

Democratization in the Post-Soviet Space:

A Case Study of the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine

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In December of 1991, the once feared superpower, The Soviet Union (USSR), fell leaving its former socialist republics to fend for themselves with their futures unknown. This action led to a period known as the Color Revolutions where former Soviet Republics descended onto the path of democracy due to intense public protest and the collapse of the former communist governments. Some were quite successful like the Orange Revolution of Ukraine and the Rose Revolution of Georgia, but many other revolutions in the region left much to be desired, with many achieving little to no democracy. This disparity led to the research question; why were some post-Soviet states more successful at democratic consolidation while others are still struggling? This has been a research topic since the dissolution of the USSR and even more so after the mixed successes of the color revolutions that swept through the region in the early 21st century. The previous research has led to two theories that can explain a great portion as to why there is such differing levels. Elite theory and democratic consolidation theory provide insight concerning the power that domestic political actors have during the transition and consolidation process. Therefore, the analytic framework can explain the actions and behaviors of domestic actors, particularly elites, and their role in a democratizing state. Yet, it does not account for foreign military intervention and aggression and how that affects democratization within a state. This will be seen in the case studies of the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine.

Literature Review

Concerning the literature on Democratic Consolidation within the Post-Soviet States, there seems to be an agreement amongst scholars concerning the role of state actors and a state's journey towards becoming a liberal democracy. There is a general consensus amongst scholars that state actors were key in either the advancement or decline of democratic consolidation. Yet, this is where the agreement ends and a schism between the scholars starts to form. The first camp

of scholars argues that external state actors are the reason why some states have advanced towards democracy and others reverted. The second camp argues that its domestic political actors that have influenced the process of democratic consolidation. Therefore, the current state of the literature remains to leave little to no consensus due to the disagreement between scholars concerning the power and influence of geo-political and domestic actors.

Geopolitical Actors

As previously mentioned, the first camp of scholars argue that geopolitical actors are the reason as to why some states have experienced a significant amount of democratic consolidation while others seem to have become stagnant or have weakened considerably. According to scholars O'Dowd and Dimitrova, a geo-political actor is an external state with considerable influence over a certain geographical region (O'Dowd and Dimitrova 2011). In the case of the Post-Soviet space, this includes the European Union and the Russian Federation. The schism further widens as scholars' debate on which geo-political actor retains greater influence over post-Soviet states. Scholars like Pidham and Dimitrova argue that the most influential geo-political actor in the Post-Soviet space is the European Union due to its economic status and the opportunities that come with it. Others like Jackson, Ziegler, and Petersheim argue that the Russian Federation remains to be the most-influential geo-political actor due to its cultural, linguistic, and historical hegemony as well as new approaches like the use of frozen conflicts to prevent further democratic consolidation. Therefore, the literature does not provide an answer to which geo-political influence is stronger but rather continues to leave no consensus.

European Union

The first group of scholars, led by scholars Pidham and Dimitrova, have chosen the European Union as the main geopolitical actor in the region due to its trillion-dollar market and

the current want and need for access by Post-Soviet states. In order to gain access into this market, regulations were created by the European Union that applying states must adhere to in order to be granted membership. The Copenhagen European Council Consensus of 1993 outlines that a state must have sufficient democratic consolidation along with other factors to be inducted as a member of the European Union (Copenhagen Criteria 1993). In order for negotiations to even begin, democratic consolidation must have been met (Copenhagen Criteria 1993).

Pidham, a scholar studying the transitional process from communism to democracy, argues that the EU uses the leverage of sufficient democratization as a method to keep other newly democratic states in control with conditional acceptance into the European Union (Pidham 2004). These rules were deemed to be semi- successful as previous studies have shown that post-Soviet states whom were granted membership into the European Union have higher ratings of democratic consolidation compared to other states who have either not been granted nor applied for membership. EU Membership is not the only method the European Union uses to influence democratic consolidation over post-Soviet states. The European Union has dispersed millions of dollars into democratic consolidation projects into the Central Asian states as well as current applicants into the European Union (Jackson 2014).

Within this specific argument, discrepancies begin to arise. Some scholars like Petersheim, find the Copenhagen European Council Consensus to be too broad due to an absence of a clear definition for what sufficient democratic consolidation is (Petersheim 2012). The lack of an exact definition creates an issue of how well democracy is actually being consolidated within post-soviet spaces. For example, over the past few years, scholars have noticed a significant backslide in democratic consolidation in former soviet-spaces. This specific backslide creates skepticism amongst scholars whether the rules and regulations outlined in the

Copenhagen European Council Consensus of 1993 were actually useful in the promotion of democracy in former Soviet spaces (Cianetti, Dawson, Hanley 2018). Also, scholars like Sharshenova have noticed that the European Union's financial aid programs to former Soviet republics in Central Asia have fallen short; for example, there are a diverse number of financial aid programs but the democracy driven programs are often avoided when it comes to sensitive matters (Sharshenova 2017).

While some scholars still argue that the European Union maintains a significant amount of influence within the region, others scholars refute this argument by stating that the European Union was never actually successful in the actual promotion of democracy throughout the post-Soviet space. This counter-argument not only affects the argument that the European Union is a strong geo-political actor within the post-Soviet space but their influence on the varying levels of democratic consolidation within the post-Soviet bloc. Considering the European Union's economic capabilities and historical geo-political influence, it is almost positive that they would have some sort of significant influence over the consolidation of democracy within Post-Soviet states. Yet, the scholars whom refute the European Union argument, like Petersheim, Jackson, and Ziegler contend that The Russian Federation is the real reason why democratic consolidation remains to be a question within the region.

The Russian Federation

The second camp of scholars, spearheaded by Jackson and Ziegler, argue that the Russian Federation maintains significant influence over former states of the Soviet Union. The Russian Federation maintains a cultural, linguistic, and historical, political, and economic hegemon in the region. This can be seen in all sectors like the entertainment industry, financial aid, the promotion of Russian language through Nongovernmental Organizations, and military aid or

intervention. Russia's interest in the near abroad, led by Putin and his allies, inherently has affected the process of democratization in the post-soviet space. Some of the most famous frozen conflicts are the presence of Russian Peacekeepers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia and in Crimea and the Eastern Region of Ukraine. The Russian Federation also maintains a significant presence in Central Asia as well. Jackson, a scholar in Central Asian studies, noticed an increase in authoritarianism in central Asian states despite western financial intervention (Jackson 2014). She argues that the leaders of these states view Putin's model of governance as more in line with their cultural and indigenous beliefs (Jackson 2014).

Not only does Putin's style of governance affect the promotion and consolidation of democracy in former Soviet spaces but the economic ties and treaties ultimately have the same effect as well. Freedom House released a report in 2016 making the argument that the democratic regression of Russia set the precedent for the rise of authoritarianism in former soviet spaces, particularly in Central Asia (Ziegler 2016). Scholars also point to the Eurasian Economic Union which Moscow uses as a way to maintain authoritarianism in former Soviet spaces in Central Asia and keep western liberal democratic values out of the region (Ziegler 2016). Moscow's influence seems to have no constraints within the post-Soviet space yet there is some disagreement about Russia's influence in the post-soviet sphere.

Jackson and Ziegler argue that the evidence of Moscow's direct interference into democratic consolidation is mixed and quite small. While others like Freire and Heller argue that due to the recent events of Russia's involvement with Syrian and Ukrainian civil conflicts, their influence has diminished some of Russia's soft power in post-Soviet spaces (Freire and Heller 2017). Despite these small areas of disagreement concerning the strengthening or diminishing of Russian geo-political influence, there is a general consensus that Moscow still maintains

influence over the post-Soviet region which has inherently interfered in the democratic consolidation process. This general consensus brings power to the argument that the Russian Federation maintains a significant regional hegemony to influence and effect the process of democratic consolidation.

Domestic Political Actors

The second camp of scholars, spearheaded by Kubik and Innes, argue that its domestic political actors who influence the process of democratic consolidation, not external geo-political actors. A domestic political actor is considered to be local or state actor who has the ability to influence policy-making and shaping from within the state (Grimm 2018). Scholars like Kubik, Innes, Petrova, and Offe argue that these domestic actors have the resources, the knowledge, and the power to either continue or halt change within their respective territories. Despite this common agreement disagreement arises about which particular domestic actor really influences the process of democratic consolidation. Scholars like Kubik and Petrova argue that the presence of a strong and active civil society can help facilitate and consolidate the process of democratic consolidation. Others like Offe, Innes, and Grimm argue that the elite class has affected democratic consolidation through the institutionalization of their interests. Overall, the continued disagreement between scholars within the literature paints a picture of controlled chaos when it comes to answering the question of the disparity in democratic consolidation across the Post-Soviet Bloc.

