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THE ELUSIVE QUESTION OF SUCCESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION
AN ANALYSIS OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION FIELD IN GEORGIA

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Hiermit bestätige ich, dass ich die Dissertation selbständig verfasst und keine anderen als die von mir angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel benutzt habe.

I hereby declare that I have independently written the present dissertation and that I did not use any other sources or aid than the indicated ones.

Berlin, 28 April 2011
Lili Di Puppò

Abstract

The study of “the elusive question of success in the fight against corruption: an analysis of the anti-corruption field in Georgia” aims to shed light at the phenomenon of the construction of success in anti-corruption. I start my study with trying to elucidate the question of the “miracle of anti-corruption” or how anti-corruption “succeeds in claiming success” considering the impossibility of proving the concrete impact of anti-corruption activities on levels of corruption. How does anti-corruption continue to develop without an evidence of a concrete reduction of corruption as a result of this activity? Drawing on the work of anthropologists of development, I argue that success is socially produced in anti-corruption through a process that appears to signal the emergence of a Bourdieu’s field. This construction of a field succeeds on the basis of a representation of technical rationality, the representation of anti-corruption activity as the disinterested and rational attempt to provide solutions to the corruption problem. Notwithstanding this construction of coherence, we observe that claims to success in anti-corruption remain fragile as revealed by criticisms questioning the genuineness and effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts.

To shed light on the recurring fragility of claims to success in anti-corruption, I analyse anti-corruption as a dynamic field. I turn my attention to the interactions between anti-corruption actors through a study of post-revolutionary Georgia. The question underlying this analysis is whether conflicts in the field reveal the emergence of an autonomous anti-corruption field in the sense of the stabilisation of a representation of anti-corruption as a disinterested attempt to provide technical solutions to the problem of corruption. First, I analyse the interactions between three main anti-corruption actors in Georgia: the Georgian government, international organisations and non-governmental organisations. The analysis of these interactions reveals the paradoxes of the production of success in the field. Actors in the field build a representation of success and try to assert their position in the field through strategies of delegitimisation against other actors. At the same time, they need the validation of these same actors on their representations. Second, I examine three case studies of anti-corruption activities in Georgia: the adoption of a national anti-corruption strategy in Georgia, the reform of the audit institution Chamber of Control and civil society anti-corruption projects. These case studies reveal conflicts emerging between anti-corruption actors as well as their difficulty to engage in a common production of coherence and success. I conclude my study by analysing the origins of the failure of the local validation of the representation of technical rationality that underlies global anti-corruption activity. I link this problematic to the broader failure of the project of depoliticisation

at the heart of the anti-corruption project, while discussing the limits of an instrumental view of external interventions.

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List of abbreviations

CCG	Chamber of Control of Georgia
COE	Council of Europe
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EDBI	Ease of Doing Business Index
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Cooperation)
IO	International Organisation
MoE	Ministry of Education
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Development and Cooperation in Europe
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
TI	Transparency International
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I Introduction

Pierre Bourdieu reflects on the open-endedness of the research process by suggesting that: “*the history of successive errors form an integral part of a body of scientific knowledge whose fundamental gains were only achieved by reflecting on those errors.*”¹ The tentative approaches to the object of study contribute to defining a research question rather than this question springing to mind fully formed. The process of deriving observations from the empirical fieldwork is an integral part of the research process and of the search for appropriate methods to approach the object of study. Indeed, the confrontation with and reflection on the complexities of the object of study help minimise the risk of starting field research with too rigid schemas of thought and too much a pre-defined idea of what one wants to find. This introductory chapter thus aims at providing an account of these tentative approaches to my object of study “the fight against corruption in Georgia” and the way I have refined my research question in the course of my fieldwork.

In the following, I will first explain how the methodological problems I have encountered during my fieldwork have helped me identify certain research puzzles and gradually specify my research question. In a second step, I will present this research puzzle and the way I intend to proceed in my examination of the fight against corruption in Georgia.

