

## THE REGIME AND THE “REVOLUTION” IN POST-SOVIET GEORGIA

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Three revolutions, one after another, replaced the three post-communist leaders of Georgia:

- (1) the Round Table and Zviad Gamsakhurdia replaced the communists;
- (2) Gamsakhurdia's cabinet was replaced by Eduard Shevardnadze, and
- (3) Mikhail Saakashvili removed Shevardnadze from his post.

Each of them changed the fortunes of the country and the nation, but only the last event was tagged as a “revolution.” It is obviously viewed as the most important among the three and prompts us to ask whether it is absolutely correct to describe Saakashvili's coming to power as a revolution. Is it not a ploy designed to boost the importance of the regime change in the eyes of the world community and the local population? To answer these questions we should answer another, broader, question: Did the regime change that removed Eduard Shevardnadze and became known as the Rose Revolution have the characteristics of a revolution?

By revolution we mean the very specific and profound impact a regime exerts on social order—it is much more than a conflict that replaces the government. A revolution brings about changes in the political, economic, spiritual, and social spheres of the nation's life, which take some time to become obvious and are never immediately manifest the very day after forces come to power which choose to call themselves “revolutionary.” The events of November 2003 in Georgia were called a revolution immediately after the coup was completed. During the three years that separate us from that time enough material has been accumulated to assess the nature of the changes that have taken place and were brought about by Mikhail Saakashvili's coming to power. The Rose Revolution is a term prompted by the immediate impressions of the non-constitutional power change in Georgia. A revolution is not merely a particular method of regime change—it is an event of profound importance for the country's economic, social, and political

life. Those Western authors who have devoted much time to the theory of revolution and who have written extensively on the subject<sup>1</sup> interpret

<sup>1</sup> See, for example: A. Giddens, *Sotsiologia*, Moscow, 1999, p. 568; A. Heywood, *Politologia*, Second edition, Moscow, 2006, p. 522.

it as a particular method of regime change that brings more radical results than other seemingly similar actions. A revolution means replacement of the top leaders accomplished by a mass illegitimate movement that results in deep-cutting changes.

## The National Revolution: Zviad Gamsakhurdia Comes to Power

The following criteria can be applied to the three regime changes in Georgia: (1) all of them “excited” the masses and relied on unprecedentedly broad social movements; (2) all of them caused changes that left deep imprints on the country’s sociopolitical development. Each of the regime changes in post-Soviet Georgia is characterized by different quantitative criteria. The public movement that brought Zviad Gamsakhurdia and the Round Table to power was the largest; the change became possible after the first competitive and multiparty election in the country’s history. At the same time, the election served as a smokescreen for the general inspiration and unheard-of popular activity that made the election possible in the first place. Indeed, the general excitement went far beyond the acceptable limits, but the rulers of still Soviet Georgia were loath to use force to contain it. The change in regime made the Georgian nation the entity of political power and put an end to the Communist Party’s domination. Georgia became an independent state, which brought about serious changes in its political system. I have in mind not only the multiparty elections, but also the unheard-of enthusiasm of the masses brought together by the idea of national independence. The Georgian nation as a united and undivided entity was the revolution’s driving force.

During the last years of Soviet power the Georgian language and culture served as the sources of the Georgians’ political activity and the core of political interests and motivations. The national independence movement was driven by the fear that the country would lose its national identity and mother tongue. The proud nation found it hard to accept a political context in which it could not fully realize its national specifics, which explains why the Georgian nation as a unitary entity (in which there were still no groups driven by economic considerations) served as the basis of the political process. There were no social gaps either: unity was consolidated by the language and culture, two factors that united rather than disunited the nation. These two elements served as the cornerstones of political awareness, which took the form of a striving for national independence outside the Soviet Union. This was a simple and easily recognized interest based on the shared social aspirations that united all. The Zviad-ists came to power during a conflict between the Soviet and Communist Party functionaries and the nationalists with the majority of the nation behind them. The Georgians’ traditionally tolerant national culture completed the process by bringing the sides closer together and proclaiming the nation’s independence. The most radical changes occurred in the political and cultural spheres: (1) the Communists were removed from power, their place at the helm taken by Georgian nationalists; (2) Georgia became an independent state; (3) all spheres of social life were transferred to the Georgian language, which replaced the Russian; (4) the rule of the toiling masses was replaced with the rule of the Georgian nation.

