NATO Membership after Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict”, **Communist and Post-Communist Studies**, 44 (2011). p. 93.

<sup>487</sup> See Arthur R. Rachwald, 2011.

<sup>488</sup> Ahmet Öztürk, 2010. p. 14.

would reach the same level again that was observed before the April 2008 NATO Bucharest summit.

## CONCLUSION

Stephen Walt, who introduces himself as “a realist in an ideological age” in his website, critically evaluates Saakashvili’s statement that “in America, as anywhere on earth you can find lots of cynics and realpolitik followers. But in America, idealists ultimately run the show.”<sup>489</sup> He suggests that:

It's easy to understand why Saakashvili said this: he's desperate for American backing and that requires portraying Georgia as a beacon of democracy and freedom and making a none-too-subtle appeal to America's commitment to defend these values everywhere. Why? Because it requires real creativity to divine a powerful strategic interest for an alliance with Georgia, especially when Washington is trying to get Russian cooperation on issues that clearly matter more, like Iran.<sup>490</sup>

Although Walt admits that there are lots of idealists in America who tries to get the US to take on various philanthropic projects overseas for spreading the values of freedom and democracy, he claims that “in the end, realpolitik tends to win out, even if we don't like to say so too openly.”<sup>491</sup> Our case study also demonstrated that neorealist view captures the main important aspects on Georgia’s and the other great powers’ behavior in establishing alliances. Georgia’s strategy of alignment driven by its motive for securing its independence and sovereignty mostly confirmed the neorealist theories’ predictions. In the 2000s, when the alliance between Georgia and the US was forced extended beyond the scope of this analysis to include ‘shared values’ in its base, it felt short in realizing its boosting commitments on Georgia’s security. Then it is important to discuss the theoretical implications of the study’s findings.

### Theoretical Implications

Examining the alignment behaviors of Georgia showed that since it has been a small state of which alignment could not change the result effectively, it remained indifferent to global balance of power. As Walt suggests for the Middle Eastern

---

<sup>489</sup> Stephen Walt, “Department of Wishful Thinking”, [http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/07/23/department\\_of\\_wishful\\_thinking](http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/07/23/department_of_wishful_thinking) (accessed on 09.08.2010)

<sup>490</sup> Ibid.

<sup>491</sup> Ibid.

regional states, Georgia's alignment mostly dealt with the threat by the proximate great power Russia. In this sense, balance-of-threat theory did better in explaining the alignment choices of Georgia than balance-of-power theory. Because, in the long term, Georgia primarily seek to balance the Russian threat that solidified by its aggregate power, proximity, offensive power and aggressive intentions.

Since the Gamsakhurdia years, Georgia particularly preferred to balance Russia rather than seeking to appease Moscow by bandwagoning with it. Even in the external assistance was uncertain, Tbilisi did not avoid confrontation with Russia, in the early independence period. Then, Shevardnadze also maintained this policy, after he turned to Tbilisi in 1992. However, his government was forced to bandwagon with Russia, in December 1993, as Tbilisi lost control of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. To provide Russia's assistance in restore Georgia's territorial integrity Shevardnadze appealed to Moscow and made a deal with Russia. This rapprochement consequently promoted the strong security cooperation with Russia, namely bandwagoning with the most threatening power. The balance-of-threat logic partly captured the reasons for this bandwagoning act, since Georgia remained clearly in the Russian sphere of influence after the Cold War with 'no available allies' at all. At the end, Russia with strong offensive capabilities that permitted a rapid conquest, showed its ability to compel obedience, as the Russian forces confronted Georgian troops on the front line.

Yet, balance-of-threat theory felt short in explaining why Georgia became so much vulnerable against Russian threat more than any other countries within the CIS, since its sole concern on the distribution of external threats in a specific geographic context. For example, Ukraine with the same proximity to Russia could always preserve its integrity and sovereignty, remaining out of the Russian collective security system (CST) from the beginning. At this point Steven David's omnibalancing perspective contributed to explain the uniqueness of Georgia case. Like many other countries in the Third World, emphasized by David, Georgia has suffered from separatist movements which have been in clear collaboration with Moscow. Therefore, the level of threat by the proximate power Russia has not been the only independent variable that directly affected Georgia's alignment preferences.

The conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as the functions of Russian threat had more profound effects in Georgia's alignment choices.

In the years following the bandwagoning behavior, Russia proved unappeasable, while new alignment opportunities emerged in Georgia's around as the Western states began to involve the Caucasian politics. These developments induced Georgia's alignment to shift, in line with balance-of-threat theory's provisions. Since 1998, Georgia adopted a clear balancing policy that aimed at declining Russia's leverage on Tbilisi by gaining the West's support. Tbilisi proved some success in this strategy, as it forced Russia to withdraw its military bases on Georgia's soil. Georgia also attained valuable foreign assistance that was crucial for enforcing its national army and providing its economic development. However, Georgia could not utilize from the alignment with the West in the way to resolve its problems in the breakaway regions. Western states remained reluctant to engage in efforts in conflict resolution and deferred the main responsibility to Russia. Therefore, although the balancing strategy reinforced Georgia's position against Moscow, to an important extent, Tbilisi could not neutralized the functions of the Russian threat on its soil, as Moscow maintained to feed their bids to secede. For that reason, it could be suggested that the balancing strategy provided an incomplete security for Georgia leaving behind a crucial handicap that Moscow could use for retaliation.

During the 2000s, the alliance between Georgia and the West gained some other implications as the instruments of alliance formation suggested by Walt, namely foreign aid and political penetration began to be prominently used. As political penetration channels improved, the US and European states supported the Western educated political figures and their promotion as the new state elite in Georgia, in order to enforce Tbilisi's alignment and dependency to the West. The Rose Revolution cleared Georgia's pro-Western orientation and transformed the country's main goals into being a NATO and EU member. At the same time the military cooperation was enriched between Georgia and the US in the post-9/11 security environment. However after 2006, the instruments of alliance formation

promoted some complications within the alliance. The motivation of the West and Georgia began to diverge; as Georgia after enforcing its army through foreign training programs and military aid, felt an urgent need to resolve the problems of ethnic separatism. It seemed that the Saakashvili government also mistook some signals through transnational penetration channels as he encouraged for a unilateral military action towards South Ossetia. That situation clearly represented the notion of 'asymmetry of motivation' defined by Stephen Walt, as Tbilisi evaluated the Western support in its own perspective and that led to a decline in the leverage that Western states held over the Georgia's government. Tbilisi's unilateral action, in this sense, did not promote the expected results for the Saakashvili government. At the end the national security policies and the commonalities over threat perceptions determined the limits of the alliance between Georgia and the Western states, as balance-of-threat perspective would predict. In short, the case study mostly confirmed balance-of-threat theory's hypotheses.