1.1 Fighting corruption in post-revolutionary Georgia: observations from the field

My initial interest when setting on a study of the fight against corruption in Georgia was to analyse how a country as corrupt as Georgia, as different indicators showed in the transition period of the 1990s, could manage to achieve the miracle of eradicating corruption in a relatively short period of time. Were the promises of the young reform-oriented government that had come to power after the Rose Revolution of 2003 to be believed? My aim was to examine more closely the measures that the new government was adopting to combat corruption. Most probably, Georgia could offer some useful insights into the problematic of fighting corruption. My second interest concerned the “enigma” of donor assistance, more precisely the question of why donor aid flowing to Georgia before the revolution did not appear to have had much impact in terms of improving the country’s performance. These initial interests that were underlying my fieldwork

¹ Quoted in Lane, Jeremy F.: *Pierre Bourdieu – A critical introduction*, Pluto Press, 2000, p. 91

in Georgia appeared to converge in the question of *efficiency*. How efficient were the anti-corruption measures of the new government and of the donor programmes in the field of anti-corruption?

However, it soon appeared difficult to establish an empirical assessment of the success and efficiency of those measures. I was rapidly confronted with a number of obstacles in my attempt to gain first insights on the impact of anti-corruption programmes. First, the anti-corruption success of the new government seemed more a matter of interpretation than an established fact. While acknowledging that the problem of street-level corruption had been tackled, as it was visible that police officers were not systematically asking bribes from citizens as they did before the revolution, some observers in Georgia would still argue that high-level corruption had increased. But how could it be proven? Assessments of corruption levels in Georgia appeared bound to be rather subjective. How then assess the effectiveness of programmes on fighting corruption if an objective measurement of the levels of corruption was problematic? Knowingly, measurements of corruption are subjective and based on perceptions of corruption, as corruption is usually a hidden practice and difficult to observe.

A second problem that I encountered during my fieldwork was the question of how and where to find programmes designed to combat corruption? In the case of the Georgian government, it seemed as if every reform initiated after the revolution amounted to fighting corruption in one way or another. The overall reform of institutions was inseparable from the fight against corruption. As for the donor programmes, few had a specific anti-corruption focus, but many appeared to have an anti-corruption component. The fight against corruption seemed to be an elusive research object: it was at the same time everywhere, but rather difficult to locate and observe.

When trying to identify anti-corruption programmes and measures, I was also confronted with the difficulty of understanding what development programmes “were actually *doing*”. I started my search for these programmes on the Internet by browsing the websites of different donor organisations. A first hurdle to identify adequate programmes was the “development jargon” used to describe them. It seemed as if a certain expertise was required to understand what terms such as “capacity-building” meant. What capacities were built and what concrete difference did it make in the way these reformed institutions were operating? Such terms appeared to make immediate sense to the development practitioners, but the neophyte had difficulties grasping their meaning. They seemed to *blur* more than adequately describe and explain the workings of

development programmes. My difficulties did not end with the terms, as my conversations with donor representatives revealed that the reality of the implementation of a programme remained difficult to grasp, even when described by a development practitioner. The impression was that a disjuncture existed between the sophisticated presentation of donor projects on the organisations' websites or in project brochures and the sometimes modest activities that were effectively taking place. A few discussions involving a small number of citizens in provincial Georgian towns were represented as successful examples of public participation that constituted a step in the democratisation of the country. Furthermore, it seemed as if success in development was a *tacitly accepted rule* despite the difficulty of proving the concrete impact of a programme. One NGO representative remarked to me on the question of the success of these programmes, "*have you ever seen a project fail?*"² The main bulk of donor activities, from what I could understand from my conversations with development workers, consisted of a long series of meetings, seminars and workshops, whose purpose and effects were not always clear.³

Another difficulty in my attempt to understand what donor programmes were doing was the reluctance of donor representatives to share information on their implementation. While the different steps involved in implementing these programmes appeared to be well-documented in evaluations, presentations and other project documents and were consistently reported to headquarters, these evaluation documents were not easily accessible. Interestingly, the same organisations whose programmes were aimed at enhancing the transparency of government structures were reluctant to share information and provide an insight into their working methods. This reluctance appeared motivated by a certain fear of seeing results "misinterpreted" and facts not being presented in a positive light. It seemed as if success in development was *fragile* enough that it had to be secured and protected against these potential misinterpretations. The *interpretation* of results was a central concern of development organisations. Hence, the majority of these organisations appeared to devote important efforts on controlling their image and the representation of their activities. Despite being secured in project documents, the control of organisations over these representations still appeared rather limited. Informal interviews with local participants in donor projects quickly revealed a disconnect between what was written on paper about the project and the real events taking place during its implementation.