Nevertheless, the economic and social structures remained the same: industry and trade remained state-dominated; the collective and state farms survived, while the new elite stood firm against pri-

vatization. The state structure remained basically the same with certain, mainly limited, changes (for example, the institutions of prefectures, the presidency, etc. were introduced).

There was no new Fundamental Law; the Soviet Constitution was merely adapted to the new realities. The ruling circles were probably convinced that Georgia was not yet ready to embrace radical changes, which, at that time, would have spelled a wide-scale catastrophe for the ordinary people. The elite opted for a protracted period of transition to build a foundation for the country's complete independence. The Preamble to the Constitution adopted in March 1991 with amendments and addenda directly stated that one of the key stages of the national-liberation movement was completed on 28 October, 1990 with the victory of the national forces at the multiparty democratic election. According to the authors of the Fundamental Law, it ushered in a new era that would completely restore the republic's independence. During the period of transition, before a new constitution appeared, the old one (with corresponding amendments and addenda) was to remain the Fundamental Law. Still, a month later, on 9 April, 1991, Georgia declared its sovereignty. This was done without achieving the prerequisites of the country's independence, which the Constitution envisaged in the Preamble.

Later, after the Rose Revolution, Chairman of the National Bank of Georgia Gotsiridze, one of those who declared the republic's independence, said in a documentary directed by T. Chagelishvili: "We were not aware of the extent to which the Georgian economy was integrated into the all-Union economy. We did not know what was taken out of the country and what was brought in."

The country's independence, which remained deeply integrated in the all-Union economy, undermined the Gamsakhurdia regime. The disrupted economic ties negatively affected the nation's standard of living and deprived the rulers of their former popularity. Culture as a political factor that served the basis of the nation's political interests and goals was gradually losing its former political impact. Some of the social circles that expected much from privatization understood that the regime had no intention of implementing it. I have in mind those who were actively operating in the shadow economy, had enough money, as well as the right connections to profit from privatization; the "red directors"—heads of state enterprises that gradually came to a standstill under Gamsakhurdia—who funded the coup d'état were disappointed when the president suddenly announced that the country would move toward state capitalism. The public translated this as a return to socialism; there was a lot of talk about Gamsakhurdia wishing to secure his grip on power and the economy. His regime fell because capitalism was too slow to come to the country.

## The Bourgeois Revolution: Shevardnadze Comes to Power

A new head of state meant radical changes in the political, social, and economic spheres. The country acquired a new, liberal constitution that made Georgia a presidential republic with a separation of powers. The private sector rapidly expanded at the expense of the public sector; the class of owners became much larger. The workforce migrated from the public to the private sector: in 1990-1998, the share of those who worked in the public sector dropped from 75.5 to 34.7 percent while the share of people engaged in the private sector increased from 24.5 to 65.3 percent.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See: *Statistical Yearbook of Georgia*, Tbilisi, 1999, p. 45 (in Georgian).

It should be said that it was not the November events of 2003 that changed the official stand on the private property issue. Under Eduard Shevardnadze private property, and the constitutional guarantees of it, was described as the cornerstone of the new society. It was under Eduard Shevardnadze that the country acquired a class of private owners based on the developing private sector, and the class of Georgian bourgeoisie. It was under Shevardnadze that a new type of social system appeared and developed. The transition from socialism to capitalism was completed; from that time on the political process unfolded in the new economic and social contexts. Social gaps widened, and the contradictions between the rich and the poor became even more acute. The political process fell under the impact of the developing social and economic classes and was greatly affected by mass poverty; the national and cultural factors receded into the background. The new groups worked hard to put pressure on the government to force it act in their interests.