#### Omnibalancing vs. balance-of-threat:

The study over Georgia also tested, whether the predictions of omnibalancing theory could be confirmed. The most suitable example to be explained in this perspective was suggested as Gamsakhurdia's appeal to Moscow in his last days in power. As it became evident that opposition took the control of Tbilisi against to pro-Gamsakhurdia forces, in the Tbilisi civil war in late 1991, Gamsakhurdia declared his government's willingness to join the CIS. Most probably, Gamsakhurdia thought that Moscow would not allow a coup d'état against the leader of a CIS member state. However Russia declined this request in which it did not view any sincerity, regarding the anti-Russian rhetoric of Gamsakhurdia's policies up to that time. It is significant that Gamsakhurdia waited until the last days before the ouster from power for a rapprochement with Russia. Because it confirmed Walt's suggestion that external and internal all threats must be countered, but states primarily move against the threat 'whichever is most imminent'. At the first stage, while Gamsakhurdia's regime felt secure, separatist conflicts targeting the territorial integrity of the state represented the most urgent threat. Yet, soon before Gamsakhurdia's ouster from



power, Tbilisi itself also turned to a battlefield and that led to a shift in Gamsakhurdia's alignment orientation regarding the regime's interest.

On the other hand, it was also suggested that Shevardnadze's move in 1993 to bandwagon with Russia in face of a civil war with pro-Gamsakhurdia forces that were advancing to Tbilisi, could be evaluated in an omnibalancing perspective. Yet it was not certain that whether Shevardnadze allied with Russia for securing his personal interest or preserving the state's territorial integrity, because, at the same time, Georgia faced the threat of total dismemberment.

#### Democratic effect on alignment behavior:

Interestingly, the study then figure out that as the state building and democratization process advanced in Georgia, the distinction between the predictions of balance-of-threat and omnibalancing were blurred, because the balancing option on the basis of the Russian external threat emerged as the only way for both securing the state interest and the consolidation of the government through providing domestic support. This trend began in Shevardnadze years, as the Georgian public unfolded their willingness on the integration with the West and reached a peak in Saakashvili years. Besides the historical narratives on Georgia-Russia relations, the Russian armed invasions in Georgia's sovereign land after 1989 triggered the Georgians' pro-Western orientation against Russia that was seen as their traditional enemy. In this respect, the leaders in Georgia detected that if they maneuver towards Moscow to consolidate the regime or to appease Russian aggressive intentions, it would led a backlash, namely a considerable decline in domestic support that would erode the future of the government. To be clearer, some examples from the case study are required.

For instance, during 1993 and 1994, there were no strong state institutions in Georgia guaranteeing democracy, not to mention the notion of 'the collapse of state' depicted in Chapter three. Under these conditions, Shevardnadze who was invited to turn to Tbilisi as the leader of state was seen the sole saver of the independence and

the person who can only guarantee stability in Georgia. Therefore, he could make a personal decision to bandwagon with Russia in October 1993, despite the Georgian parliament objection and people's attitude. However, in the early 2000s, when the civil society and opposition groups gained strength, Shevardnadze's softening approach towards Moscow in the face of West's raising criticism on Georgia's level of democracy, fed people's antagonism to the government and consequently it played a catalytic role in the Rose Revolution. Then, Saakashvili government relied on West in order to balance Russia and maintain the domestic support in line with both balance-of-threat and omnibalancing perspectives. Therefore here it is suggested that as the democratic state institutions developed in a country, it will be very hard for its political leaders to omnibalance by bandwagoning with a power that is viewed as an enemy to their national independence and sovereignty. Given the bitter memories of the communist years, it may be a reason of why America tries to promote democracy and open societies in the post-Soviet space.

### **Policy Implications**

Through this study, explaining Georgia's alignment preferences necessitated more than solely examining Tbilisi's threat perceptions, security needs and the imbalances between Russian power and Georgia's capabilities. Because Georgia's behavior, as a small state, mostly influenced by the security policies that the power centers followed and Tbilisi often needed to reformulate its alignment strategy to adapt the changes in the security environment in its around. As Coppieters suggests:

In the case of relations with Moscow, Washington, or Brussels, the remaking of Georgia's international security environment as a result of major shifts in the security policies of these states—from the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 to the enlargement of the European Union in 2004—had a greater impact on Georgia's foreign relations than either of the two regime changes within Georgia had.<sup>492</sup>

The most important setting that affects Georgia's alignment in this sense became the relations between Russia and the Western capitals. Between 1991 and 1995, Georgia was mostly leaved alone by the Western states to manage its affairs

---

<sup>492</sup> Bruno Coppieters, "Locating Georgian Security", 2005. p. 383.

with the RF. Fortunately, the West's engagement since 1995 into the Wider Europe and the Caucasus brought some opportunities to establish multi-dimensional relations with the states apart from the CIS countries. The European states mostly dealt with the integration of the regional states to the international system by supplying necessary assistance through the TACIS program. The most important factor driving the West's attention to the region, on the other hand, became the issue of exploitation and transportation of the oil and gas sources the Caspian basin. In this sense Azerbaijan came to the fore into the interest, while Georgia gained a strategic importance as a transit country for the West. Georgia, in this sense, gave a full support to the TRACECA and the INOGATE projects.

Soon, Georgia and the Western states coordinated their policies through these projects. The EU began to invest the region increasingly. However it has to be noted that while the Western states did not avoid improving trade and energy relations with the region, they remained hesitant to take an active role in conflict resolution in Russia's near abroad. In other words, they sometimes behaved contrary to the Russian interest on soft policy issues, e.g. by building alternative pipelines to Moscow controlled system, but, at the same time, thought that to take bold initiatives to resolve the problems of hard security may promote a direct confrontation with the RF damaging their bilateral relationships. As Antonenka suggests, "for years both Washington and Brussels neglected the so-called 'frozen conflicts' in the Caucasus, hoping against all logic that they would remain frozen forever", not risking the security of their investments.<sup>493</sup>

However, Russia-Georgia war in August 2008 demonstrated that a little spark may lead a larger conflict that would extend beyond the disputed borders and complicate the regional rivalry among the actors locating in a system of counter alliances. Even Western mediation activities that time could stop the Russian aggression towards Tbilisi, an important station of all three current pipelines, the Russian retreat to frozen conflict zones together with the forces of breakaway regions seems not be a guarantee of stability in Georgia. Because Tbilisi would continue to

---

<sup>493</sup> Oksana Antonenko, "A War with No Winners", **Survival**, Vol. 50, No: 5, 2008. p. 29.

perceive that the country has been occupied by the foreign forces in the future, and tend to behave accordingly. On the other side, further militarization of the breakaway regions would always feed their mobilization on the borderlines with Georgia that means another misperception again may lead varying levels of conflicts. A renewed conflict, yet would not promote losses only for Georgia and local populations, but also for Russia and the future of Caucasian regional states as well. The rise of conflicts in the region inevitably enforces the realist parameters in the behaviors of actors involving in regional politics. Consequently, in case of further conflict, the dialogue and cooperation between Russia and West would be endamaged together with the projects for regional integration covering all the Caucasian states which in fact allied with different centers of power. Bringing peace in the region through economic and political integration as being e.g. in Balkans seems to be a much harder task in the persistence of those frozen conflicts that runs forward to further militarization promoting hostile alignments, far away from ultimate peaceful resolutions.