The proliferation of activities such as workshops and seminars and the apparent restlessness of development workers contrasted with the impression that little measurable results were actually

² Interview with NGO representative, March 2008.

³ Representatives of development organisations would often be seen rushing from one meeting to the other and organising workshops in locations such as the mountain resort of Bakuriani or the sea resort of Batumi.

produced by these activities. What did these programmes actually “produce”? What was produced in meetings and seminars and what was the purpose of these activities? Their impact remained elusive even for the development workers themselves who seemed unaware of the way their activities inscribed themselves into the greater rationales of development. Furthermore, the world of donor projects seemed to be decisively remote from the world of ordinary Georgians who observed them with some distrust. The impression was that these activities were part of a certain representation that development actors wanted to project to the outside world. A world with its own rituals and routines whose meaning remained elusive for those not directly involved in it. While the impact of donor activities remained difficult to assess, it became clear in the course of my fieldwork that the appearance of dialogue and consensus that was produced through the regular official meetings between donor and government representatives seemed to conceal some tensions between these actors. Moreover, the presence of Georgian officials in these seminars appeared sometimes difficult to obtain and this seemed to represent a major problem for donors in post-revolutionary Georgia. *Why was it so?*

Hence, one major observation in the initial phase of my field research in Georgia was that the relations between international donors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Georgian government were not as smooth as they appeared to be when related in official narratives. Tensions were palpable between these different actors. This observation was rather surprising as it contradicted the expectation that a government composed of young, Western-educated and energetic new cadres would easily win the approval of donor organisations and ensure that both actors converge on most areas. As one Georgian working in an international organisation remarked to me, this people had been in the same schools, in the same top-ranked universities and they were socialised in the same way.⁴ What was the origin of the tensions in the relations between donors and the government and why were NGOs criticising a more committed and reform-oriented government? Clearly, the new government appeared to be choosing a path that was not fully supported by the international community and NGOs, as it was prioritising state-building over the building of democratic institutions. But there was more than a lack of democratic commitment that appeared to frustrate donors and NGOs in their relation with government officials.

While the representatives of development organisations appeared to be active, running from one meeting to the other, and with a certain sense of entitlement in the way they were interacting with local actors, they also conveyed a feeling of *helplessness*. While a sense of frustration is

⁴ Interview with representative of international organisation, November 2008.

typical of the development world where young Western professionals eager to do good can soon become disillusioned with the workings of development organisations, this sense of helplessness appeared to have another origin. In effect, the level of activities of donors appeared to depend in great part on the willingness of government officials to take part in these activities and *validate* them through their participation. A non-interested official in a state agency where a donor project was implemented would not participate in certain meetings and this lack of interest could significantly affect the running of a project. The success of a project appeared to depend in great part on securing the involvement of key committed individuals in state agencies. As the head of a development organisation in Georgia told me, projects could fall like a castle of cards if a key individual was replaced or sent to another agency as was often the case in post-revolutionary Georgia.⁵ Hence, donor representatives with their salaries largely above the average salary in Georgia were dependent on the goodwill of young, sometimes inexperienced and middle-ranked officials. Their appearance of power did not seem to relate to their real position towards these officials. What magic was operating that allowed these young and low-paid officials to keep donor representatives waiting to meet them and trying to secure their approval on certain activities? This helplessness appeared at first an anomaly as it contradicted the generally held vision of all-powerful development organisations setting the agendas in weak developed countries.

Finally, when returning to the issue of corruption, it seemed as if the government was doing something entirely different from international organisations. Government officials were talking about Georgia's statehood, the return to a Golden Age of Georgian history and the need to break with the corruption of Soviet times. It was a discourse on the rebirth of the Georgian state that was at odds with the rather technical language used by organisations such as the World Bank and Transparency International and their elaborated models on fighting corruption. Furthermore, the government appeared sometimes more ready to abolish certain institutions and regulatory agencies than reforming them with the help of international donors. One could wonder if these actors were actually *talking about the same thing*. The government was arresting officials and staging these arrests on television, while international organisations were advising it to adopt an anti-corruption strategy and NGOs were organising public discussions in the Georgian province. All these actors were talking about fighting corruption, while doing very different things. Each seemed to be fighting a battle on its own. What it meant to fight corruption was clearly open to interpretation in post-revolutionary Georgia. Furthermore, few domestic actors in the government and NGOs seemed to have heard of or be preoccupied with the sophisticated

⁵ Interview with head of donor organisation, November 2008.

methodology to fight corruption elaborated by organisations such as the World Bank and Transparency International. They appeared unaware of the existence of such anti-corruption tools.