Social inequality and impoverishment of most of the nation toppled the Shevardnadze regime and brought Mikhail Saakashvili to power. The fact that the event came to be known as the Rose Revolution did not mean that the transition was free from coercion. Force was used, albeit to a much lesser extent than before, when the regime change that removed Gamsakhurdia developed into a civil war.

Under Shevardnadze the country moved forward: it acquired a new economic, social, and political system and abandoned developed socialism for capitalism. His coming to power can be described as a bourgeois revolution.

There is a more or less general consensus that the Rose Revolution was triggered by falsifications of the results of the November 2003 parliamentary election, but the real causes go deeper than that. Popular discontent with the election results just set the ball rolling. The deepening social inequality and the contradictions between the poor majority and the rich minority, as well as between business and bureaucracy, were the true reasons for the removal of Shevardnadze and his regime.

There were subjective reasons as well:

- (1) the political elite split when some of its prominent members joined the opposition on the eve of the revolution;
- (2) this part of the Georgian opposition was supported from abroad;
- (3) the well-organized opposition mobilized and brought huge crowds into the streets;
- (4) the opposition largely controlled the NGO network and foreign foundations functioning in the republic;
- (5) the opposition had the support of the media, especially of those which it controlled (Rustavi-2 TV sided with the opposition);
- (6) the regime, which had enough strength to restore law and order, remained passive and undecided.

## **The Rose Revolution or a Globalizers' Coup?**

To decide whether the Rose Revolution was a revolution or a mere coup d'état, we should return to two of the parameters described above. The huge crowds engaged in unconstitutional activities characterize it as a revolution. In November 2003, the change of power was brought about through

mass illegal actions and the use of force, which produced a psychological rather than physical effect. The scope of the changes, on the other hand, makes the picture less clear: November 2003 changed a lot, but not enough to assess the changes as revolutionary. The changes should be assessed according to the following parameters:

- (1) replacement of the old state machinery with a new one;
- (2) emergence of a generation of globalizers;
- (3) anti-criminal struggle;
- (4) institutionalization of capitalism, which finally left the stage of “uncivilized capitalism” behind;
- (5) institutionalization of state power by tightening state discipline, accounting, and control;
- (6) constitutional changes.

## **Struggle Against Corruption and Smuggling. Institutionalization of State Power**

The November events were of an obviously anti-bureaucratic nature. The previous regime relied on bureaucracy for its continued existence, while the people and the business sphere, which made the bureaucracy rich, were dead set against it. Before coming to power, Mikhail Saakashvili promised that the bureaucrats would lose their ill-gotten gains, which meant expropriation of expropriators. He also promised to retrieve the money corrupt bureaucrats had stashed away in Swiss banks. After coming to power, however, the new president limited himself to expropriating several expropriators, his actions never reaching the promised scope, while the second promise was never fulfilled at all. Once in power, Saakashvili and his movement passed a law on illegal property, the effect of which proved negligible: several heads of criminal groups lost their possessions. The explanation is simple: once in power, the “revolutionaries” began grabbing property left and right. Immediately after the coup, the new people in power moved into business and started amassing property. On the second day the newly elected parliament was in effect, its deputy, one of the active members of the United National Movement (the party that won the election), was detained in the State Chancellery as he passed on a bribe from Batumi businessmen to one of the top cabinet members. The latter’s name was never disclosed to the public.

Corruption and smuggling were two targets of the new regime. According to the media, however, it moved mainly against those who had no patrons in the corridors of power; the political elite was rumored to be guilty of both vices. Shortly before he was removed from his post State Minister Khaindrava, in a TV interview, accused the head of military police, a man close to the then Minister of Defense Okruashvili, of smuggling. In her article “How Nogaideli Became Rich,”<sup>3</sup> journalist Eka Sekhniashvili referred to documents stating that Premier Nogaideli had made it rich as finance minister through shady dealings involving state treasury obligations. According to journalists, as minister of the interior at one time, Okruashvili became interested in the shady dealings in the Ministry of Finance; the then Premier Zurab Zhvania moved in to protect future premier Zurab Nogaideli.