On the other side, the Rose Revolution in Georgia in fact had brought many hopes for democratic transformation in the CIS space along with the developments in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, but the 'velvet' revolutions could not prove their adequacy in liberal transformation of the current order. Chapter four touched upon the question that whether those revolutions represented some kind of a transnational penetration action aiming at 'subversion of regimes' or the pure intent on 'democracy promotion'. Yet, Saakashvili's undemocratic attitude towards the opposition when his domestic support declined around the year 2007, and Washington's unconditional support to Georgia's government in this sense enforced the suspect over the US sincerity in the strategy of democracy promotion. While facing the domestic unrest, Saakashvili government maintained its idealist rhetoric over the world politics based on democratic values, like George W. Bush and his allies in the Iraqi operation who also dealt with the question of legitimacy and domestic opposition to the war. The discursive emphasis on democracy in Georgia, on the other hand, did not satisfy the Western European states that put a big question mark of possibility for Georgia's accession to NATO. Then Tbilisi entirely relied on

Washington and that situation expanded the different attitudes towards Georgia in the Alliance further. In this sense, Georgia's alignment with the US in the late 2000s reinforced through Bush-Saakashvili personnel relations represented rather an omnibalancing strategy based on the regime interest to an important extent. While losing the strong US support to its NATO membership in the Obama period, Georgia now should intimately concern on its democratic development. That would surely bring advantages in Tbilisi's way towards integration to Euro-Atlantic political security structures, at least in the long term.

#### Future prospects:

Examining Georgia's alignment and security policies exposed the fact that Georgia has an identity of 'nation under threat'. The Georgian people, on the other side, perceive Russia as their main enemy against the state's sovereignty and independence and as the occupier of more than 20 percent of the country. In this context, Georgia's strategy towards Russia became by and large radicalized than the state's policies regarding any other countries. As the external threat was so tangible and the power imbalance between two states was enormous, Georgia needed a strong alliance of balancing at any cost and its dependency to its allies, as a small state, hugely increased. For that reason Georgia tried to harmonize its security policies completely with the states that would provide allied support against Russian influence, e.g. by supporting energy transportation projects, NATO's operation in Afghanistan and participating the US led Iraq war. The latter also established the ground for military cooperation between Washington and Tbilisi. On the other hand, because Georgia was bordering instable North Caucasus region within the RF, Moscow has been allergic to foreign influence emerging around its borders, while viewing Tbilisi as a satellite of Western powers. Under these conditions, it has not been possible for Georgia to preserve balanced relations with its neighbor Russia while seeking to ensure its security.

Then what is to be done, in a period when Georgia's NATO prospects are blurred and Moscow recognized two breakaway regions? As Edilashvili suggests,

after the August war, some political forces in Georgia put forward the neutrality option on their agenda and preferred closer ties with Russia, by saying no to NATO membership.<sup>494</sup> In fact, Russian Ambassador to Georgia Kovalenko had announced that “Russia wants to see Georgia be an independent, sovereign and neutral state with neighbourly relations with Russia” at the news conference in Tbilisi on 7 February 2007. Yet Edilashvili indicates that only after the August war that gave momentum to this new rhetoric in Georgia, pro-NATO opposition figures could pronounce the neutrality slogan. However these political groups never enjoyed substantial public support, in Georgia. For example, Irina Sarishvili, the only presidential candidate opposing NATO accession, garnered less than 1 % of votes during the 2008 presidential elections.<sup>495</sup> The Georgian scholar concludes that:

Among many Georgians these developments have only reinforced the government’s earlier assumptions that Russia was behind the moral, if not financial, support for radical opposition appeals in Georgia. With all the diplomatic links broken with Moscow, Russia’s occupying forces still on the Georgian territory and Moscow permanently breaching the 2008 ceasefire agreement, it is no surprise that the above mentioned politicians have been labelled as losers, avengers, or simply traitors domestically.<sup>496</sup>

Those observations indicate that Georgia will go on its way to seek both balancing Russia with the Western states and progress for its NATO membership in the future. However, here it is suggested that Georgia needs somehow to manage its relations with the neighbor Russia by trying to reduce the effects of crises. It is also to Tbilisi’s advantage to improve smooth relations with all the regional states as better as possible not regarding the regional axes against each other. Those moves would make more room for Tbilisi in the regional politics; otherwise Georgia, as a small state will suffer in the power struggle covering the region and its absolute dependency to its allies may go on increasing.

On the other hand, in terms of conflict resolution, Georgia’s attempts to secure its territorial integrity through the allied external support irrespective of the internal dynamics among the ethnic groups in the country, proved little success. Because the external states involved in conflicts only looked for their interest in the

---

<sup>494</sup> Maia Edilashvili, “Washington’s Changed Tone...”, 2010. p. 61.

<sup>495</sup> *ibid.* p. 61

<sup>496</sup> *ibid.* p. 62.

future order of state and behaved accordingly. To be more hopeful, here it is suggested that, in the long term, the Western states favoring Georgia's territorial integrity should put forward substantial projects covering the whole country that regards soft power instruments and favors integration vs. conflict and support Georgia in this way that may remain inadequate. On the other side, Georgia needs long and patience-requiring-years in order to fulfill its democratic transformation and to promote a liberal state order. Purely relying on the balancing strategy yet, would preserve the current status quo in the conflict zones and impede the international recognition of the breakaway territories that seems to be rather a limited object for Georgia.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Books**

BROOKS, Stephen G. and William C. Wohlforth, **World out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 2008.

BRZEZINSKI, Zbigniew K; **Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Documents, Data, and Analysis**, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, New York, 1997.

COENE, Frederik; **The Caucasus: an Introduction**, Routledge, New York, 2010.

CORNELL, Svante E; **Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus**, RoutledgeCurzon, London, 2001.

GACHECHILADZE, Revaz; **The New Georgia: Space, Society, Politics**, UCL Press, London, 1995.

GILLARD, David; **Struggle for Asia, 1828-1914: A Study in British and Russian Imperialism**, Butler & Tanner Ltd., London, 1978.

JACKSON, Nicole J; **Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates, Actions**, Routledge, London, 2003.

LUCAS, Edward; **The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West**, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008.

LYNCH, Dov; **Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan**, Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 2000.



MITCHELL, Lincoln A.; **Uncertain Democracy: U.S. Foreign Policy and Georgia's Rose Revolution**, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2009.

NYGREN, Bertil; **The Rebuilding of Greater Russia: Putin's Foreign Policy towards the CIS Countries**, Routledge, New York, 2008.

SHEEAN, Michael; **Balance of Power: History and Theory**, Routledge, London, 1996.

SMITH, Martin A; **Russia and NATO since 1991: From Cold War through Cold Peace to Partnership**, Routledge, New York, 2006.

WALT, Stephen M; **The Origins of Alliances**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1987.

WALTZ, Kenneth; **Theory of International Politics**, McGraw-Hill Inc, New York, 1979.

### **Articles**

ADAMIA, Revaz, "Nato: Caucasus in the Context of Partnership for Peace", *Perceptions*, Vol: 9, No: 1, March-May 1999.