The question of what was actually happening with the fight against corruption in Georgia, whether it was a success, and what measures had proven effective, remained elusive. The fight against corruption did not reflect a clear image of itself, of what it was, of its purpose. How was it to be understood and how could its reality be grasped? It appeared problematic to analyse the fight against corruption in Georgia through its concrete impact on corruption levels, as their measurement was subjective. Even more problematic was to understand it on the basis of what anti-corruption actors were saying about their actions. It seemed as if there was a disjuncture between what was said about anti-corruption programmes on websites and in project documents, what the donor representatives were saying themselves, and what was happening in activities whose purpose was not always obvious. A way to approach the fight against corruption as an object of research could thus be to ask why such an activity could appear legitimate and its existence taken-for-granted even if its impact on corruption levels was far from clear. *Through which miracle was success produced in anti-corruption if there was no means to observe and measure this impact?* How could the activity of fighting corruption be successful at all? Instead of looking at the “shiny surface” of anti-corruption in project documents and brochures, one had to look more closely at the “holes” between narratives, the unsaid, or the disjuncture between discourse and practice. Furthermore, the fight against corruption could only be approached through what the different actors engaging in it said about their actions. But since they did not seem to be talking about the same thing, these descriptions could not be taken-for-granted, as objective descriptions of a reality. Viewing these descriptions as “representations” would allow understanding better why these actors appeared to be acting in a different world. It would also explain why what actors said about what they were doing was not clearly related to their concrete activities. Representations of the fight against corruption could be understood as as many attempts at constructing a reality and legitimising certain actions.

1.2 From the fight against corruption to the anti-corruption field: research puzzle

1.2.1 *The problem of success and of tensions between actors*

My initial observations on the fight against corruption in post-revolutionary Georgia confronted me with two main research puzzles. The first puzzle is the *problem of success in anti-corruption activities*. The new government has delivered on its anti-corruption promises by achieving major reforms in the police and education sector, yet its anti-corruption record is still very much open to debate with some observers even arguing that high-level corruption has increased. A magazine article notes these doubts about the government's success by observing on Georgian citizens: "*many do not believe that high-level corruption has been banished, even though many of them have not had to pay a bribe for years.*"⁶ The anti-corruption success of the new government is *contested* and open to interpretation despite having translated in tangible improvements in the life of ordinary citizens and improved scores in international rankings for Georgia. Furthermore, Georgia's improved record does not dispense it from adopting international anti-corruption instruments as shown in the Council of Europe's and other international organisations' insistence that Georgia should adopt an anti-corruption strategy. *Georgia thus illustrates the elusiveness and fragility of success in the fight against corruption*. This leads to the question of when does one actor achieve success in fighting corruption and what determines a successful anti-corruption activity? When can one actor *claim success in fighting corruption*? What are the *conditions* of these claims to success?

A second puzzle is the building up of *tensions between the three main actors engaged in anti-corruption activity in Georgia after the revolution*: international organisations, Georgian government and NGOs. The Georgian government's reform drive after the revolution quickly received the approval of the international community and this support translated in large amounts of donor assistance flowing to Georgia. Georgia's progress was hailed as an achievement and was reflected in improved scores in rankings. At first glance, international organisations appeared satisfied with Georgia's reforms and ready to give their unconditional support to the government. But, this wave of enthusiasm soon let the way to a certain irritation with the government's methods. The government's governing style was depicted as chaotic and unpredictable making the implementation of donor projects sometimes difficult. A more

⁶ See Kandelaki, Ana: Georgians question squeeze on bribe-taking, IWPR Caucasus Reporting Service No. 535, 12 March 2010.