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<sup>3</sup> *Alia*, 23-24 November, 2006.

The new regime strengthened the institutional structure of state power, tightened control over the state functionaries and their accountability, and replaced bureaucratic control over society with state control. Yet it was petty smugglers and bribe-takers with no influential patrons who were sacrificed to the new rules of the game. A series of recent scandalous publications, in particular the stories of former head of the forest department B. Giorgobiani and former head of the auditing chamber Nachkebia, revealed that state functionaries and at least some of the post-revolutionary political elite had been shamelessly indulging themselves in smuggling and corruption.

Nothing much has changed since the Shevardnadze era. Bureaucracy and the political elite have merged with the business community and use the state machinery to promote its, and their, interests. B. Giorgobiani said in so many words on TV that the republic's "forest business" had been divided among district heads, the public prosecutor's, state security, and central power structures. What he revealed about timber smuggling from Georgia cost B. Giorgobiani his post and his country, which he left.

## **Institutionalization of Capitalism: Business and the Government**

The new leaders have been concentrating on institutionalizing capitalism at home. In the past, under Shevardnadze the state encouraged business activities with the conviction that the objective historical process of capital accumulation would finally produce a national bourgeoisie that would need law and order. It was expected, therefore, that the period of primary "uncivilized" accumulation of capital would develop into civilized capitalism. Those in power used these arguments to justify the permissiveness of the Shevardnadze era and avoided coercion as a way to make developing businesses toe the line. Under Shevardnadze, it was a more or less spontaneous process that guided state-building. The republic became one huge marketplace. The old elite, which included, along with the president, the future leaders of the Rose Revolution (Saakashvili, Zhvania, Nino Burjanadze, Nogaideli, and others) exchanged the unrestricted freedom of big businesses for the money they needed to pay for election campaigns (often at the expense of the state treasury). On the eve of the Rose Revolution, for example, during TV debates with Nogaideli, the then State Minister Deputy Zoidze revealed that during the parliamentary campaign of 1999, the budget lost a large share of petrodollars. He reminded his opponent that the Civil Alliance (Shevardnadze's party) and oil business signed an agreement under which businessmen were exempt from taxes in exchange for the Alliance's financial support.<sup>4</sup>

The new political elite steered the country toward institutionalizing capitalism; this meant that business should follow the rules and norms established for it by the state; business activities were subjected to closer accounting and control and were expected to serve the tasks of state-building and public order. In real life, however, the steps designed to translate the above into practice were checked by the ruling elites' political and economic interests and were channeled against micro and small businesses. This narrowed down the ruling party's social base and sent up the level of public discontent. The process reached its peak in the wave of clashes between the police and petty merchants that swept Georgia. The government wanted them to vacate the marketplaces where they worked to put up more prestigious projects instead. The merchants, in turn, refused to move. The government sent the

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<sup>4</sup> See: Kurieri TV program, 30 June, 2003, at 9 p.m.

police to teach the recalcitrant traders a lesson; the infuriated crowd pushed the police back and occupied the market. The government, in turn, dispatched the riot police; law and order was finally restored after fierce clashes.

Institutionalization of capitalism presupposes that the business community should become accountable to the government, while the official structures will tighten their control over it. From that time on the business community was expected to stay within the law. This makes the law extremely important for businesses to remain afloat. The government is trying to regulate business with the aim of helping it to grow stronger—but this regulation is not at all to the liking of micro and medium businesses. Institutionalization brings to the fore the sharp contradictions between large and medium and between small and micro businesses. The latter two find it especially hard to obey the rules—the new control methods demand money. This explains the protests against the government, which obligated petty merchants to buy cash registers to improve control over their transactions. The relatively large businesses with more money were in a better state—the new requirements rid them of their relatively small rivals.