AKINER, Shrin, "Caspian Intersections: Contextual Introduction", in **The Caspian: Politics, Energy and Security** (eds.), Shirin Akiner, RoutledgeCurzon, New York, 2004.

AKKIEVA, Svetlana, "The Caucasus: One or Many? A View from the Region", **Nationalities Papers**, Vol. 36, No. 2, 2008.

ALLISON, Roy, "Russia resurgent? Moscow's campaign to "coerce Georgia to peace"" **International Affairs**, Vol. 84, No. 6, 2008.

ANABLE, David, "The Role of Georgia's Media--and Western Aid--in the Rose Revolution", **The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics**, Vol. 11, No: 7, 2006.

ANTONENKO, Oksana, "A War with No Winners", **Survival**, Vol. 50, No: 5, 2008.

AYDIN, Mustafa and Sinem Açıkmeşe, "Europeanization through EU conditionality: understanding the new era in Turkish foreign policy", **Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans**, Volume 9, No: 3., 2007.

BAILES, Alyson J. K, Vladimir Branovsky and Pal Dunay, "Regional Security Cooperation in the Former Soviet Area" in **SIPRI Yearbook 2007: Armaments, Disarmament, and International Security**; (eds.), Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007.

BARAN, Zeyno, "Turkey and the Wider Black Sea Region", in: **The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century** (eds.), Daniel Hamilton and Gerhard Mangott, Center for Transatlantic Relations, Washington, 2008.

BARKOVSKIY, Anatoli and Rivanna Islamova, "Where is GUUAM Heading?" **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 2 (20), 2003.

BARNETT, Michael N. and Jack S Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962-73", **International Organization**, Vol. 45, No. 3, (Summer, 1991).

BEISSINGER, M. R., "State building in the Shadow of an Empire-State: The Soviet Legacy in post-Soviet Politics", in **The End of Empire? The Transformation of**

**the USSR in Comparative Perspective** (eds.), Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrot, M. E. Sharpe, New York, 1996.

BIRCH, Julian; “The Georgian/South Ossetian Territorial and Boundary Dispute” in **Transcaucasian Boundaries** (eds.), John F.R.Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield, UCL Press, London, 1996.

BISHKU, Michael B., “The South Caucasus Republics and Russia’s Growing Influence: Balancing on a Tightrope”, **Middle East Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 15, No. 1 (March 2011).

BOLUKBASI, Suha, “The Controversy over the Caspian Sea Mineral Resources: Conflicting Perceptions, Clashing Interest”, **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol. 50, No. 3. 1998.

BORAWSKI, John, “Partnership for Peace and beyond”, **International Affairs**, (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 71, No. 2, (Apr., 1995).

BROOKER, David C., “How They Leave: a Comparison of How the First Presidents of the Soviet Successor States Left Office”, **Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics**, Vol. 20, No. 4, 2004.

BUNCE, Valerie J and Sharon L Wolchik, “International Diffusion and Postcommunist Electoral Revolutions”, **Communist and Post-Communist Studies**, 39 (2006).

CAROTHERS, Thomas, “The Backlash Against Democracy Promotion,” **Foreign Affairs**, Vol. 85, No: 2, 2006.

CHETERIAN, Vicken, “Georgia's Rose Revolution: Change or Repetition? Tension between State-Building and Modernization Projects”, **Nationalities Papers**, Vol. 36, No: 4, 2008.

CHRISTENSEN, Tomas J. and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity", **International Organization**, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Spring, 1990).

COENE, Frederik, "NATO and the South Caucasus: Much Ado About Nothing?", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 3 (21), 2003.

COOLEY, Alexander and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent U.S.-Georgian Relations", **The Washington Quarterly**, Vol. 32, No. 1., 2009.

COPPIETERS, Bruno, "Locating Georgian Security", in **Statehood and Security: Georgia after the Rose Revolution** (eds.), Bruno Coppieters, Robert Legvold, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, New York, 2005.

COPPIETERS, Bruno, "Western Security Policies and the Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict", in **Federal Practice: Exploring Alternatives for Georgia and Abkhazia** (eds.), Bruno Coppieters, David Darchiashvili, and Natella Akaba, Vub Brussels University Press, 2001.

CORNELL, Svante E., "Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective", **World Politics**, Vol. 54, No. 2 (Jan., 2002).

CORNELL, Svante E. "International Reactions to Massive Human Rights Violations: The Case of Chechnya", **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol. 51, No. 1, 1999.

ÇELİKPALA, Mithat, "From a Failed State to a Weak One: Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations", **The Turkish Yearbook**, Vol. 36, 2006.

DARCHIASVILI, David, "Georgian Defense Policy and Military Reform", in **Statehood and Security: Georgia after the Rose Revolution** (eds.), Bruno Coppieters and Robert Legvold, the MIT Press, Cambridge, 2005.

DAVID, Steven R., “Explaining Third World Alignment” **World Politics**, Vol. 43, No. 2, (Jan., 1991).

DEMETRIOU, Spyros, “Rising From the Ashes? The Difficult (Re)Birth of the Georgian State”, **Development and Change**, Vol. 33, No. 5., 2002.

DEMİRAĞ, Yelda, “EU Policy towards South Caucasus and Turkey”, **Perceptions**, 4 (IX), Winter 2004.

DEVDAIANI, Jaba, “Georgia: Rise and Fall of the Façade Democracy”, **Demokratizatsiya**, Vol. 12, No: 1, 2004.

EDILASHVILI, Maia, “Washington’s Changed Tone and Georgia’s NATO hopes”, **Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review**, No. 23 (2010).

EVERA, Stephen Van, “Primed for Peace: Europe after the Cold War”, **International Security**, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Winter, 1990-1991).

FAIN, Stephanie, “Russian Power Brokering, Peacemaking and Meddling in the Georgian Abkhaz Conflict”, **LBJ Journal of Public Affairs**, Vol. 18, (Spring 2006).

FAIRBANKS, Charles H. Jr., “Georgia’s Rose Revolution”, **Journal of Democracy**, Vol: 15, No: 2, (April 2004).

FAWN, Rick, “Russia's reluctant retreat from the Caucasus: Abkhazia, Georgia and the US after 11 September 2001”, **European Security**, Vol: 11, No: 4, 2002.

FILIPPOV, Mikhail, “Diversionary Role of the Georgia-Russia Conflict: International Constraints and Domestic Appeal”, **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol: 61, No: 10, 2009.

FRITZ, Paul and Kevin Sweeney, “The (de)Limitations of Balance of Power Theory”, **International Interactions**, Vol. 30, No. 4, (October-December 2004).

GACHECHILADZE, Revaz, “National Idea, State-Building and Boundaries in the Post-Soviet Space (the case of Georgia)”, **GeoJournal**, Vol. 43, No. 1, (Sep. 1997).

GEGESHIDZE, Archil, “The New Silk Road: A Georgian Perspective.” **Journal of International Affairs**, Vol. 5, No. 1 (March-May 2000).

GEORGE, Julie A., “Expecting ethnic conflict The Soviet Legacy and Ethnic Politics in the Caucasus and Central Asia”, in **The Politics of Transition in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Enduring Legacies and Emerging Challenges** (eds.), Amanda E. Wooden and Christoph H. Stefes, Routledge, New York, 2009.