Civil Society

The first sub-camp within this group of scholars argue that the reason as to why there is such differing levels of democratic consolidation across the post-soviet bloc is due to the level of activity and influence of civil society groups. This argument, led by scholars like Kubik and

Petrova, argue that the civil society groups in post-Soviet states in central and eastern Europe have been successful in giving citizens leverage within their governments and ensuring accountability (Kubik and Petrova 2011). It has even been found that some of these civil society groups are already seen as legitimate social actors within their state due to their transnational network of influence (Glenn & Mendelson 2002).

Civil society groups have proven to be successful in areas of deficient democratization due to their ability to get outside resources and funding (Petrova 2018). Also, these civil society groups bridge the gap and create more transparency and communication between the government and their constituents, which inherently creates more trust between either party (Marsh 2000). This type of trust is vital, particularly in the post-Soviet era (Marsh 2000). Civil society has an effect on the level of democracy within former soviet states. Marsh, Petrova, and Kubik all argue that states with high levels of civil society participation see higher levels of consolidated democracy because these groups serve as the middle men between the government and the citizens which inherently increases trust and overall public participation in the political arena.

Despite the arguments made by Kubik, Petrova, and Marsh concerning civil society groups and their effect on the levels of democratization within these former soviet states, there is quite a large push-back from the scholarly community. A large portion of the scholarly community like Howard, Rose, Carnaghan, Mishler, and others committed to the domestic actor angle refute the claim that appearance and participation of civil society has increased level of democratic consolidation for a number of reasons. A number of surveys have been done where the general consensus stated that even with higher levels of civic knowledge, a decent amount of political interest, and good will, there were still low levels of civic participation across the board (Howard 2003). Many scholars like Carnaghan, Howard, Mishler, and Rose attribute this low

turnout due to a longstanding distrust in the government and its institutions, even after the reforms of the 1990s. (Carnaghan 2001, Mishler & Rose 1997; Rose 2001, Petrova 2011). Despite the evidence displayed by Kubik, Petrova, and Marsh, there seems to be a consensus within the domestic actor community that more research still needs to be done concerning the role of civil society and their influence over the process of democratic consolidation.

Elites

However, rather than civil society groups being the dominant domestic actors, there seems to be a general consensus that elites are the dominant domestic actor within the Post-Soviet States. Scholars like Offe, Howard, Carnaghan, and Innes point to a number of reasons as to why they see the elite as a dominant actor that has influence to continue or halt democratic consolidation during and after times of transition. Much of the literature seems to argue that the reforms made during the transition period in the 1990's were led by elites which made this democratic transition "a top down" process; refuting the argument that the reforms made, were driven by civil society groups. Some scholars, like Offe argue that elite participation was inevitable due to the historical and political background of post-soviet states (Offe 1991). This "top-down" process is important to scholars because it is actually one of the causal effects of why there is such unevenness of democratic consolidation across the post-soviet bloc. Many scholars like Innes and Dimitrova argue that because of the accelerated process of democratization in the post-Soviet bloc affected the types of governance and how power was shared within the government. Innes argues that elites have managed to take control of both economic and political sectors which inherently affects the consolidation of democracy because elite interest becomes institutionalized (Innes 2014). Overall, the domestic elite's argument seems to have a consensus amongst scholars. This consensus creates an opening where elites

could be considered the bridge between the two camps of scholars when it comes to explaining the disparity of democratic consolidation across the Post-Soviet bloc.

An Analysis of the Geopolitical Actor vs. Domestic Actor Argument

The Soviet Union may have dissolved thirty years ago kick-starting democratic consolidation across the Post-Soviet bloc, yet scholars have yet to find a consensus on why there are such differing levels of democratic consolidation within the post-soviet space. The argument of external versus internal actors seems to have created more schisms between scholars due to the complexities and sub-groups that come with the Post-Soviet Bloc. From the literature, there seems to be a clear distinction that, in the terms of external geo-political actors, the European Union maintains influence over parts of Central and Eastern Europe while Russia still maintains a regional hegemon over Central Asia and other parts of Eastern Europe. External actors do have some influence over newly formed states due to their economic capabilities and foreign-policy driven guidance but scholars also point to the fact that state-building comes from within and the ability to maintain a democracy is also controlled by the actual state.

When it comes to the argument of domestic political actors and the issue surrounding democratic consolidation, scholars are quick to blame two groups. Civil society has risen as an important domestic actor in new democracies around the globe, their participation is often vital for the democratic government to continue. Yet, many don't believe that that is the case for post-soviet spaces due to the history of oppression by the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union. The elite argument angle seems to have a clear consensus amongst a number of scholars which is surprising because most of the research is incredibly polarized. Essentially, there needs to be more research done because the political situation is constantly changing within the post-soviet bloc.

Overall, the literature remains to be divided over what the answer is to why there is such unevenness in democratic consolidation across the soviet bloc. The literature can be divided into two camps. The first camp attribute the unevenness due to how much influence other geo-political actors have. But even that first camp is divided. Some of the scholars argue that the European's Union push for democratization with the incentive of joining the trillion-dollar economic union has led to some democratic consolidation across the post-soviet bloc. Others argue that Russia still maintains are cultural, economic, and historical hegemony over much of the region and still has influence over many of the domestic politics. The second camp of literature argues that its domestic political actors that cause the unevenness of democratic consolidation. Some scholars argue that some states have more active civil society groups which makes the consolidation process easier. Yet, the majority of the second camp argues that it's the elites and their influence has essentially either helped or halted democratic consolidation across the post-soviet bloc. Using scholarly agreement, the soundest argument seems to be the elites and the process of institutionalizing their interests has inherently affected the process of democratic consolidation across the post-soviet bloc.

Analytic Framework

In order to answer the question concerning the disparity of democratic consolidation across the Post-Soviet Bloc, the first theory that can be used is elite theory. By definition, elite theory states that power is concentrated and shared by a small group of people (the elites) and the masses do not have power (Lasswell 1950). Elite theory came into existence as many were debating about how power was to be shared within the state. It also serves as an alternative argument to pluralism, who's basic assumption is that power is concentrated and controlled by the masses. The main points within this theory are that power is concentrated in a small group of

leaders, there is consensus over values and goals, the elites all share a common background or experience, the primary institutions of power are mostly economic and political, there is a downward direction of influence, and often policy reflects elite preferences, and the protection of the current values lies in elite commitments (Dye 2016). Elite theory presents itself in all types of government, including democracies.

Elite theory is often applied to explain the behavior of states but it particularly fits in the explanation when it comes to the unevenness of democratic consolidation across the Post-Soviet bloc. Elite theory can be seen in how the government was formed during the transition and whether it was comprised of former elites or citizens. This can be indicated by the proportions of newly elected officials during the era of transition compared to the number of previous communist officials. The second basic assumption of elite theory is that there is a commitment to the protection of current values of their small group. This commitment to protection can be seen in the action of the formation of policy. This can be indicated by the protection of certain industries, the protection of previous officials of the communist party, and the protection of policy making. The third basic assumption of elite theory is that all elites have a similar background and/or experience. This can be seen in the creation of either new elites or a simple change of mask. This can be indicated by whether new elites were created during the time of transition or the elites from the previous era had simply changed their mask and continued on (Rivera 2000). These variables and indicators can be connected to the power and influence geopolitical actors have on domestic internal actors.

Elite Theory	Variable	Indicators
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Small Group of Leaders	Formation of Government	Number of Newly Elected Officials vs. Number of Previous Communist Officials.
Protection of Elite Values and Preferences	The Formation of Policy	Number of Protected Industries, Individuals, and power in policy-making.
Similar Background or Experience	Creation of New Elites or a Change of the Mask.	Number of new elites created during transition period vs. number of elites whom stayed strong during the transition period.

While the literature does not adhere to one type of theory, elite theory can actually relate to the literature quite well. There is argument that the European Union influenced the creation of elites in the newly formed democratic states. This can be indicated by the types of financial aid and trade preferment programs and whom benefited from these actions. There is also this same argument for Russia as well as in many states, particularly in the foreign policy of Near Abroad, Russian companies remain dominant over the commercialization in these states. These can be indicated by the numbers of democratic consolidation reported by Freedom House prior to Russian intervention and afterwards and the proportion of Russian owned companies and their monopoly within the area. Therefore, elite theory can be applied to this case as it not only

successfully analyzes the action of domestic political and economic actors but also to some extent geo-political actors as well.

The second theory that is planned to be used is democratic consolidation theory. According to the definition, democratic consolidation theory is the challenge of securing and sustaining democracies against the threat of authoritarian regression (Schedler 1998). As the theory has been studied throughout the years, it has come to use the main points of popular legitimization, the diffusion of democratic values, the neutralization of antisystem actors, civilian supremacy over the military, the elimination of authoritarian enclaves, party building, the decentralization of the state power, the introduction of mechanisms of direct democracy, judicial reform, the alleviation of poverty, and finally economic stabilization (Schedler 1998). This critical junctures act as key points in time of whether a state is on the right path towards democratic consolidation.

Democratic Consolidation Theory	Variable	Indicators
Popular Legitimization and Diffusion of Democratic Values	Civil Liberties	Freedom House Ranking and Reports of Ballot Stuffing,
Neutralization of Authoritarian Enclaves and Anti-system Actors	Political Party Prevalence	Number of Popular Elections, Success of unbiased election conduct.