committed government did not appear to have the effect of smoothing relations with international organisations. On the contrary, it seemed as if it made the life of donor organisations more complicated through its frequent rejection of their advices and recommendations and its can-do-attitude. These tensions culminated in July 2008 shortly before the Georgian-Russian August war with former Prime Minister Lado Gurgenedze voicing indirect criticism at donor projects. During a meeting with representatives of donor organisations, he listed donor projects that the government approved of, indirectly signifying that the government did not welcome technical assistance programmes and uncoordinated donor efforts. The government openly questioned the efficiency of these programmes. The Georgian government encountered the same tensions with NGOs that did not approve of its methods in fighting corruption. Why are certain aspects of the government's anti-corruption reforms irritating international donors and NGOs? Why are tensions characterising the relations between these actors despite the fact that the government appears more committed to reforms?

Finally, a last observation that constitutes my research puzzle is that the different actors in Georgia *do not appear to do and say the same thing when fighting corruption*.

1.2.2 Locating the research puzzle

I have deduced three main observations from my field analysis of the fight against corruption in post-revolutionary Georgia: 1) success in fighting corruption is *fragile* and open to contestation and interpretation, 2) a more committed government does not necessarily win the approval of international organisations and NGOs; on the contrary, *tensions* appear to run higher between these actors, 3) the different actors do not do and say the same thing when fighting corruption. The fight against corruption in Georgia does not reflect a clear image of itself, neither concerning its purpose and impact nor concerning the meaning of fighting corruption. In my attempt to approach the fight against corruption in Georgia as a research object, I choose to view it as a *field* in the Bourdieu's sense of term, a field of competition between different actors. Viewing the fight against corruption as a field allows me to look more closely at the tensions and conflicts between different actors and understand how these actors construct a particular representation of their activities. Furthermore, I ask the question of how success is possible at all in the fight against corruption if its concrete impact on the levels of corruption cannot be demonstrated.

In the following, I will take different steps to answer these three elements of my research puzzle and analyse the fight against corruption in Georgia as a field. The tensions between different actors in post-revolutionary Georgia should be understood against the background of a broader analysis of development relations. Furthermore, the contestation of the government's anti-corruption record and the fact that those different actors appear to be doing and saying different things when fighting corruption should be analysed by examining more closely the rise of anti-corruption as a global issue in the last decade. I will use different strands of literature to locate my research puzzle in a broader study of development and research on anti-corruption. In particular, I will use anthropological approaches to the study of development. Furthermore, I will use Bourdieu's theory of the practice to analyse the fight against corruption as a field of competition.

Certain characteristics of the emergence of the fields of development and anti-corruption provide a first direction to my research. The emergence of a development field in the 1950s and of an anti-corruption field in the 1990s has the effect of constructing relations of power between development organisations and developing countries. Similarities can be found in both fields to the extent that they construct developing countries as *objects* of development or of anti-corruption interventions. As such, these countries are represented as harbouring certain deficiencies and gaps that can be filled through these interventions. They are portrayed as lacking the resources to face certain development problems. Corruption is one of these development problems, if not the main obstacle to development. In this sense, corruption is presented as a problem of poor, developing countries rather than as a problem of developed OECD states. With the emergence of an anti-corruption movement in the 1990s and the involvement of international organisations such as the World Bank, corruption is increasingly mainstreamed in development programmes. Both the development and the anti-corruption discourse construct development problems and the corruption problem as *objects of knowledge*. The representation of a practical knowledge oriented at finding solutions to development problems is an important element in the emergence of both fields and in the way developing countries are constructed. Both fields are characterised by this *instrumental approach* that aims at linking problems to solutions through establishing causalities. This knowledge accumulation serves in turn to constitute resources that are then provided to developing countries in search of solutions to tackle their problems. These countries are assumed to be *in demand* of such solutions.

These characteristics of the emergence of a development and anti-corruption field throw a particular light on the problem of tensions between different actors in Georgia and the contestation of the government's anti-corruption success. These tensions can be seen as resulting from the *reluctance of the Georgian government to embrace the solutions offered by international organisations*.