The coup undermined the public mechanism of control over the ruling elite and its urge to expand its power, which made political control over the business community much tighter, more direct, and more obvious. The cabinet openly threatened businesses to force them to obey its political aims. State functionaries continue to patronize businesses (a phenomenon inherited from the days of Eduard Shevardnadze), but it seems that now fewer businesses are under state protection, although they are larger in size. By gradually developing into an economic regime, the political regime is undermining honest market competition. Large firms with high-ranking patrons in the government and among the political elite squeeze their competitors from the market by non-economic methods.

Institutionalization of capitalism has encouraged the expropriation of private property. After the revolution, donations of property to the state became “fashionable.” The *Alia* newspaper wrote in this respect: “Recently, the number of alienations-donations in Georgia has reached catastrophic dimensions.”<sup>5</sup> According to the Notary Chamber, in 2002 in Tbilisi alone, 499 contracts of alienation and donation were registered; the figure for the provinces was 833. In 2003, there were 1,059 such transactions in Tbilisi and 425 in the provinces; the figures for 2004 were: 1,890 in Tbilisi and 728 in the provinces. The newspaper continued: “It is hard to say whether the public prosecutor’s office was involved, but knowing how fond the government is of taking away other people’s property, there appears to be no doubt that it was. Here is a far from complete list of the donated enterprises: the Elektrovozostroitel (39 percent of the total number of shares) and Elektrovagonostroitel (42 percent) joint-stock companies; PLCs Arena meat packing plant (60 percent); Farma-Alliance pharmaceutical company (51 percent); Traktorny tractor factory (13.4 percent); the Elektrotehnik joint-stock company, which produces electronic devices (8.8 percent); PLC Idzhiey cast-iron producer (50 percent), a car factory in Kutaisi (59 percent), etc. According to Melashvili, a member of the National Front, this frenzied activity could have become possible only if the country was flooded with investments. He added that even China, which attracted huge amounts of money, was never flooded with investments and concluded that what was going on in Georgia meant that the old owners had simply been robbed of their property. The fact that markets, expensive buildings, and land plots changed hands testified to it. The shareholders of the Zhiner energy firm, which rented the Zhinvalskaiia hydropower plant to supply Tbilisi with electric power and water and created good profits, lost 61 percent of its shares. On the same day, 13 January, 2005, its nine owners had to sign a contract on donating different parts of their shares. Some of the enterprises listed above were not particularly profitable; some of them were doing well. There are facts that say that the state forced the owners to part with property in favor of the state.

<sup>5</sup> *Alia*, 21-22 December, 2006.

The director of Liakhvi, for example, signed a contract of donation under a procedural agreement with the public prosecutor's office. The director of Kommersant-95, another firm appropriated by the state, signed a similar document in prison without consulting fourteen shareholders. The minutes of their meeting, at which they agreed to part with the shares, appeared twenty days later. Today, both directors are free."<sup>6</sup>

The laws and regulations applied to the institutionalization of capitalism are spearheaded against small businesses: they find it hard to adjust themselves to the new rules, while the law-enforcement structures find it easy to blackmail and rob their owners.