Judicial Reform, Civilian Supremacy over Military, and Party Building	Human Rights	Presence of Military, Process of choosing Judges, and the number of civilian led political parties
Alleviation of Poverty	Social and Economic Welfare Programs	Number of Welfare Programs and Success Rate of said Programs
Economic Stabilization	Income Inequality	The Corruption Index and the rates of Income Inequality within the state.

The first critical juncture in democratic consolidation theory is popular legitimization and diffusion of democratic values. This can be seen in the variable of Civil Liberties. Indicators include the right of popular vote, the lack of ballot stuffing, and human rights being instituted in everyday life. The second critical juncture is the neutralization of anti-system actors and authoritarian enclaves. This can be seen in the variable of political party prevalence and can be indicated by how elections are held and whether popular vote actually chooses the candidate. The third critical juncture Judicial reform, civilian supremacy over the military and party building. This can be seen in the protection of human rights and can be indicated by the number of civilian led political parties, how judges are chosen and whether the military plays a major or minor role within the state. The fourth and fifth critical juncture are the alleviation of poverty and the economic stabilization. Each can be seen in social and economic welfare programs and

the level of income inequality in the states. This can be indicated by the creation of welfare programs and whether income inequality remains to be a problem within the state.

While the theory does not set out an exact process of what a state should do during the process of democratization, it does create critical junctures for a state during that process. This applies to the research question in a number of ways as well as relates to the literature.

Democratic transition theory relates to the literature as it explains both arguments made by scholars concerning the research question made. The arguments laid out in the literature concerning the power of external and internal actors and how they influence the democratic consolidation process within the post-soviet bloc all relate to the critical junctures laid out within the democratic transition theory. Despite the fact that it can explain the behavior of geo-political actors somewhat, much if the critical junctures stated concern the policies and influence of domestic internal actors and often forgets how to incorporate the influence of geo-political actors. Essentially, the critical junctures laid out within the theory are all influenced by the power of external geopolitical actors and internal domestic actors. Therefore, democratic transition theory can be applied to this case as it analyzes the action of domestic actors but also some of the behavior of geo-political actors.

Methodology

After reviewing the literature and analytic framework, the method to be used to explain the disparity of democratization in the Post-Soviet Space will be Alexander George's Structured and Focused Comparison method. The cases to be used is the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine after their respective color revolutions in the early 21st century. This method, in general, allows for intensive study concerning a few number of cases which can yield important details concerning future policy, whether it be public or foreign (Kachuyevski 2018). This method, later

to be explained provides the best framework concerning democratization of the Post-Soviet Space. The Structured and Focused Comparison method has a total of three phases. The first phase includes a multitude of steps, in order to create the broad topic of a research design. This phase includes creating and examining previous research concerning the research question identified, examining independent and dependent variables identified through the analytic framework, selecting case studies that can answer the research question, operationalizing and measuring variables identified, and formulating a list of questions to be asked of each case (Kachuyevski 2018). The second phase and third phases of this method include asking the questions laid out in the first phase and comparing the results of each case in order to answer the original research question.

Phase One:

In George's Method, the first phase includes the creation of a research question and the previous literature written and the gaps to be investigated. The question to be answered is why is there such large gaps of democratization across the Post-Soviet Space? The literature review, as stated previously, argues that external geo-political actors as well as domestic actors have affected democratization within the Post-Soviet Space. Yet, due to the lack of congruence within the scholarly community, there is a gap of scholarly work where both geo-political actors and domestic actors can work together to create this disparity, which is what to be argued throughout this thesis. This argument is going to be tested through the competing theories of elite theory and democratic consolidation theory which also leave gaps concerning this issue of disparity.

The second step in George's first phase is looking at variables to be identified and measured later in the methodology. The analytic frameworks to be used is elite theory and democratic consolidation theory which both seem to explain the actions of domestic actors and

some actions of geo-political actors yet there still seems to be a gap. The variables for elite theory include the formation of government, policy, and the creation of new elites or a change of mask. The second theory to be used in the analytic framework is the democratic consolidation theory. This particular theory looks at critical junctures a newly democratizing state must take on its journey towards a liberal democratic democracy. The variables for this theory include civil liberties, political party prevalence, human rights, social and economic welfare programs, and income inequality.

The Republic of Georgia and Ukraine can be considered great states to compare, especially when looking at their historical and contemporary similarities. Both states were subject to the rule of Moscow, starting with the Russian Empire and ending with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Their color revolutions fell only two years apart and have experienced significant steps towards democratization. These steps have inherently moved the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine away from the influence Moscow. In addition, both states have experienced Russian interference, not only economically and politically, but also through the use of military intervention in areas of conflict. These military interventions are often referred to by scholars as Frozen Conflicts. Yet, while both states do share similarities, there are some specific distinctions that also make them great cases to explain the disparity of democratization across the Post-Soviet space. Both states, while having made significant steps towards democratic consolidation, their success vary from one another which adds another piece to the puzzle, this paper seeks to answer. Overall, The Republic of Georgia and Ukraine, specifically when it comes to answering the disparity of democratic consolidation across the Post-Soviet Bloc, fit the structured and focused comparison method the best.

As the variables listed previously in the analytic framework will be measured using a scale either considering small versus large influence from the elite class and high versus low success when it comes to the critical junctures described in the democratic consolidation theory. For the first theory of elite influence and its level will be measured using the scale in Figure Three. All of these variables can be measured using a scale of elite influence. Small elite influence can be measured by the strong civil liberties, a strong presence and respect for human rights, and a successful socio-economic status with low levels of corruption. Large elite influence can be seen by weak civil liberties, a weak presence and respect for human rights, and a low socio-economic status with high levels of corruption. In the chart below, each variable and its indicators will be measured using this chart in order to figure out their relationship with elite influence.

Small Elite Influence ←-----	Large Elite Influence -----→
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Liberties including: free and fair elections, a partially or completely free score on Freedom House, different political parties, free media, lack of a political party monopoly , independent judiciary, and power of citizens 	Civil Liberties including: lack of free and fair elections, a low score on Freedom House, lack different political parties, lack of free media, presence of ballot stuffing, and a dominant political party monopoly, and a dependent judiciary, citizens hold no power

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Rights include: strong minority rights, lack of police brutality, small presence of military force and influence, 	<p>Human Rights: lack of minority rights, presence of police brutality and abrupt willingness to use force by military,</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-Economic Welfare: the gap of income inequality is small, there is a number of socio-economic welfare programs which are successful, and the lack of corruption. 	<p>Socio-Economic Welfare Includes: the income inequality gap is large, there is few socio-economic programs that produce success, and corruption is rampant .</p>

Questions to be Asked of Each Case

The fifth step of the first phase of George's Framework is creating a list of questions to be asked of each case and how it measures according the measures of association listed in the fourth step. The questions to be asked include:

- What are the minority protections laws in The Republic of Georgia and Ukraine?
- Are the minority protection laws in their respective constitutions?
- Is there presence of police or military brutality?
- What are the levels of income inequality in each state?
- What are the corruption levels in each state?
- How is each state ranked in Freedom House and other international watchdog organizations?
- Are there free and fair elections?

- Are different political parties allowed to run?
- How have the industries changed since the Color Revolutions of the early 21st century?
- What industries are protected against Foreign Direct Investment and Domestic Startups?
- Have the officials changed since the color revolutions?
- Is there presence of Foreign military on national territory?

Data Analysis

In order to understand the democratization journey of the Post-Soviet space, a simple question was asked concerning what had caused the large disparity of democratization over the Post-Soviet Space since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. The literature review above states that scholars believe it is either domestic actors or external geo-political actors that cause the disparity in democratization but no consensus is found amongst scholars. The analytic framework above includes elite theory and democratic consolidation theory. The variables listed above, sourced from the both theories, were used to create questions to be answered through the structured and focused comparison method of Alexander George through the case studies of the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine. Overall, what the research shows is that domestic actors play a major role in a state's democratic transition but the analytic framework fails to account for foreign military intervention and its effect on democratization. This is to be shown through the case studies of The Republic of Georgia and Ukraine.

The Republic of Georgia

As stated previously, the Republic of Georgia's Rose Revolution was one of the most successful public protests out of the Color Revolution period of the early 21st century. The Rose Revolution began in 2003 led by public outrage due to immense corruption and poor government leadership. These mass public protests brought change as the previous president of the Republic

of Georgia, Edvard Shevardnadze resigned from his position and new elections were held. These elections were then dominated by Mikael Saakashvili's United National Movement (UNM) Party. After these elections, Saakashvili and the UNM started a period of reform which targeted a number of issues within the Georgian government like corruption within government agencies. Despite these reforms, the Republic of Georgia is still plagued by a number of issues which hinders further democratic consolidation. The greatest issues the Republic of Georgia continues to face is biased media, a political party monopoly, and judicial corruption. Therefore, the elite presence created during the Rose Revolution can explain the issues the Republic of Georgia still faces with democratic consolidation today through the factors of a biased media, a political party monopoly, and judicial corruption.