GERBER, Urs, “Whither South Caucasus: to prosperity or to conflict?”, in **The Caspian: Politics, Energy and Security** (eds.), Shirin Akiner, RoutledgeCurzon, New York, 2004.

GERMAN, Tracey, “David and Goliath: Georgia and Russia's Coercive Diplomacy”, **Defence Studies**, Vol: 9, No: 2, 2009.

GLEASON, Gregory and Marat E. Shaihtudinov, “Collective Security and Non-State Actors in Eurasia”, **International Studies Perspectives**, (2005), 6.

GUDIASHVILI, David, “Nato Membership as Georgia’s Foreign Policy Priority”, **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 4 (22), 2003.

HATİPOĞLU, Esra, “After Empire: Georgia-Russia Relations and the Prospects for Stability in the South Caucasus”, **Turkish Review of Eurasian Studies**, Annual 2004-4.

HENZE, Paul B., "Russia and the Caucasus", **Perceptions (SAM)**, June-August 1996.

HERD, Graeme P., "Colorful Revolutions and the CIS: "Manufactured" versus "Managed" Democracy?", **Problems of Post-Communism**, Vol. 52, No: 2, (March/April 2005),

HEWITT, B. G., "Abkhazia: A Problem of Identity and Ownership", in **Transcaucasian Boundaries** (eds.), John F.R.Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield, UCL Press, London, 1996.

HURREL, Andrew, "Hegemony, Liberalism and Global Order: What space for Would-be Great Powers?", **International Affairs**, Vol. 82, No. 1, (January 2006).

IISS Editorial Board, "Russian bases in Georgia", **Strategic Comments**, Vol: 7, No: 4, 2001.

INDANS, Ivars, "Relations of Russia and Georgia: Developments and Future Prospects", **Baltic Security & Defence Review**, Vol. 9 (2007).

INTSKIRVELI, G. Z., "Constitution of Independent Georgia", **22 Review of Central and East European Law** (1996), No. 1.

ISLAMOVA, Rivanna and Anatoli Barkovskiy, "Where is GUUAM Heading?" **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 2 (20), 2003.

İPEK, Pınar, "The Aftermath of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline: Challenges ahead for Turkey", **Perceptions**, XI, 2006.

JIBLADZE, Kakha, "Russia's Opposition to Georgia's Quest for NATO Membership", **China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly**, Volume 5, No. 1 (2007).

JONES, Stephen, “The Role of Cultural Paradigms in Georgian Foreign Policies”, **Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics**, Vol: 19, No: 3, 2003.

KAKACHIA, Kornely K., “End of Russian Military Bases in Georgia: Social, Political and Security Implications of Withdrawal”, **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 2 (50), 2008.

KEOHANE, Robert O., “Alliances, Threats, and the Uses of Neorealism”, **International Security**, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Summer, 1988).

KHELASHVILI, George “Obama and Georgia: a Year-long Awkward Silence”, **Caucasus Analytical Digest**, No. 13 (2010).

KRIZ, Zdeněk and Zinaida Shevchuk, “Georgian Readiness for NATO Membership after Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict”, **Communist and Post-Communist Studies**, 44 (2011).

KOBRINSKAYA, Irina, “The Post-Soviet Space: From the USSR to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Beyond”, in **The CIS, the EU and Russia: The Challenges of Integration** (eds.), Katlijn Malfliet, Lien Verpoest, Evgeny Vinokurov, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2007.

KOCAMAN, Ömer, “Russia’s Relations with Georgia within the Context of the Russian National Interests towards the South Caucasus in the Post-Soviet Era”, **Journal of Central Asian and Caucasian Studies** (USA), Vol. 2, No. 3, (2007).

KUKHIANIDZE, Alexandre, “Corruption and organized crime in Georgia before and after the 'Rose Revolution'”, **Central Asian Survey**, Vol: 28, No: 2, 2009.

KULICK, Jonathan and Yakobashvili, Temuri, “Georgia and the Wider Black Sea”, in **The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and**



**Energy Perspectives** eds, Daniel Hamilton, and Gerhard Mangott, Center for Transatlantic Relations Washington 2008.

KUZIO, Taras, “Geopolitical Pluralism in the CIS: The Emergence of GUUAM”, **European Security**, Vol: 9, No. 2, 2000.

LARSON, Deborah Welch, “Bandwagon Images in American Foreign Policy: Myth or Reality?”, in **Dominoes and bandwagons : strategic beliefs and great power competition in the Eurasian rimland** (eds.), Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder, Oxford University Press, New York, 1991.

LIGHT, Margot, “Russia and Transcaucasia”, in **Transcaucasian Boundaries** (eds.), John F.R.Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg, Richard Schofield, UCL Press, London, 1996.

MACFARLANE, S. Neil, “Colliding state-building projects and regional insecurity in post-soviet space: Georgia versus Russia in South Ossetia” in **Troubled Regions and Failing States: The Clustering and Contagion of Armed Conflict** (Comparative Social Research, Vol. 27), (eds.), Kristian Berg Harpviken, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Bingley, UK., 2010.

MACFARLANE, S. Neil, “The United States and Regionalism in Central Asia”, **International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)**, Vol. 80, No. 3, 2004.

MACFARLANE, S. Neil, “On the Front Lines in the Near Abroad: the CIS and the OSCE in Georgia’s Civil Wars”, **Third World Quarterly**, Vol 18, No 3, 1997.

MACKINLAY, John and Evgenii Sharov, “Russian peacekeeping Operations in Georgia”, in **Regional Peacekeepers: The Paradox of Russian Peacekeeping** (eds.), John Mackinlay and Peter Cross, United Nations University Press, New York, 2008.

MARTIN, Susan B., “From Balance of Power to Balancing Behavior: The Long and Winding Road”, in **Perspectives on Structural Realism**, (eds.), Andrew K. Hanami, Palgrave, New York, 2003.

MASTANDUNO, Michael, “Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy after the Cold War”, **International Security**, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Spring, 1997).

MATSABERIDZE, Malkhaz, “The Rose Revolution and the Southern Caucasus”, **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 2 (32), 2005.

MEYER, Karl, “After Georgia: Back to the Future”, **World Policy Journal**, Vol. 25, No: 3, 2008.

MIKHELIDZE, Nona, “After the 2008 Russia-Georgia War: Implications for the Wider Caucasus”, **The International Spectator**, Vol. 44 No: 3, 2009.

MILLER, Eric A. and Arkady Toritsyn, “Bringing the Leader Back In: Internal Threats and Alignment Theory in the Commonwealth of Independent States”, **Security Studies**, Vol. 14, No: 2, (April–June 2005).

MITCHELL, Lincoln A., “Democracy in Georgia since the Rose Revolution”, **Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs**, Vol. 50, No: 4, 2006.

MITCHELL, Lincoln A., “Georgia’s Rose Revolution”, **Current History**, Vol. 103, No: 675, (October 2004).