## Replacing the Old State Machinery with New

Those who are building democracy in Georgia are guided by the task of creating new, politically neutral state machinery able to keep in check all the rivaling political forces and teach them to obey the democratic behavior code. From the very beginning of the republic's post-Soviet development, the national bureaucracy has been a slave of the dominant political force, an instrument it used to remove political rivals. This is especially true of the courts of justice, the police, the state security structures, and the public prosecutor's office. The post-communist republic has evidently inherited from its predecessor a state which is a fusion of the government and the political elite. It is this special feature that is the main source of reproduction and development of the political system's authoritarian trends. This fusion interferes with political competitiveness and cements the economic foundations of the political domination of one group or another. Business and the economy are subordinated to political interests. Some of the Soviet political features are thus reproduced: politics and the economy are fused into a single whole in which the economy is dominated by politics and is, therefore, excessively politicized. This became especially evident when, some time ago, the country's political leaders ordered private firms, which had nothing to do either with wine-growing or wine production, to buy grapes from Kakhetian wine-growers to avert mass protests. Under Shevardnadze, who was busy building up state institutions and expanding their influence, the ruling elite and bureaucracy formed a political alliance based on mutually advantageous market principles: the state functionaries exchanged their political support of the government for administrative powers used to promote private interests. In this way, the bureaucracy developed into a new social stratum that took the state and society hostage; this new social group delegated its members to the newly developing bourgeoisie, thus transforming its administrative powers into economic. Then minister of communications Indzhia is one of the most graphic examples: after he became minister, he also became a millionaire with vast properties in the communication sphere. The most enterprising among the state functionaries grew rich under the umbrella of the omnipotent bureaucracy where state control and accounting were virtually non-existent. Unbridled privatization and the business community's consistent violation of laws created a new social stratum.

Those who worked in the state structures (the police, public prosecutor's, security, and taxation structures) could improve their statuses in the economic system. In this way, the state institutions fused with the private sector and interfered with the very much-needed institutionalization of the state by furthering the civil servants' private economic and business interests. This paralyzed everything that should have been done on the domestic scene and placed private interests above those of the state.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibidem.

State development required stricter state discipline and demanded that civil servants and administrative power adhere faithfully to the law. What is more, the government should be transformed into a tool for carrying out policy. After November 2003, the political elite resolved to establish its complete control over the bureaucrats to use them as a political tool. Throughout its post-communist history, Georgia has been gradually and surely changing the structure of its state machinery; it was only after November 2003 that the government became resolved to weed out the remnants of the communist past and move closer to Western standards.

There are three directions in which the process is unfolding:

- (1) creation of new structures to replace the Soviet ones;
- (2) new methods of recruiting civil servants;
- (3) changes in personnel management.

The law-enforcement sphere, which was more punitive than law-enforcing and was the most corrupt, according to common opinion, experienced the most radical changes. The old structures were replaced with new ones immediately after the revolution: the old traffic police was liquidated; today the streets are patrolled by police that are responsible for highway control and keep an eye on street crime. Old employees were dismissed en masse and the vacancies filled with new inexperienced officers.

Today vacancies in the civil service are filled by means of competitive selection. This method could have expanded the bureaucracy's social base, added transparency to its functioning, facilitated public control over employment, and helped to employ honest and professional people. Competition could have promoted social mobility based on merits, experience, and knowledge. This, in turn, would have stabilized the political system, made society more democratic, and created meritocracy. However, political and clan interests are undermining the new method's efficiency and turning this method into a "democratic disguise" of the ruling elite's interests, since society has no adequate force and influence to bridle the top circles' lust for power.

Personnel management has also changed: the ruling elite is convinced that those who served and acquired experience under the old regime cannot be used in the new conditions: they are very slow to master Western standards and progressive methods. Civil servants were driven away in large numbers, and after the revolution the vacancies were filled by means of competitive selection. Today, the average age of Georgian bureaucrats is much lower than before: all people of 50 and over were weeded out without explanation. All the new bosses (ministers and others) ordered their subordinates to resign; after that the new functionaries were employed by means of competitive selection. At the second stage, those who passed the tests with the best marks were invited for interviews: the final decisions rested with the bosses. In the absence of a real system of distribution of powers and their mutual control and restraint, as well as of public control over the authorities and responsible governance, the system became a smokescreen behind which voluntarism and subjectivism in personnel management is flourishing. Patronage is reaching far and wide, encompassing not only political, but also the administrative posts of sector and department heads, etc. The November regime change extended the administrative powers of ministers and administration heads by undermining the rights of salaried workers. This created even stronger clan ties. As soon as Defense Minister Okruashvili was removed from his post, nearly all those employed by means of competitive selection were dismissed. Even though the screening was completed several days before the minister's resignation, he did not have time to authorize the results, and D. Kezerashvili, the newly appointed minister, annulled the results and set the date for a new screening process.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See: *Rezonansi*, 1 February, 2007.