How is the Government Formed?

In order to properly understand how the Republic of Georgia's government is structured, three sets of questions were asked including the style or type of government, whether this government was comprised of new elites or old elites, and whether the government suffers from a large presence of elite influence. Currently, the Republic of Georgia's style of governance is a parliamentary democratic republic operating under a multi-party system. The Republic of Georgia has maintained this style of governance since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. While this style of governance has been maintained, the government did see a major shift in power and policy initiatives after the Rose Revolution, as previously mentioned. The first group of policy initiatives surrounded the structure of the bureaucracy and how it changed the elite landscape of the Georgian government.

In addition, one of the most significant reforms taken place under Saakashvili's term as president was the restructuring of several government offices. This restructuring created a

number of new political elite; changing the demographic and power structure of the Georgian government. New elites are those who became politically affluent after the Color Revolutions in the early 2000s. For example, a large amount of government officials was fired and new people, particularly those of the younger demographic, were hired to take their places (Papava 2009). This shift in governmental structure created a vacuum of power as old political elites were either voted out or removed from their positions within the government. This new political elite would soon rule the government until the 2012 election when the UNM were voted out of office and the Georgian Dream became the new dominant party.

When it comes to looking at new elites and their influence on the political and economic level, it would be safe to say that they have maintained a large amount of influence over the political system. Large elite influence can be characterized by the amount of power elites have in important policy making. For example, Saakashvili created a small circle of political allies and much of the reforms were made in a top-down process (Papava 2009). Also, this can also be seen in how the political party dominated the parliament and is often criticized to be a notary of the executive branch (Papava 2009). All of these issues affect The Republic of Georgia's democratic consolidation because they create a political atmosphere where elites dominate the policy-making and the political narratives of the state. Therefore, The Republic of Georgia still suffers from heavy elite influence as the reforms in the early 21st century bolstered the power of the new political elite's despite their intent of creating a new political structure dominated by democratic values.

What civil liberties and political rights are granted within The Republic of Georgia?

In order to understand the gravity of elite influence in The Republic of Georgia, one must look at what civil liberties and political rights are granted and to what extent are they free of

governmental influence. Civil liberties can be defined as the access to freedom of expression and belief, association and organizational rights, rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual rights (Freedom House 2019). Political rights, on the other hand, can be defined as the validity of electoral processes, political pluralism and participation, and government function (Freedom House 2019). With the intention of understanding elite influence and its connection to civil liberties and political rights, six indicators including their Freedom House Score, freedom of the press, free and fair elections, political party prevalence, and the type of judiciary are to be measured. The Republic of Georgia still faces a large issue of elite influence which can be seen in the institutionalization of mediocre civil liberties. For example, there are issues of a biased media, a political party monopoly under a multi-party system, and a dependent judiciary within the Republic of Georgia. The first indicator to be investigated is The Republic of Georgia's Freedom House Score which provides insight to their commitment to the democratic values.

In addition, this score is broken down into two sub groups which include political rights and civil liberties. For political rights, a state is scored out of a total score of 40. For civil rights, a state is scored out of a total score of 60. Therefore, a state is measured on a scale with 100 being the highest possible score. Amongst the post-Soviet states, former Soviet Republics now current European Union members have the highest Freedom House scores of the region yet there has been significant democratic back-sliding over the past few years. However, outside of the European Union, The Republic of Georgia has a higher score compared to post-Soviet states that were not inducted into the European Union in the early 2000s.

Currently, The Republic of Georgia scores a 61 out of 100 possible points dictating that they are considered to be partially free on the Freedom Houses' scale (Freedom House 2019). This score is a compilation of a 24 out of 40 for political rights and 37 out of 60 for civil liberties

(Freedom House 2020). While Georgia has made a serious advancement towards democratization, it should also be noted that Georgia has witnessed a decline because as of 2019, their score was 63 out of 100 (Freedom House 2020). These scores for the Republic of Georgia are incredibly important data because it outlines how Georgia fits in with its post-Soviet neighbors and it gives a hint as to what they are doing to better democratically consolidate compared to their neighbors.

The second indicator to be measured is Freedom of the Press. Free Press, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), is critical to a democracy because the free media acts as a watchdog and reports the wrongdoings of the government... (ACLU 2020). In dictatorships and authoritarian governments, the press is either heavily monitored or owned by the government to ensure that any dissent is not broadcasted, therefore many watchdog organizations often look at the media to check on the progress of democracy. In the case of the Republic of Georgia, there is currently access to freedom of the press, but there is an issue of a biased media within the Republic of Georgia.

According to the Encyclopedia of Political Communication, a biased media is “refers to the media exhibiting an unjustifiable favoritism as they cover the news” (Kaid & Bacha 2019). The Republic of Georgia has had a complicated relationship with the media. One of the missteps taken by Saakashvili and his small circle of elites was its treatment of certain media sites, particularly those who were sided with the opposition. For example, the government had taken control over most of the media including closing down or buying independently owned broadcasting stations to make them more aligned towards the government (Papava 2009). These earlier actions then created an environment that invited policies to pursue a biased media, a problem that The Republic of Georgia faces to this day.

Currently, the media within the Republic of Georgia are known to be “pluralistic” yet the media has become more partisan over the years and are often extremely favorable to the party in power (Freedom House 2020). If a media outlet is not favorable, there is often issues of retaliation (Freedom House 2020). For example, there are numerous cases where if some broadcast stations are not favorable to the current political party in power, the government uses taxation as a way to ensure that all broadcast stations are favorable to the government (Freedom House 2020). This is to be expected due to the large amount of elite influence is within the government and the need to remain in power despite the inherent volatility of a democratizing state. While freedom of press is an important civil liberty, free and fair elections play an important role in democratic consolidation as well.

The third indicator to be measured is free and fair elections. Free and Fair elections, according to the US Mission to the OSCE, are elections that ensures the authority of the government derives from the will of the people (OSCE 2012). Features of these types of elections include a society where voting is encouraged, space needs to be provided for political parties to work and campaign freely, independent free media, civil society, and an impartial judiciary (OSCE 2012). Yet, Free and Fair elections are where democratizing states often have the most trouble with due to either their authoritarian or totalitarian pasts. Although, for much of the post-Soviet space, particularly the Republic of Georgia, free and fair elections have become much easier over time, especially after the color revolution period.

In the case of the Republic of Georgia, they generally have free and fair elections, particularly after the Rose Revolution in the early 2000’s. Yet, there are still a number of issues that need to be worked out to this current day. The first issue that prevents the Republic of Georgia from furthering in their journey to democratic consolidation is funds being improperly

used in elections. For example, there were issues of administrative funds being used to finance campaigns (Freedom House 2020). This is an example of how current parties in power used public funds in order to re-consolidate their power within the government which highlights the issue of high corruption which is still present within the Georgian government today. The second issue and possibly the most important is election rules were changed last minute which harmed the amount of political parties that could register for the election (Freedom House 2020). The sudden change harms the multi-party system as the amount of political parties registered for the election were less than what it could have been. This sudden rule change is an example of how the political elite, particularly those within the ruling majority, manage to stay in power and keep out political rivals. While The Republic of Georgia has achieved the façade of free and fair elections, there remains the issue of how high corruption and elite influence prevent them from achieving true free and fair elections. Free and Fair elections are often purported by the presence of political parties and according to democratic consolidation theory, there must be political party prevalence in order to ensure protection against a regression into authoritarianism.

The fourth indicator to be measured is political party prevalence. Political party prevalence is important to democratizing states as they represent a spectrum of political opinion from a state's citizenry. What is meant by political party prevalence is the number of political parties present within a state's political environment. Political parties, while extremely important to a democracy's survival can become an issue if a single party has dominance. The Republic of Georgia, despite its massive reform period during Saakashvili's time as president, there became issue concerning political party prevalence within the state. Despite the numerous reforms slated during the Rose Revolution, many fell flat and some even created the existence of a political party monopoly, which is an issue that the Republic of Georgia still suffers from today.

After the Rose Revolution, the United National Movement won in a landslide election, soon becoming the dominant party in parliament. Yet, this dominance and influence soon became an issue when it came to policy initiatives. For example, the party and its members were monopolizing state resources, operating without strong opposition, and due to their power, they were able to push through controversial policies (Mierzejewski-Voznyak 2013). These monopolistic tactics allowed the UNM to stay in power for almost a decade until a transfer of power was made in 2012 to the Georgian Dream Party. Yet, these tactics still have a place in government as the Georgian Dream Party still uses these tactics to maintain their monopoly as well. For example, in the previous section, The Georgian Dream Party and their allies changed the rules of political party registration, ultimately affecting the political landscape of the election and ensuring their continued dominance (Freedom House 2020). This has affected further democratic consolidation as political elites have managed to maintain their positions and power through a political party monopoly.