MÖRIKE, Andrea, “The military as a political actor in Russia: The cases of Moldova and Georgia”, **The International Spectator**, Vol. 33, No: 3, 1998.

NERE, Richard, "Democracy Promotion and the U.S. National Security Strategy: U.S. National Interest, U.S. Primacy, and Coercion", **Strategic Insights**, Vol 8, No. 3 (August 2009).

NIOU, Emerson M. S. and Peter C Ordeshook, "Alliances in Anarchic International Systems", **International Studies Quarterly**, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Jun., 1994).

NIXEY, James, "The South Caucasus: Drama on Three Stages", in **America and a Changed World: a Question of Leadership** (eds.), Robin Niblett, Chatham House, London, 2010.

NYGREN, Bertil, "Russia's Relations with Georgia under Putin: The Impact of 11 September", in **Russia as a Great Power: Dimensions of Security under Putin** (eds.); Jakob Hedenskog, Vilhelm Konnander, Bertil Nygren, Ingmar Oldberg and Christer Pursiainen, Routledge, New York, 2005.

ÖZTÜRK, Ahmet, "Obama Yönetiminin Gürcistan Politikası: 2008-2010", **Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları Dergisi** (USAK), Vol. 5, No. 9, 2010.

PAPAVA, Vladimir, "On the Role of the Caucasian Tandem in GUAM", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, No. 3-4 (51-52), 2008.

PARSON, J. W. R, "National Integration in Soviet Georgia", **Soviet Studies**, Vol. 34, No. 4, (Oct., 1982).

PETERSEN, Alexandros, "The 1992-93 Georgia-Abkhazia War: A Forgotten Conflict", **Caucasian Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 2 No: 4 (Autumn 2008).

POSEN, Barry R., "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict", **Survival**, Vol. 35, No. 1, (Spring 1993).

PRIEGO, Alberto, "NATO cooperation towards South Caucasus", **Caucasian Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 2, (1), (Winter 2008).

RACHWALD, Arthur R., "A 'reset' of NATO-Russia relations: real or imaginary?", **European Security**, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2011.

RAHMAN, Mohammad Sajjadur, "Georgia and Russia: What Caused the August War", **Identity, Culture & Politics: An Afro-Asian Dialogue**. Vol. 10, No: 1, 2009.

REACH, Rolan, "Recognition of States: The collapse of Yugoslavia and Soviet Union", **European Journal of International Law**, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1993.

ROBINSON, Colin, "Update on the Russian Ground Troops", **The Journal of Slavic Military Studies**, Vol: 19, No: 1, 2006.

SAGRAMASO, Domitilla, "Russian Peacekeeping Policies", in **Regional Peacekeepers: The Paradox of Russian Peacekeeping** (eds.), John Mackinlay and Peter Cross, United Nations University Press, New York, 2008.

SAKWA, Richard and Mark Webber, "The Commonwealth of Independent States, 1991-1998: Stagnation and Survival", **Europe-Asia Studies**, Vol. 51, No. 3, (May 1999).

SAMMUT, Dennis, "Love and Hate in Russian-Georgian Relations", **Helsinki Monitor**, Vol. 14, No. 1, (Jan. 2003).

SCHWELLER, Randall L., "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In", **International Security**, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer, 1994).

SHAIHUTDINOV, Marat E., and Gregory Gleason, "Collective Security and Non-State Actors in Eurasia", **International Studies Perspectives**, (2005), 6.

SKAKOV, Alexander, "The August Crisis in the Caucasus and its Consequences", **Central Asia and the Caucasus**, 1 (55) 2009.

SMITH, Graham, "The Masks of Proteus: Russia, Geopolitical Shift and the New Eurasianism", **Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers**, New Series, Vol. 24, No. 4., 1999.

SPLIDSBOEL-HANSEN, Flemming, "GUUAM and the Future of CIS Military Cooperation", **European Security**, Vol: 9, No: 4, 2000.

STEWART, Susan, "The Role of the United Nations in the Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict", **Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe**, 2003, No: 2.

TOFT, Monica D., "Multinationality, Regions and State-Building: The Failed Transition in Georgia", **Regional & Federal Studies**, Vol. 11, No. 3, (Autumn, 2001).

TSYGANKOV, Andrei P. and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, "Duelling Honors: Power, Identity and the Russia–Georgia Divide", **Foreign Policy Analysis**, (2009) 5.

TUDOROIU, Theodor, "Rose, Orange, and Tulip: The Failed post-Soviet Revolutions", **Communist and post-Communist Studies**, 40 (2007).

VOITOVICH, Sergei A., "The Commonwealth of Independent States: An Emerging Institutional Model", **European Journal of International Law**, Vol. 4, No. 1, (1993).

VUJAČIĆ, Veljko, Historical Legacies, "Nationalist Mobilization, and Political Outcomes in Russia and Serbia: A Weberian View", **Theory and Society**, Vol. 25, No. 6, (Dec., 1996).

WALT, Stephen M., "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power", **International Security**, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Spring, 1985).

WALT, Stephen M., "Alliance Formation in Southwest Asia: Balancing and Bandwagoning in Cold War Competition", in **Dominoes and bandwagons : strategic beliefs and great power competition in the Eurasian rimland** (eds.), Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder, Oxford University Press, New York, 1991.

WALT, Stephen M., "Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia", **International Organization**, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Spring, 1988).

WALT, Stephen M., "Why Alliances Endure or Collapse", **Survival**, Vol. 39, No. 1, (Spring 1997).

WAY, Lucan, "State power and Autocratic Stability: Armenia and Georgia Compared", in **The Politics of Transition in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Enduring Legacies and Emerging Challenges** (eds.), Amanda E. Wooden and Christoph H. Stefes, Routledge, New York, 2009.

WEINSTEIN, Adam, "Russian Phoenix: The Collective Security Treaty Organization", **The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations**, 8, (2007).

WIVEL, Anders, "Balancing against Treats or Bandwagoning with Power? Europe and the Transatlantic relationship after the Cold War", **Cambridge Review of International Affairs**, Vol. 21, No. 3, (September 2008).

WOHLFORTH, William C., "Revisiting Balance of Power Theory in Central Eurasia", In **Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in 21. Century** (eds.), T. V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, Michael Forthman, Stanford University Press, Stanford-California, 2004.

WRIGHT, John F. R., "The Geopolitics of Georgia", in **Transcaucasian Boundaries** (eds.) John F.R.Wright, Suzanne Goldenberg and Richard Schofield, UCL Press, London, 1996.

YAKOBASHVILI, Temuri, "Georgia's Path to Nato", in **Next Steps in Forging a Euroatlantic Strategy for the Wider Black Sea** (eds.), Ronald D. Asmus, The German Marshall Fund of United States, Washington, 2006.

YETIV, Steve, "The Travails of Balance of Power Theory: The United States in the Middle East", **Security Studies**, Vol. 15, No. 1, (April 2006).

### **Research Papers, Reports and Policy Briefs**

ALIEVA, Leila, "Reshaping Eurasia: Foreign Policy Strategies and Leadership Assets in Post-Soviet South Caucasus", **UC Berkeley: Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies**, Winter 1999-2000, Retrieved from: <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/53q654p5> (accessed on 06.03.2010).