1.2.3 Structure of the thesis

As a result of my observations on the development field and the global fight against corruption, I develop a first hypothesis to analyse the anti-corruption field in Georgia: 1) tensions between actors signal the reluctance of the Georgian government to accept ready-made solutions to the problem of fighting corruption. The second hypothesis that I have already advanced is that 2) claims to success in anti-corruption are not correlated to the impact of anti-corruption measures on the levels of corruption. This second hypothesis relates to the conditions of the emergence of claims to success in fighting corruption. How are these claims to success sustained without the recourse to the reality of a concrete change in the levels of corruption? To approach the question of success in anti-corruption activities, I see these activities as *discursive representations* constructed by actors rather than through the way they are described by these actors as an element in a causal chain aimed at linking technical solutions to the corruption problem.

Viewing anti-corruption activities as representations and not concrete and more or less successful attempts at fighting corruption throws a different light on the conflicts that exist in the field. The impression that the different actors engaging in fighting corruption do not do or say the same thing can be explained by the fact that they construct different representations of their activities. My argument is that the fight against corruption should not be approached as a set of activities which different actors agree to see as constituting anti-corruption activities, but as a field of competition. *I will analyse the fight against corruption in Georgia as a Bourdieu's field whose purpose is to produce and sustain claims to success, but where the different actors appear to fail in their attempt to engage in a common production of coherence*. The question is thus to understand how success is produced in anti-corruption and explain the sources of this apparent failure to stabilise claims to success.

I will take the following steps to examine the question of success in anti-corruption.

In ***Chapter II***, I will present the setting of my analysis: post-revolutionary Georgia.

In *Chapter III*, I will review theoretical approaches to the study of development and of anti-corruption to explain how I approach the analysis of the fight against corruption in Georgia. In particular, I will examine how the literature on anthropology and development and Bourdieu's theory of the practice can provide an adequate framework for my study. I will also present my methodological approach to analysing anti-corruption activities in Georgia.

In *Chapter IV*, I will analyse more closely both the question of success and of the problem of tensions between actors in the fight against corruption in Georgia.

First, I will examine the "miracle of anti-corruption" in the form of the production of success in anti-corruption activity. This process appears to signal the emergence of a Bourdieu's field.

Second, I will analyse how different actors respond to the impossibility of demonstrating the impact of their activities by engaging in strategies of building success. My examination of the interactions of these actors reveals the paradoxes of the production of success in the field and its inherent fragility. The central observation in this analysis is that while actors depend on each other to validate their representations, these representations tend to undermine one another. Thus, claims to success appear fragile.

In *Chapter V*, I will turn to the empirical study of anti-corruption activities in Georgia to analyse more closely the paradoxes emerging in the interactions between anti-corruption actors as well as their implications for my analysis of the anti-corruption field and the question of success in anti-corruption.

First, I analyse the drafting and implementation of a national anti-corruption strategy in Georgia as an example of the conflict between two main elements in the representation of anti-corruption activity: "technical knowledge" and "political will". This case study reveals the difficulty for the Georgian government and international organisations to engage in a common production of coherence and success. Further, it sheds light on the dilemma of a local validation of global anti-corruption activity.

Second, I analyse the reform of the audit institution Chamber of Control of Georgia as an illustration of conflicts between anti-corruption actors. The analysis of the reform reveals the problematic of the representation of actions in the anti-corruption field. It also shows the

difficulty of a common production of coherence in the field. Finally, it sheds light on the difficulty of stabilising a representation of anti-corruption activity as a technical and non-political activity in the domestic context of Georgia.

Third, I analyse civil society anti-corruption projects as examples of the changing strategies of NGOs to produce success and the uncertainty of these claims to success. The NGOs' strategies also shed light on the problematic of the representation of anti-corruption activity in the domestic context of Georgia and the dilemma arising from the different sources of approval on which anti-corruption actors depend.

In *Chapter VI*, I conclude my study of the fight against corruption in Georgia by reflecting on the different tales of anti-corruption. I come back to the question underlying my study: *is the question of success in anti-corruption resolved by the construction of a field and if not, why is it so?* I examine the origin of the *failure* of anti-corruption to develop as a coherent field and stabilise claims to success. I shed light on the paradoxes that cast a shadow on the “miracle of anti-corruption” and reveal the inherent fragility of this construction.