The fifth indicator to be measured is judicial independence. According to Popova, Judiciary independence can be conceptualized as a lack of bias towards the preferences of specific actors (Popova 2012). Judiciary independence is often vital to a democratizing state as it bolsters the citizen's confidence as well as ensures that law enforcement is taken seriously. Judiciaries, particularly dependent judiciaries, can be susceptible to corruption and power from dominant political parties and dominant domestic actors like political and economic elites. In the Republic of Georgia, it seems that there is still issues with creating and maintaining an independent judiciary as seen after the Rose Revolution in 2003.

The Republic of Georgia continues to have issues with the judiciary. Even after Saakashvili's reforms, the judiciary was extremely neglected and is often criticized as an

appendage to the General Prosecutor's office and the Executive Branch (Papava 2009). What is meant by this is that the Georgian judiciary is viewed to be dependent on the government's power and influence rather than independent and impartial. For example, in 2007, over half of the population who answered a survey by the Georgian newspaper "The Weekly Palette" said that they did not trust the judiciary (Kukhianidze 2009). This comes from the reputation the judiciary has due to numerous reports of deaths caused by law enforcement but are never investigated nor brought to prosecution.

Even after the transfer of power in 2012 to the Georgian Dream party, there still remains large issues with the judiciary today. There still remains to be a large issue of the legislative and executive branches influencing the judiciary which creates a lack of transparency and overall independence (Freedom House 2020). But there does seem to be hope as a new bill was passed in December of 2019 that created a disciplinary procedure for judges but it should be noted that these procedures are still too broad (Freedom House 2020). This issue of judiciary dependence all relates back to the fact that new elites were created during the Rose Revolution and how the government was reformed rested power within the hands of the elite which has made it difficult for civil liberties to be respected because the democratic transition has stopped in terms of creating an impartial judiciary.

Are Human Rights accessible?

In any democracy, respect for human rights is important. According to the United Nations, human rights are "rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more" (UN 2020). One of the first things to look at when

assessing a state's commitments to democracy and human rights is looking at how the minorities are treated and whether they share the same rights as the majority. The first question of human rights asked of the Republic Georgia is whether there are minority rights in The Republic of Georgia? The short answer is yes but there are some issues, especially issues that often come with a state beginning to nationalize.

In the early 2000's, The Republic of Georgia instituted a policy of "Civic Nationalism". This policy states that all nationalities had the right to participate in political public life. While this policy has a great façade, the actual numbers representing those of national minorities in political life are quite low. For example, from 2004 to 2008, only 9 out of 225 MPS were from National Minorities (Wheatly 2009). The number continues to decrease as the early 2010's saw only 6 out of 225 MPS were from National Minorities (Wheatly 2009). For context, the number of national minorities politically active within the parliament were higher during the Shevardnadze era or pre-Rose Revolution (Wheatly 2009). The lack of minorities active in political life hinders democratic consolidation because it can be perceived as the majority is taking control over the minority. The policy of "Civic Nationalism" was met with skepticism due to its perceived nature of forced assimilation (Wheatly 2009). This perceived nature of assimilation is not too far off as there were controversial language laws that were passed during Saakashvili's time as president.

In addition, in democratizing and particularly nationalizing states, some states try to capitalize and push on the majority culture which often harms the national minorities. In the Republic of Georgia, during Saakashvili's time as president, a series of language laws were passed which were met with protest as they were seen as an institutionalization of Georgian nationalism which was ignorant of The Republic of Georgia's national minorities. The first

language law was actually passed during the Shevardnadze era but it became mandated in the Saakashvili era. This law mandated that all state administration jobs and university jobs required a knowledge of Georgian (Wheatly 2009).

This law was then bolstered by the Bill of General Education, passed in 2005, which mandated that all schools must teach Georgian language (Wheatly 2009). Minority political involvement was further damaged due to the Civic Nationalism and Language laws because only 4 % of the ministry of interior affairs are from national minorities and only 6 out of 200 judges are from national minorities as well (Wheatly 2009). Overall, while The Republic of Georgia does have legislation protecting national minorities and their rights to political life, their livelihoods are severely affected by these language laws, particularly those who live in rural areas. These language laws and the “Civic Nationalism” law represent how the elites whom belong to the majority are affecting and influencing national policy.

The second indicator of human rights is looking at police brutality and how it affects the livelihood of all citizens. According to Cao, “police brutality is when police officers use excessive force towards civilians” (Cao 2003). Police brutality is often an issue in many states including democracies. Yet, particularly in the case of the Republic of Georgia, police brutality had been a major issue prior to the Rose Revolution. Saakashvili and his allies passed a number of reforms were passed including reforms centered on law enforcement.

Under Saakashvili’s tenure as president, there were a large number of reforms passed and taken under by the Georgian government to fix the issues of corruption and lack of efficiency in the justice sector. The reforms that were successful include the firing all of the previous law enforcement officers from the Shevardnadze era, many who were known to demand bribes. Yet, according to Light, the reason for bribes was that the tax collection was so low that officers were

not getting paid enough, therefore bribes were often necessary (Light 2014). The second reform instituted a merit test which was mandated because for all positions within the government and those within law enforcement (Light 2014). And the third reform was that there was a complete restructuring of the police academy and all other major police agencies (Light 2014). Despite these reforms, there still remains to be issues concerning police brutality within the justice sector.

As stated previously, the Republic of Georgia still suffers from issues of police brutality despite the successful reforms instituted after the Rose Revolution. For instance, there still remains the issue of abuse and unlawful treatment against inmates in their prisons. Over 100 cases were reported to the prosecutors' office but no investigation was opened (HRW 2019). Secondly, there are often complaints about police force and their heavy handedness in drug raids and other types of police action (HRW 2019). Thirdly, there remains the issue of law enforcement bias when it comes to prosecution. There are a number of cases where either suspects are let off or are partially acquitted (HRW 2019). Despite these current issues, there have been some recent moves for reform. For example, in July of 2019, a law passed by the parliament that created the State Inspector Office which oversees and prosecutes cases of abuse by public law officials (HRW 2019). There was also another office created under the Ministry of the Interior which offers the protection of human rights (HRW 2019).

In conclusion, Georgia's internal elites seem to have control over their parliament which creates issues of minority rights and police brutality. While reforms have been made because the elites were pressured by public opinion, the elites have remained in control as seen in law enforcement bias in cases of police brutality. The elites grip on these key sectors of the government prevents the Republic of Georgia from moving forward in the process of democratization. The fourth variable to be investigated is looking at socio-economic status and

how elites capitalize on a state's income to either move forward or push back against the journey towards democracy.

What is the Socio-Economic Status of these states?

As post-Soviet states gained their independence in 1991, economically speaking, it was difficult for them to get on their feet due to the reliance on the Soviet economy for over 60 years. In order to properly assess a state's socio-economic factors, research was conducted concerning the levels of corruption and poverty within the Republic of Georgia. According to Transparency International, the definition of corruption is "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. It can be classified as grand, petty and political, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs" (Transparency International 2020). These two indicators of corruption and poverty are key to fully understand the level of elite influence within the state and how it affects their levels of democratization.

The Republic of Georgia, according to Transparency International, is ranked 44 out of 180 countries and its current corruption score is 56 out of 100 (Transparency 2019). Essentially, The Republic of Georgia's score is one of the highest out of the Post-Soviet Space. They were able to move out of deep corruption that persisted throughout the Soviet era and into post-independence due to the strong reforms mandated under Saakashvili's presidency. Saakashvili is most known for his anti-corruption reforms in the Republic of Georgia. These corruption reforms were grouped into two different factors which included Economic and Education reform which was all centered around lessening corruption in these areas of the state (Light 2014).

The second area of reform was centered on economic reform. The areas of reform include reforms to tax collection and revenue. These reforms were so successful that there was a 700% increase in tax revenue in 5 years (Mitchell 2009). Also, difficulties were made for businesses

and officials when they tried to bribe their way out of taxes (Mitchell 2009). This area of tax revenue clean-up was so successful that it had helped the policing reform and corruption because the police officers' salaries were raised (Light 2014). The third area of reform centered on education reform and corruption. Saakashvili and the ambassador to the United Nations Alexander Lomaia created a set of anti-corruption reforms where many of the private universities, certified prior to the Rose Revolution, were decertified and the national education administration tests were mandated across the country. These, though met with some resistance, were overall successful and bolstered the education system significantly (Mitchell 2009).

While these reforms were highly successful, they only targeted petty corruption throughout the state. Therefore, there still remains issues concerning high level corruption to this current day. Saakashvili's reforms created a small circle of allies whom concentrated and took a great amount of power from the legislative and judiciary branches (Transparency International 2009). These particular reform affected and weakened the opposition parties which left a large levels of corruption concerning the powers of the president compared to the legislative and judiciary branches. Currently, the ruling party the Georgian Dream and its senior level officials have informal agreements with the judiciary branch in order to obtain for favorable decisions (Transparency International 2009). These favorable decisions then give judges the chance for lifetime appointments (Transparency International 2009). What this means for The Republic of Georgia is that the political arena is still centered around elite power which weakens the institutions of democracy within the state.