CORNELL, Svante E., "NATO's Role in South Caucasus Regional Security", **Turkish Policy Quarterly**, Uppsala 2004. Retrieved from: <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/publications/2004/TPQ.pdf> 132 (accessed on 15.07.2010).

CUTLER, Robert M., "Georgia/Abkhazia", **Self-Determination Conflict Profile**, Retrieved from: <http://selfdetermine.irc-online.org/pdf/overview/OVabkhaz.pdf> (accessed on 30.03.2010).

DE HAAS, Marcel, "Current Geostrategy in the South Caucasus", **Power and Interest News Report**, December 15, 2006, Retrieved from: <http://gees.org/documentos/Documen-01905.pdf> (accessed on 16.07.2010).

DEVDERIANI, Jaba and Blanka Hancilova, "Georgia's Pankisi Gorge: Russian, US and European Connections", **CEPS Policy Briefs**, No: 23 - June 2002, Retrieved from: <http://aei.pitt.edu/1985/01/PB23.PDF> (accessed on 17.07.2010).

JANSEN, Dinah, "The Conflict between Self-Determination and Territorial Integrity: The South Ossetian Paradigm", **Centre for Foreign Policy Studies**, 2008.

<http://centreforforeignpolicystudies.dal.ca/pdf/gradsymp09/Jansen.pdf> (accessed on 27.02.2010).

JOHNSON, William T. and Thomas-Durell Young, "Partnership for Peace: Discerning Fact from Fiction" Working Paper, **Strategic Studies Institute**, U.S. Army War College, 1994, Retrieved from: <https://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/PUB172.pdf> (accessed on 15.07.2010).

KRIZ, Zdenek and Zinaida Shevchuk, "Georgia on the Way to NATO after the Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict in 2008", **Defense and Strategy EU.**, 2008, Retrieved from <http://www.defenceandstrategy.eu/filemanager/files/file.php?file=20673> (accessed on 06.08.2010).

LEONARD, Mark and Charles Grant, "Georgia and the EU: Can Europe's Neighbourhood Policy Deliver?" **Centre for European Reform: Policy Brief**, September 2005, Retrieved from: <http://www.cer.org.uk/pdf/policybrief%5Fgeorgia%5Fsept05.pdf> (accessed on 24.06.2010).

LYNCH, Dov, "Why Georgia matters?", **Chaillot Paper** 86 (2006).

MATSABERIDZE, Malkhaz, "Georgia and Russia: In Search of Civilized Relations", **CA&CC Press**, 2007, [http://www.ca-c.org/online/2007/journal\\_eng/cac-05/07.shtml](http://www.ca-c.org/online/2007/journal_eng/cac-05/07.shtml) (accessed on 26.02.2010).



MATSABERIDZE, Malkhaz, "Russia and Georgia: Post-Soviet Metamorphoses of Mutual Relations", **CA&CC Press**, 2007, Retrieved from: [http://www.ca-c.org/online/2008/journal\\_eng/cac-05/14.shtml](http://www.ca-c.org/online/2008/journal_eng/cac-05/14.shtml) (accessed on 14.04.2010).

MIRIMANOVA, Natalia, "Between pragmatism and idealism: businesses coping with conflict in the South Caucasus", **L. Business L. Peace D.P. Sector**, 2006, Retrieved from: [http://www.international-alert.org/pdfs/lblp\\_South\\_Caucasus.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/pdfs/lblp_South_Caucasus.pdf) (accessed on 14.07.2010).

MORANDI, Maura, "Approaching the Conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia: Different Perceptions", **IICP Working Paper Series**, 2008/3.

NICHOL, Jim, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for US Interests", **CRS Report for Congress**, 1 February 2007.

NICHOL, Jim, "Georgia [Republic] and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications", **CRS Report for Congress**, 6 March 2009.

NICHOL, Jim, "Georgia [Republic]: Recent Developments and U.S. Interest" **CRS Report for Congress**, 21 May 2008.

NICHOL, Jim, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S.", **CRS Report for Congress**, 24 October 2008.

PHILLIPS, David L., "Stability, Security and Sovereignty in the Republic of Georgia"; The Report by **the Council on Foreign Relations-Center for Preventive Action**, 2004. Retrieved from: [http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/RESSpecNet/14821/ipublicationdocument\\_singledocument/EB8A4495-D15D-40AC-8BC5-9B6832FE53F5/en/2004-01\\_Georgia.pdf](http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/RESSpecNet/14821/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/EB8A4495-D15D-40AC-8BC5-9B6832FE53F5/en/2004-01_Georgia.pdf) (accessed on 14.07.2010).

PIFER, Steven, "Squaring U.S. Policy Toward Russia with U.S. Interests in the Larger Post-Soviet Space", **U.S.-Russia Relations: Policy Challenges for the Congress**, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2010. p. 29. Retrieved from: <http://www.amacad.org/russia/russiaConference.pdf#page=33> (accessed on 29.04.2011).

POPESCU, Nicu, "'Outsourcing' de facto Statehood: Russia and the Secessionist Entities in Georgia and Moldova", **CEPS Policy Briefs**, issue: 112 / 2006. Retrieved from: <http://www.ceeol.com/asp/getdocument.aspx?logid=5&id=adf0c7e85b4349a1b60d17cf295ee0a7> (accessed on 17.07.2010).

POPJANEVSKI, Johanna, "Russian troop-withdrawal in light of international law", **Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies**, 2005, Retrieved from: [http://gfsis.net/pub/files/publications\\_security/Popjanevski\\_Russian%20Troop-withdrawal%20in%20Light%20of%20International%20Law.doc](http://gfsis.net/pub/files/publications_security/Popjanevski_Russian%20Troop-withdrawal%20in%20Light%20of%20International%20Law.doc) (accessed on 17.07.2010).

SABANADZE, Natalie, International Involvement in the South Caucasus, **ECMI Working Paper**, No 15, February 2002.

TARKHAN-MOURAVI, George, "The Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict in a Regional Context", **Institute for Policy Studies**, 1998, Retrieved from: [http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002157/01/IPS\\_Abkhaz\\_paper\\_jav.pdf](http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002157/01/IPS_Abkhaz_paper_jav.pdf) (accessed on 14.07.2010).

WALT, Stephen M., Keeping the World Off Balance: Self Restraint and U.S. Foreign Policy, **John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty Research Working Paper Series**, October 2000, [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=253799](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=253799) (accessed on 15.01.2010).

WHEATLEY, Jonathan, "Elections and Democratic Governance in the Former Soviet Union: The Case of Georgia", **Berliner Osteurope Info**, 2004, Retrieved from: [http://www.oei.fu-berlin.de/en/projekte/cscqa/downloads/jw\\_pub\\_boi.pdf](http://www.oei.fu-berlin.de/en/projekte/cscqa/downloads/jw_pub_boi.pdf) (accessed on 15.04.2010).