## Local Elections

The 2006 local elections opened a new page in the history of undermining the democratic mechanisms. The ruling elite exploited its administrative resource, not so much to falsify the results as to put the competitors in uneven conditions. It used

- (1) gaps in the laws;
- (2) the administrative resource, which allowed the people at the helm to use the weight of the state to tip the balance in their favor;
- (3) the business community completely dominated by the ruling elite, which allowed the latter to stem the money flow going to the opposition;
- (4) wage earners who were completely at the mercy of their bosses.

The government skillfully exploited the fact that the laws said nothing about the exact terms for holding elections: the president set a date that favored his party and, unexpectedly for the opposition, cut the campaigning short, which left the latter short of time.

The ruling party had all the state departments at its disposal: it could mobilize the electorate to acquire the desired results without falsifications. According to Kukava, member of the parliament from the Conservative Party, “the government became even more dangerous; it maneuvered the opposition into an impossible situation. While in the past the results were falsified by merely adding the needed number of ballot papers to the ballot boxes, today the government relies on money. The entire state machinery is busy gathering votes for the ruling party.”<sup>8</sup> In Imeretia, the employees of the taxation structures were instructed to gather at least twenty people each who would pledge to vote for the United National Movement, the ruling party. Gugava, a member of the Labor Party, said that the civil servants had been persuaded to vote for the National Movement under the threat of losing their jobs.<sup>9</sup>

The heads of the district administrations (*gamgebelis*) used money to organize and encourage the movement’s active members. According to one of the most active of them, who also sat on the local election commission, the *gamgebeli* of the Isan District of Tbilisi gathered the activists of this movement to promise 70 laris to everyone who enlisted twenty supporters of the National Movement and reminded the gathering that despite the outcome he would remain in his place and that “sooner or later” they might need his support.<sup>10</sup> The National Movement’s functionaries used money, psychological pressure, violence, and blackmail to mobilize the voters. This is what members of the election commissions from the ruling party had to say. One of them, for example, said: “The National Movement activists demonstrated high efficiency: they brought old people in cars to the polling stations nearly by force; the voters held the Movement’s red booklets and were instructed to be very careful and mark No. 5 (the number of the National Movement) on the ballot form.”<sup>11</sup>

With the help of the taxation service, the Public Prosecutor’s Office, and the Ministry of the Interior, the ruling elite scared the business community enough to stop funding the opposition. This explains the vast gap between the sums the ruling party and the opposition reaped in the form of donations during the 2006 election campaign (see Table 1).

The above testifies to the moral and psychological climate in the business community after the revolution. The number of sources funding the National Movement and the opposition parties sug-

<sup>8</sup> *Alia*, 12-13 December, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> See: *Rezonansi*, 18 October, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*.

Table 1

The Party	Donations, laris	Sources of funding	
		Legal persons	Physical persons
United National Movement	3,667,383	123	23
Davitashvili, Khidasheli, Berdenishvili Bloc (opposition)	88,956.21	1	26
Industry Will Save Georgia (opposition)	523,758.51	8	3
Sakartvelos gza (opposition)	43,945	0	3
Labor Party (opposition)	13,277	0	from physical persons

Based on data supplied by *Alia*, 31 October-1 November, 2006.

gests that businessmen were afraid to give money to the opposition. While the National Movement received money from 146 sources, the main opposition parties were funded from 41. The money came from physical and legal persons, the correlation between them changing depending on the recipients. The National Movement was mainly supported by legal persons—123 compared with 23 physical persons, while the opposition was mainly supported by physical persons: 32 compared with 9 legal persons. Obviously afraid of giving money to the opposition, businesses preferred individual donations, legal persons being strictly controlled by the state through financial institutions.