The second area of looking at socio-economic status within in a state is poverty. According to the United Nations, overall poverty is defined as a lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods..." (UN 1995). Poverty is also one of the indicators of

the democratic transition theory and alleviation of it marks represents one part of a liberal democracy. Poverty remains to be a large issue across the world but particularly in the Post-Soviet area where many struggled to become economically stable due to the quick end to the once great power. The Republic of Georgia in particular suffers from great poverty and this is partly due to the amount of corruption that went on for years but currently the number of poverty is still quite staggering to this day.

Poverty remains to be a large issue in the Republic of Georgia. Currently, 32 percent of the population lives below the poverty line in the Republic of Georgia (World Bank 2016). To put that into real numbers, out of its population of a little over 3 million people, over 900,000 people live in poverty. In order to combat poverty, the World Bank and other international organizations have instituted economic and education programs (World Bank 2016). The amount of poverty actually relates back to corruption in a significant way. There is a correlation between the ability to effectively tax and the amount of poverty and income inequality (Gerry 2008). Poverty isn't just an issue of lack of wealth and material but poverty also excludes those whom live below the poverty line to be active in social, political, and cultural life (UN 1995). Therefore, the domestic elites, despite the reforms the Rose Revolution brought, have taken over control and have driven The Republic of Georgia in a direction where politically they might be consolidated but socially and economically, the regular citizens are still suffering even with the interference of international organizations and civil society groups.

Conclusion

After viewing the data, it seems to be clear that the elites created in the Rose Revolution have a large amount of control over the state's democratic consolidation. While the reform period had some successful reforms, many other areas of democratic governance suffered. This

can be seen in the areas of a biased media, a political party monopoly, and a dependent judiciary. Overall, The Republic of Georgia is a perfect example of how elites can control the pace of democratization within the state. Yet, the Republic of Georgia only serves a piece of the puzzle when understanding democratization in the Post-Soviet Space. Ukraine, the second case study, also serves as an important puzzle piece because like The Republic of Georgia, they have also persevered towards democratic consolidation.

Ukraine:

As the Color Revolutions swept through the Post-Soviet region, Ukraine became its next target. In 2004, a presidential election was to be held but it soon became contentious between the two front runners Viktor Yanukovich and Viktor Yushenko as fraudulent election results were announced. Mass public protests soon erupted, now known as the Orange Revolution, and some success came as new elections were held and a new winner was announced. Yet, as history would tell, nothing changed and almost a decade later, protests began again due to the sudden decision to not sign the EU Association Agreement. These protests, known as Euromaidan, evolved as violence and conflict began between the protesters and law enforcement. Now, almost six years later, Ukraine is still plagued by numerous issues which prevent them from moving towards total democratic consolidation. The biggest issue is that the elite whom have remained in power since the dissolution of the Soviet Union have hindered further democratization. This elite presence can be seen by the persistent issues of a dependent judiciary, minority language rights, and immense corruption.

How is the Government Formed?

Ukraine's governmental system is a unitary republic which operates under a semi-presidential system. Ukraine has maintained this style of governance since the dissolution of the

Soviet Union but the power shared between the parties of government has changed, particularly after the Orange Revolution. For example, after the Orange revolution, the powers of the president were diminished and the powers of the parliament were expanded. Yet, as the powers of the parliament were expanded, this inherently expanded the powers of the parliamentary elite, many who have been in power since independence. While the style of governance is important, one must also look at those who make up these governmental structures as well.

Unlike The Republic of Georgia, much of the Ukrainian elite class is made up of those whom are considered to be old elites. Old elites are those whom have been around since the post-independence era. The communist party elites are not included in what is means to be considered an old elite due to the fact that communist party is banned from participating in elections. In addition, the elites who came into power belonged to Kuchma's small circle of allies whom benefited from Kuchma's power in parliament once he became president. These elites would soon affect democratic consolidation due to their immense influence within the parliament.

Elites, in Ukraine, have a great influence on policy and political narratives due to their positions in parliament. As stated previously, within the Ukrainian parliament, there were old elites dating back from the post-independence era. A criticism of the Orange Revolution by scholar's state that while the Orange Revolution was successful in a number of ways, one of the problems of the aftermath was its failure to deal with the elites that still corrupted the parliament from Kuchma's era (Kubicek 2009). Their power and influence was also increased due to the shift in the power-sharing agreement between the executive and legislative branches after the Orange Revolution in 2004. Therefore, the old elites still maintain a large amount of influence over the parliament which inherently affects democratic consolidation within the state.

What civil liberties are granted within Ukraine?

The first indicator to be measured is Ukraine's Freedom House World Report Score. Currently, Ukraine scores 62 out of a possible 100 points, ranking them at partially free (Freedom House 2020). Their score is broken down into 27 points out of 40 for political rights and 35 points out of 60 for civil liberties (Freedom House 2020). What is meant by partially free is that some political and civil liberties have been instituted within the system but there are a number of other issues which prevent their score from increasing. Yet, Ukraine has recently seen an uptake in their score, particularly in the last year or so. This uptake highlights Ukraine's recent commitment post-Euromaidan to furthering democratic consolidation. While Freedom House's scores are an important indicator, they are not the only one when looking at civil liberties. The second indicator, freedom of the press, allows for a closer look at how domestic actors influence the media.

The second factor to be measured is Freedom of Press. Ukraine enjoys the right to freedom of the press as it is institutionalized and protected in their constitution. For example, they have pluralistic media environment and the ability to openly criticize the government and its actions (Freedom House 2020). And free media has gotten stronger particularly after Orange Revolution in 2004. However, there are still a number of issues that Ukraine's free press still faces on its way towards democratic consolidation. The first issue is that journalists, especially those highly critical of the government, are still targeted and there is a lack of protection from not only law enforcement but the judiciary as well (Freedom House 2020). The second issue is that the elites often influence the media in order to ensure their choice for election is viewed in a favorable light. For example, in the most recent election of President Zelensky, a famous economic powerhouse influenced popular broadcasting stations in order for Zelensky to have more positive coverage compared to his opponent. This is a direct example of how elites can

influence elections through the power of media which inherently affects the process of democratization. While freedom of the press is an important civil liberty, it is not the only variable important to understanding the democratization process of Ukraine.

The third indicator to be measured is the presence of free and fair elections. Ukraine has had a troubled past with free and fair elections. As stated previously, the Orange Revolution was kick started due to numerous reports of ballot stuffing which ended with fraudulent election results. Yet, Ukraine has mostly cleaned up and tightened regulations around election season but there still remains to be some issues concerning free and fair elections. These issues include that in the most recent election, polls did not take place in certain parts of the country including Crimea and separatist regions of Donbas. This is due to the fact that there are Russian Forces currently present in these parts of the country, but that is to be explained later. Also, the OSCE had found evidence of vote buying, exploiting legal loopholes, and the misuse of incumbency during election season (Freedom House 2020). This highlights the immense corruption that Ukraine still faces. And thirdly, there was an issue of new electoral laws being enacted too close to an election season (Freedom House 2020). These electoral laws created some confusion which threatened the integrity of said elections. This comes to show how domestic actors, particularly elites, use elections and its loopholes to maintain their positions within Ukraine.

The fourth factor to be measured is political party prevalence. Ukraine, unlike the Republic of Georgia, does not have an issue of a political party monopoly. There is an abundance of political parties and they form and dissolve quite easily (Freedom House 2020). The only restriction that international watch dog organizations note is that the communist party is not allowed to participate in any elections which one can say undermines Ukraine's multi-party system (Freedom House 2020). But, Ukraine overall seems to have an easier time when it comes

to maintaining a large abundance of political parties rather than having one party dominate the political structure. This is an example of how elites control the pace of democratization within a state. For example, Ukraine's elites seemed to have allowed democracy to progress in terms of political party prevalence while simultaneously preventing other areas of democratization like the areas of a dependent judiciary, minority language laws, and immense corruption within the state.

The fifth indicator when measuring a state's commitment to civil liberties, is looking at the judiciary and whether or not it is dependent on governmental power. After the Orange Revolution in 2004, the judiciary played a major role in the recount and verification of the false win of Viktor Yanukovich but during the period from 2010-2013, the judiciary and its independence suffered quite a bit. During this time period, the judiciary could be seen as dependent on corruption within the government rather than an impartial and independent branch. This was due to a number of reasons. The first issue is that many governmental branches operated under self-governance guidelines, mitigating the need for the judiciary to provide oversight. The second issue is that those in power would often dismiss and re-assign judges in order to ensure loyalty. These are ways the elite managed to maintain their positions which happened at the expense of the judiciary. But, after Euromaidan, a number of reforms were put in place once the protests ended and new government was elected.