YOUELL, Melanie, "The Peculiarities of Fourth-Party Intervention: The Cases of South Ossetia, Transdnistria and Abkhazia", **Bologna Center Journal of International Affairs**, 2009. Retrieved from: <http://bcjournal.org/2007/the-peculiarities-of-fourth-party-intervention/> (accessed on 21 May 2010).

### **Newspapers and News Portals**

Defense News.com, "Russia deploys S-300 missiles in Abkhazia", <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4742567&c=EUR&s=TOP> (accessed on 12.08.2010).

Moscow-Pullman Daily News, "Georgian Leader Blames City's Fall On Russia", September 28, 1993.

New Strait Times, September, 17, 1991.

New Strait Times; "Georgia wants to join new group", December 25, 1991.

New Strait Times, 20 Oct 1993.

Newsmax.com, "Soros downplays role in Georgia Revolution", June 1, 2005. <http://archive.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2005/5/31/164945.shtml> (accessed on 30.07.2010).

Newsweek, “Mikheil Saakashvili : Where Are My Western Friends?”, April 11, 2009. <http://www.newsweek.com/2009/04/10/mikheil-saakashvili-where-are-my-western-friends.html> (accessed on 26.04.2011).

NY Times, “Pact with Russia Bedevils Georgians”, December 9, 1993. <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/09/world/pact-with-russia-bedevils-georgian.html> (accessed on 15.04.2010).

NY Times; “As Centralized Rule Wanes, Ethnic Tension Rises Anew in Soviet Georgia”, Oct., 2, 1991, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/10/02/world/as-centralized-rule-wanes-ethnic-tension-rises-anew-in-soviet-georgia.html?pagewanted=all> (accessed on 15.04.2010).

NY Times; “Soviet Turmoil; Soviet Georgia Chief, In Quest of Freedom, Sees Only Enemies”, Sep., 9, 1991 <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/09/09/world/soviet-turmoil-soviet-georgia-chief-in-quest-of-freedom-sees-only-enemies.html?pagewanted=all> (accessed on 15.04.2010).

Reuters, “Russia deploys missiles to protect Georgia rebels”, August 11, 2010. <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE67A26520100811> (accessed on 12.08.2010).

Rianovosti Online, “Abkhazian, S. Ossetian Leaders’ visits to Nicaragua, Venezuela go bost”, July 17, 2010. <http://en.rian.ru/world/20100717/159849958.html> (accessed on 10.08.2010).

Spiegel Online, “EU Investigators Debunk Saakashvili's Lies”, (10.01.2009) <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,652512,00.html>, (accessed on 10.08.2010).

Spiegel Online; Road to War in Georgia: The Chronical of a Caucasian Tragedy, (25.08.2008), <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,574812-3,00.html> (accessed on 12.03.2010).

## Internet Sources

Blagov, Sergei, “US-Georgian Security Cooperation Agreement Provokes Outcry in Russia”, **Eurasia Insight**, 2003.

<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav041603a.shtml> (accessed on 12.04.2010).

CSIS, “Russia's Strategy in the War Against Georgia”, 2008.

<http://csis.org/publication/russias-strategy-war-against-georgia> (accessed on 07.08.2010).

Eurasia Insight, “Pro-Russian Georgian Officers Impede US Military Training Program”, July 2002.

<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav072902b.shtml> (accessed on 12.07.2010).

Eurasia Insight, “States in Central Asia, Caucasus Brace For Iraq Blitz Consequences”, March 2003.

<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav032003.shtml>. (accessed on 12.07.2010).

Eurasia Insight, “Tbilisi Pressing Washington to OK Defense Purchases”, September 15, 2010. <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/61934> (accessed on 26.04.2011).

European Commission, “External relations; Georgia”,

[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/georgia/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/georgia/index_en.htm) (accessed on 24.06.2010).

Georgian Biography, “Mikheil Saakashvili”,

<http://www.georgianbiography.com/bios/s/saakashvili.htm> (accessed on 28.07.2010).

Georgian Biography, “Zviad Gamsakhurdia”,  
<http://www.georgianbiography.com/bios/g/gamsakhurdia2.htm> (accessed on 5 March 2010).

Georgian Parliament, “National Security Concept of Georgia”, 2005,  
[http://www.parliament.ge/files/292\\_880\\_927746\\_concept\\_en.pdf](http://www.parliament.ge/files/292_880_927746_concept_en.pdf) (accessed on 08.08.2010).

Kandelaki, Giorgi, “Shevardnadze's Chisinau Concessions Shatter Georgia's Political Unity” **Eurasia Insight**, 2002.  
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav100902.shtml> (accessed on 12.07.2010).

Kuzio, Taras and Sergei Blagov, “GUUAM Makes Comeback Bid With US Support”, **Eurasia Insight**, 2003.  
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav070703.shtml> (accessed on 16.07.2010).

Kuzio, Taras, “NATO Reevaluates Strategic Considerations in Caucasus, Central Asia”, **Eurasia Insight**, 2001. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.taraskuzio.net/media9\\_files/12.pdf](http://www.taraskuzio.net/media9_files/12.pdf) (accessed on 15.07.2010).

NATO Handbook, Chapter 2: The Transformation of the Alliance,  
<http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb020201.htm> (accessed on 3 July 2010).

NATO's relations with Georgia,  
[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_38988.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm) (accessed on 14.05.2010).

Owen, Elizabeth, “In Georgia, Bush Emphasizes Freedom, Conflict Resolution” **Eurasia Insight**, 2005,  
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav051005.shtml> (accessed on 08.08.2010).

RFE/RL, “Georgian Minister Eyes EU Membership in 15 Years”, 2011.  
[http://www.rferl.org/content/georgia\\_eu\\_membership\\_baramidze/9498036.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/georgia_eu_membership_baramidze/9498036.html)  
(accessed on 27.04.2011).

RFE/RL, “Obama, Saakashvili Meet On NATO Sidelines”, 2010.  
[http://www.rferl.org/content/Obama\\_Saakashvili\\_Meet\\_On\\_NATO\\_Sidelines/2225327.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Obama_Saakashvili_Meet_On_NATO_Sidelines/2225327.html) (accessed on 25.04.2011).

RFE/RL, “Shevardnadze Interview -- 'Eradicating Corruption Is Not Enough To Sustain A Country'”, <http://origin.rferl.org/content/article/1051300.html> (accessed on 29.07.2010).

The White House Web Archive, “President Addresses and Thanks Citizens in Tbilisi, Georgia” [http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050510\\_2.html](http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050510_2.html) (accessed on 08.08.2010).

The White House Web Archive, “President and President Saakashvili Discuss NATO, Democracy”, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/05/20050510.html> (accessed on 05.08.2010).

US Department of Defense: “Georgia Train and Equip Program Begins” <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=3326> (accessed on 12.07.2010).

Van Oss, Alex, “Georgia: Looking Back at the Rose Revolution”, Eurasia Insight, 2009, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav123009.shtml> (accessed on 30.07.2010).

Walt, Stephen M., “Department of Wishful Thinking”,  
[http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/07/23/department\\_of\\_wishful\\_thinking](http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/07/23/department_of_wishful_thinking)  
(accessed on 09.08.2010).