## Raising a Generation of Georgian Globalizers

The Rose Revolution destroyed the political barriers that interfered with the free development of the new ideological and spiritual processes. “Liberate Yourself from the Old Prejudices—Be Free” is the slogan of a TV youth program run by the public channel, which puts in a nutshell the meaning of the changes in Georgia’s national identity and behavior norms. The role of national identity in personal self-awareness has been undermined; public life is losing its typically Georgian features. Prof. M. Tsatsanashvili has pointed out: “There is a lot of talk about the victories scored by our government, yet they are scored at the expense of Georgian spirituality.”<sup>12</sup>

The educational system is playing one of the key roles in raising a generation of globalizers. It, and science, has been subjected to the most radical changes.

After the revolution, science and education fell into the clutches of the globalizers of the Soros Foundation and the Freedom Institute. K. Lomaia, former head of the Soros Foundation in Georgia, was appointed minister of the newly created Ministry of Education and Science. The new minister dismissed the old employees and hired a new staff by means of competitive selection. The newly hired civil servants have close ties with the republic’s globalization centers (the Soros Foundation—Open Society Institute-Georgia, Freedom Institute, and others) and the ruling party. The republic’s Acade-

<sup>12</sup> *Akhalgazrda Iverieli*, 30 November-10 December, 2006.

my of Sciences was reformed: its institutes became legal entities, while the Academy was deprived of its function of guiding scientific and scholarly studies. This function now belongs to the Ministry of Education. The secondary and higher education system was also transformed; enrolment in the higher educational establishments is based on nationwide entrance exams, which have largely eliminated corruption in this sphere. The academic councils acquired the right to elect the rectors, certain functions of whom were transferred to the councils and elected senates. The changes raised a wave of opposition in the academic community, which had its own ideas about the future of science in Georgia. Tbilisi State University (TSU), for example, was rocked by fierce clashes between the rector's office and the lecturers who objected to the changes, which violated the laws. Only the police were able to pacify the professors and disperse the most active protestors.

The secondary education system was also reformed: parents acquired more rights at the expense of the rights and powers of teachers and directors. The parents and teachers elect boards of guardians, which, in turn, are empowered to elect the directors. The state no longer funds the schools—the money goes to the pupils, each of whom is free to change schools, taking his money with him. This was done to improve school teaching and education, while real life, as is often the case, produced different results. Small schools have found it hard to survive, which has increased the number of larger schools with larger student bodies. The number of students becomes too large for efficient management, maintenance of discipline, and good academic performance. This is indirectly shown by widespread private tutoring.

Management of science and education has allegedly become more democratic, but today it is far removed from true democracy: it merely camouflages the power and influence of the Ministry of Education and Science, which controls everything in its sphere of competence. This explains why the election results of the TSU rector brought no surprises: everyone knew that the Ministry's candidate would win.

## *C o n c l u s i o n*

The question “Is it absolutely correct to describe Saakashvili's coming to power as a revolution?” should be answered in the negative. It did not affect the very roots of social order, or the forms of its social stratification and distribution of power and influence. The “revolution” produced mainly quantitative, rather than qualitative changes: the state and the government became even closer, the civil service became more politicized, while the political machine was completely appropriated by the ruling elite. Business and the economy are completely dominated by the government political goals. Society fears the state structures even more than before. All the changes in the post-revolutionary era are rather superficial, but administration has improved because of the institutionalization of state power. Some of the changes were inherited from the previous regime: the “revolution” merely added to their scope and pace. This is true of the reform in the education system. Still, all the post-November 2003 changes unfolded against the extended reproduction of the elite administration methods also inherited from the Shevardnadze era. There have been no qualitative changes that could help the country to finally leave the stage of post-communism behind. This is explained by the specifics of the democratization process, which was never an aim in itself in Georgia, but was launched in the interests of new forms of social stratification and economic structure. For this reason, the process is inevitably accompanied by worsening economic, social, and cultural conditions.