These reforms included a merit exam for all acting judges (VOX 2019). Also, all acting judges must have submitted academic, professional, and family records to the government in order to mitigate nepotism within the judiciary (VOX 2019). Another reform was spearheaded by civil society as they were allowed to participate in the selection of new judges through the Public Integrity Council (PIC) (VOX 2019). And the fourth reform included terms that must be met for

dismissal in order to prevent the previous cycle of dismissal and re-assignment of judges. These reforms were mostly driven by the new government installed after Euromaidan, which one could argue was a new elite. Yet, some may believe that the old elite was still present as there were a number of issues during the period of judicial reform. For example, many believed that the re-assessment of judges was too negligent due to a mere 24 hours for review (VOX 2019). Also, there was disregard of the judges picked through the PIC (VOX 2019). Overall, it seems the judiciary dependence still remains to be an issue for Ukraine despite the Euromaidan reforms. One can see that domestic actors, particularly elites, have a large role within the judiciary which explains the issue of judicial dependence. But, it is not the only issue as minority language laws remains to be an issue as well.

Are Human Rights accessible?

As stated previously in the case study concerning the Republic of Georgia, minority rights and police brutality are two important markers when measuring a state's commitment to human rights. While Ukraine has an official commitment to human rights, there is a major issue concerning minority language laws within the state. Ukraine has had a complicated past since post-Orange Revolution and its push for nationalization of Ukrainian culture and language despite having half the population speak Russian as their native language. While minority language laws have become politicized in the past few years, they play a major part in the accessibility of human rights within the state of Ukraine.

Ukraine has had minority rights since independence in the early 1990's. In 1990, the Declaration for Ukrainian State Sovereignty guaranteed all nationalities the right to national-cultural development. In 1991, the Law of Citizenship gave citizenship to everyone on territory regardless of nationality, if they had been permanent residents. Also, in 1991, the Declaration for

Rights of Nationalities created a broad range of rights for minorities (MRGI 2019). And in 1992, the Law of National Minorities states that there is state support for the development of minorities (MRGI 2019). This law was a supplement to the 1991 bill on the Declaration for Rights of Nationalities. While these laws give a great façade, there were some issues concerning these laws. For example, the 1991 and 1992 Declaration for Rights of Nationalities did not improve the quality of life for national minorities (MRGI 2019). The quality of life for minorities only got more complicated as minority language laws became more politicized in the political arena, particularly after the Orange Revolution in 2004.

After the Orange Revolution, there was a push by the Ukrainian government to begin the process of creating a Ukrainian national identity separate from the Russian language. This has become a moment a contentious juncture for many within Ukraine. In 2012, minority language laws were introduced under the presidency of Viktor Yanukovich. These laws stated that if there was a substantial minority in the area, they were allowed to use their native language in official business and education. It should be noted that this law was mostly centered around the use of Russian language but it applied to other minority languages as well. For instance, the language of the Crimean Tartars is considered to be highly endangered by UNESCO (UNESCO 2019). This language law did not last for long as Euromaidan began in late 2013 and early 2014. In 2014, these laws were annulled by the parliament and later in 2018, the Ukrainian Constitutional Court called the 2012 Minority Language Laws “Unconstitutional”. As one can see, the state elites are unified behind this idea of a singular national identity without the use of the Russian language. But, these minority language laws also highlight how the elite manage to control the policy narrative as well.

The second area of human rights that is to be investigated concerning the accessibility of human rights in Ukraine is police brutality. As stated previously, “police brutality is when police officers use excessive force towards civilians” (Cao 2003). In Ukraine, there has been a history of police brutality. For example, the militia and the police had a bad reputation and were often reported to be participating in abuse of power, illegal detention, denial of judicial aid, torture, and the killing of those detained (Amnesty 2005). Prior to Euromaidan, the Ukrainian Constitution and its articles concerning the law of the militia, it was often interpreted and perceived by the government that the militia and police were seen as a protector of the state rather than a protector of the public (Frisendorf 2017). Not only was there violence and police brutality, but many of the police officers earned their positions through nepotism rather than merit (Taylor 2011). Because of this, it is safe to say that the officers were then compromised because they were held to political obligations.

This issue worsened due to the stick system that had been in place for many years prior. The stick system was a system where the more cases solved, the better chance for advancement, so more serious cases were often never solved or had been put on the back burner (Frisendorf 2017). Officers were also compromised due to the fact that salaries were low so corruption and bribes were often necessary to live. The elites of the post-Orange Revolution and leading up to Euromaidan maintained their positions through the actions of police brutality. They did so through the perpetuation of the stick system and through the acts of nepotism. Yet, during Euromaidan, the police and government created an even worse reputation for themselves after the police hired thugs, who were deployed to break up the opposition rally (Euromaidan) which ended with numerous people injured and others dead. Euromaidan is often referred to as a

turning point because there was a massive change to law enforcement due to the violence during the protest.

After Euromaidan, a number of reforms were made to the police due to the horror and violence that was seen during the protests. The first reform was dissolving the Berkut Unit in 2014 due to their participation in the Euromaidan protests. The second reform founded a new patrol police force. This force was based off of recruitment and creation were based off the Rose Revolution's plan for corrupt officers. But instead of a mass firing, all officers were slowly dismissed through a two-year period. There were also new screening and teaching methods instituted which emphasized the state's commitment to human rights, outlined when use of force was acceptable, and pushed for transparency. For the patrol police, they attracted applicants through merit than relying on the previous system of nepotism and political favors. And in order to prevent bribes and corruption through political favors, salaries were raised for the officers and new vehicles were also given. There was also a new law passed in 2015 which dissolved the national militia and created the National Ukrainian Police Force. Also, this force included those who were previously with the militia but only after a screening had taken place and whether any crimes had been committed. While these reforms were quite successful, police brutality still plagues the Ukrainian law enforcement system.

The first issue is the apparent lack of accountability. There has been indifference and lack of investigation when it comes to past abuses, particularly those during Euromaidan. This lack of accountability is worsened by the fact that the law enforcement within Ukraine failed to preserve evidence from Euromaidan which has made it difficult to proceed with prosecution (HRW 2019). There was also the acquittal of 19 anti-Maidan protesters which appeals had begun but it remains to be at a standstill which gives a foreshadowing of what the current judicial system acts like

(HRW 2019). There are also issues with arbitrary detention. In 2014, 18 people were held in a secret detention center in Kharkov for over two years before being freed in 2016. This detention was never acknowledged by the government until 2019 (HRW 2019). In 2019, a criminal investigation was ordered but the investigations of stalled (HRW 2019). Overall, despite the reforms made in 2014, the elites still have the law enforcement under their influence and are able to control the quality of the investigations which greatly impacts a state's democratic consolidation.

What is the Socio-Economic Status of these states?

The last question to be answered by the case study of Ukraine concerns the socio-economic status of the state. The two factors to be analyzed are corruption and poverty. The current definition of corruption to be used to explain Ukraine's process comes from Transparency International which states "corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. It can be classified as grand, petty and political, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs" (Transparency International 2020). Ukraine currently struggles with immense corruption and has maintained its status as a hot-topic since pre-Orange Revolution. Despite the numerous reforms, the status has remained the same. Therefore, corruption is caused by the current elites in power and those who have managed to stay in power since post-independence in the early 1990's.

According to Transparency International, Ukraine is ranked at 126th out of 180 countries that are scaled according to their corruption index (Transparency International 2020). Ukraine's actual score is 30 out of a possible 100 points (Transparency International 2020). Ukraine, as stated previously has struggled with corruption since post-Independence. During Yushchenko's presidency, there was a number of reforms put through but were met with no success. These

reforms including power dispersion due to the coalition government between Tymoshenko's party "Fatherland" and Yushchenko's party "Our Ukraine". But, these reforms actually gave the opposition more power as they were more united. In Ukraine's case, they defied scholar's expectations because power dispersion is often the best way to combat political corruption (Hellman 1998; Frye & Mansfield 2003; Andrews & Montinola 2004; Gehlbach & Malesky 2010). In addition, Yushchenko had implemented reforms like Saakashvili in order to combat police, education, judicial, and political corruption but these reforms fell flat with corruption maintaining its position as one of the biggest issues in Ukraine. The failure in reforms were due to a number of issues. The first major issue was that there seemed to have been a lack of a coherent plan. Secondly, Yushchenko's government was made up of a coalition government between two parties which seemed to have suffered from internal fighting. Because of these reasons, elites whom had been in power since post-independence were able to use these issues against Yushchenko's government and maintain the action of corruption despite the reforms put in place.

As corruption persisted, Euromaidan happened and it seems to become a turning point in combating corruption in Ukraine. There have been improvements in corruption, transparency, and openness after the Maidan Protests in late 2013 and early 2014. The reforms implemented after Euromaidan were meant to target issues like accountability in public money and police brutality. These reforms are considered to be successful because in 2017, Ukraine ranked higher compared to other European Union states like Italy and Bulgaria in the public sector in the areas of transparency and openness (USIP 2019). The reforms after Maidan have brought some change to the system but corruption still manages to have Ukraine in its hold with a number of issues (USIP 2019). Firstly, the incumbent elites have little incentive to change the political and

economic issues that come with corruption. This can be seen in areas such as tax collection and administration (USIP 2019). Secondly, civil society, though a dominant domestic actor after Euromaidan, has been focused on other issues rather than economic corruption. This can be seen in that despite of financial aid packages from international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other external actors, civil society does not pick up on corruption in this area (USIP 2019). Overall, corruption maintains to be a large issue in Ukraine despite numerous reforms. This can be caused by elites and their tight grip and large influence over the government in Ukraine.

The second area that measures socio-economic measures is looking at poverty. Poverty, according to the United Nations, "is defined as a lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods..." (UN 1995). Currently, Ukraine does suffer from moderate poverty but it has always been one of the better off states due to their resources and economic capabilities, dating back to the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. In 2016, Ukraine's poverty rate measured around to be 6.4 percent of the population was declared to be under the poverty line. Out of the 42 million people that live in Ukraine, it comes out to 2 million people live in poverty. Ukraine does receive financial aid from international organizations and external actors to help combat poverty but on the scale compared to other Post-Soviet states, their aid is definitely less. Poverty can also be caused by the fact that tax collection is quite low in Ukraine due to the immense corruption rampant. Poverty is just another way that elites manage to stay in power due to the little incentive to change the current system.

Conclusion

Ukraine, like its counterpart The Republic of Georgia, still has a long way to go in order to fully democratically consolidate. Ukraine is still under the influence of elites whom have

benefited from the corrupt system since post-independence. This can be seen in the areas of a dependent judiciary, the institution of minority language laws, and the rampant corruption within the state. While Ukraine has come quite a long way since the Orange Revolution of 2004, there is still much to be expected of the state since Euromaidan was only a few years ago. Overall, Ukraine, like the Republic of Georgia, serves as a perfect example of how domestic actors, particularly elites, can control the pace of a state's journey towards democracy.

Theoretical Implications

While elite theory and democratic transition theory do a great job at analyzing the variables and indicators listed above, it fails to account for the actions of external actors like the Russian Federation and how they use military intervention to prevent democratic consolidation within the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine. What is meant by military intervention is “the threat or use of force across state borders...without the permission of the state within those territory force is applied” (Holzgrefe 2009). Another striking similarity between The Republic of Georgia and Ukraine is that both states have a history of foreign military intervention, particularly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Color Revolutions of the early 2000's. Therefore, elite theory and democratic transition theory fail to account for the foreign military interventions which have prevented democratization within the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine.

The Republic of Georgia has a history of foreign military intervention stemming from post-independence. Both of these foreign military interventions have the same actors partaking which include the Republic of Georgia and The Russian Federation. The first military intervention began in the early 1990's when the separatist region of Abkhazia had voted in a referendum to separate from the Republic of Georgia which sparked issues. This referendum was sparked because Abkhazia's government were and are currently threatened by the push for

Georgian Nationalism starting under Shevardnadze's government and continued under new policies in Saakashvili's government (Garb 2009). This conflict soon turned violent between The Republic of Georgia and Abkhazia. The Abkhazians believe that the Georgians acted with genocidal intent because the conflict was ridden with violence and destruction of cultural and historical treasures of Abkhazia's history (Garb 2009). How the Russian Federation comes into the picture all comes down to Day Zero and the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

What drove the Russian Federation to officially enter the conflict came down to the citizenship law decided on Day Zero which gave citizens of the previous Soviet Union the choice to either take citizenship of the territory they are residing in or take Russian citizenship. In Abkhazia, 80 to 90 percent of the population holds a Russian passport (Allin 2008). Due to the violence, The Russian Federation came in and to this day act as peacekeeper which prevents any further conflict but also extends Russian influence within the area. Yet, it should be stated that the people of Abkhazia want independence as their own state, not a part of the Russian Federation nor The Republic of Georgia. For instance, this can be seen in the 2004 election where the pro-Russian candidate, backed by Moscow, was not elected despite the clear interference on the Russian Federation's part. However, the Russian Federation still manages to influence the region and use its leverage, particularly now as Putin pushes his "Russian World" policy which protects citizens and compatriots, which much of Abkhazia are both. The Republic of Georgia and the Russian Federation are also involved with a second frozen conflict but this conflict surrounds the region of South Ossetia.

The conflict with South Ossetia began during the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the beginning of Georgian Independence. Violence broke out in the 1990's after the dissolution of Soviet Union and the push for Georgian nationalism aka the slogan "Georgia for Georgians".

Many in South Ossetia, like the population in Abkhazia were afraid and threatened by the push for Georgian Nationalism. The majority of those living in South Ossetia took the option after Day Zero and hold Russian citizenship and hold residency within Georgia but do not claim Georgian citizenship (Allin 2008). This violence in the early era ended with a peace agreement that allowed for Peacekeeping forces which included all three parties of Russia, Georgia, and South Ossetia. Yet, tension began once again in 2004 under Saakashvili's tenure as presidency.

Tensions had been building since 2004 since Saakashvili had won presidency after the successful Rose Revolution. One of Saakashvili's main points included maintaining Georgia's territorial integrity which included South Ossetia. In 2008, Saakashvili went to "restore" Georgian control over South Ossetia which sparked violence not only from within South Ossetia but also with Russia. This military action created an issue with the Russian Federation and they not only recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states but also intervened militarily on part of South Ossetia. The Russian federation also maintains control and due to having two separatist regions with occasional conflict between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia, democratization has been put on hold in some of these regions. Elite theory and democratic transition theory also fails to account for the behavior of conflict between the Russian Federation and The Republic of Georgia which creates issues when trying to explain the democratic consolidation process of the Republic of Georgia.

Ukraine has also suffered from foreign military intervention though it began quite later compared to the Republic of Georgia. As stated previously, Euromaidan created numerous reforms but it also led to a situation where The Russian Federation annexed Crimea, although initially denied. Crimea has a history with the Russian Federation beginning during the reign of Catherine the Great in the Russian Empire and ending with the dissolution of the Soviet Union

when Ukraine took ownership over the peninsula. The Russian Federation was allowed to lease their naval base but that had created discontent amongst the military elite in Moscow. Also, Crimea has a large ethnic Russian population dating back to the Soviet Union along with the Crimean Tartars whom returned after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. To this day, The Russian Federation still has control over the peninsula which affects the democratization process in Ukraine particularly when it comes to free and fair elections. Essentially, elite theory and democratic transition theory could have not accounted neither for Putin's' actions nor the effect on democratization this action would take.

Along with the annexation of Ukraine, there has been conflict in the Eastern part of the country particularly in the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk which are collectively referred under the name of Donbass. This violence is between Ukrainian forces and Russian backed separatists (Russia has denied involvement with these separatists but NATO and Ukraine have reported a build- up of Russian military personnel and equipment along with Russian shelling at the border) (CFR 2019). While there is technically no Russian military involved in these regions, there is presence of Russian interference. In addition, many scholars and government leaders believe that the separatists are not acting on their own accord but are rather under the influence of Moscow. This can be seen with the Russian support for Ukraine to allow these regions to have a special status which can give them veto power on federal initiatives. This could heavily affect the democratization process and elite theory and democratic transition theory fail to account for this push for presence within Ukraine's process towards democratization.

Conclusion

Overall, while elite theory and democratic transition theory do a fantastic job at explaining the democratic consolidation process through the variables and indicators measured

above, it fails to account for foreign military interference and how that affects a state's democratic consolidation process. From what the research shows, is that the Republic of Georgia has democratized quite well since the Rose Revolution but continues to fail in the areas concerning free and fair elections, free media, and judicial corruption. Yet there is hope as it seems that the government is taking steps to combat these issues but due to the newly instituted law, it is too soon to say therefore more research is needed in the future. In the case of Ukraine, the Orange Revolution needed to happen but Ukraine mostly began their journey after Euromaidan and the success of reforms right after Euromaidan compared to those reforms that were instituted post-Orange Revolution. Despite these reforms, there still remains to be issues of a dependent judiciary, minority language laws, and immense corruption. Consequently, it is too soon to tell with Euromaidan and whether the reforms can be considered a success and have furthered to process of democratic consolidation in Ukraine. Therefore, more research needs to be conducted on how foreign military intervention affects democratization and how elite theory and democratic transition theory can learn to account for the actions of external geo-political actors.

Variables	The Republic of Georgia	Ukraine
Style of Governance	Parliamentary Democratic Republic under a multi-party system	Unitary Republic under a semi-presidential system
New vs. Old Elites	New Elites	Old Elites
Elite Influence	Large Amount of Elite Influence	Large Amount of Elite Influence
Freedom House Score	61	62
Free Press	Free Press	Free Press
Free and Fair Elections	Yes	Yes
Political Party Prevalence	No	Yes
Type of Judiciary	Dependent	Dependent but getting better
Minority Rights	Yes but there are issues	Yes but there are issues
Police Brutality	Yes	Yes but has gotten better since Euromaidan

Corruption	Yes but not as much petty corruption	Yes
Poverty	Large amount of poverty	Moderate amount of poverty

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