II Building statehood in post-revolutionary Georgia

2.1 The pre-revolutionary period

Before the Rose Revolution of November 2003, Georgia was often depicted as a failed and weak state characterised by widespread corruption. It was seen as an archetype of dysfunctional statehood in the period covered by the regime of Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze from 1992 to the revolution. This period began with a coup against the first democratically elected President and former dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia in January 1992. A heteroclite alliance composed of members of the old nomenklatura, the Soviet intelligentsia and criminal groups precipitated the fall of the Gamsakhurdia's government. Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze was then "invited" to take power in Georgia by Jaba Iosseliani and Tengiz Kitovani, the leaders of paramilitary groups which had staged the coup.

Indicators such as low tax collection, cross-border smuggling, the lack of territorial control on the secessionist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the presence of illegal militia groups in cross-border zones concurred to produce an image of Georgia as an archetypal failed state. Frequent disruptions in electricity and water supplies that have plagued the country for many years vividly exemplified the failure of the state to provide for the most basic needs of its citizens. The former Soviet republic was characterised by a culture of impunity and corruption that earned Georgia the reputation of one of the most corrupt countries in the world. Yet at the same time, Georgia was also regarded for many years as a promising transition country in the post-Soviet space. Hence, the Georgian leadership appeared willing to implement the advices of international organisations in various reform sectors. Georgia's legislation was brought in line with international standards, political parties and the media enjoyed relative freedom compared to other post-Soviet neighbours and civil society was strong with a high number of NGOs. Georgia's apparent efforts to engage in democratic reforms were rewarded with large financial aid, making it the second-largest per capita recipient of U.S. development assistance.⁷ King captures the contradicting image of Georgia as being simultaneously one of the most corrupt and reform-prone countries with the term "potemkin democracy".⁸ The readiness of Georgia's corrupt elite to bring the country in line with democratic standards was only a façade that

⁷ In 2004, Phillips notes that the United States has provided \$1.3 billion in foreign aid to Georgia through the Freedom Support Act (FSA) since its independence. See Phillips, David L.: *Stability, Security and Sovereignty in the Republic of Georgia*, Rapid Response Conflict Prevention Assessment sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations Center for Preventive Action, 15 January 2004, p. 3.

⁸ See King, Charles: *Potemkin democracy: four myths about post-Soviet Georgia*, *The National Interest*, 1 July 2001.

fulfilled the purpose of attracting even more donor assistance. King further argues that Western governments and organisations were ultimately complicit in the perpetuation of different myths about post-Soviet Georgia, one of the most important being that it was a reforming country, a promise that bear little resemblance to the realities of local politics and average living standards in the country.⁹

Christophe further observes the strategic use of the image of a weak state by the Georgian leadership and the apparent complicity of international organisations in perpetuating this image.¹⁰ She suggests that this image was misleading, as it failed to account for the extraordinary skills deployed by the ruling elite to ensure its survival in power.¹¹ Eduard Shevardnadze did not face any serious challenges to its monopoly on power during the ten years of his leadership until the revolution of November 2003 despite the striking incapacity of its government to provide for its citizens.¹² Christophe notes how the regime's resilience and ability to keep power rested on different mechanisms such as the right to appoint key officials that allowed the cooptation of potential rivals.¹³ The frequent reshuffle of ministers and high-level officials was an important tool that served to prevent the formation of autonomous networks of power within the state administration.¹⁴ The image of a weak state can further be contrasted with the firm control of the ruling elite and their associates on the most lucrative segments of the economy, including illegal sources of revenues such as the drugs trade. Rather than being a symptom of the state's weakness and of its inability to control corrupt networks, corruption was used as a tool of control over state agents.¹⁵ Public servants were co-opted into the corruption system, for example through the practice of purchasing official positions, and then made compliant through the threat of the disclosure of compromising material (*'kompromaty'*) on them.¹⁶ Christophe suggests that the Georgian state in the Shevardnadze's period must be understood as a rational construct serving the specific interests of the ruling elite rather than the product of the failure of the same elite to develop functional statehood.¹⁷

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See Christophe, Barbara: Understanding politics in Georgia, DEMSTAR research report No. 22, November 2004

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² To illustrate Shevardnadze's failure to reform the country and Georgia's dramatic economic decline, Georgia's GDP stood at a mere 45 percent of its 1989 level in 2004. See EBRD: Transition Report 2009: Transition in crisis?, 2009, p. 169, quoted in European Stability Initiative: Georgia's libertarian revolution, part three: Jacobins in Tbilisi, 25 April 2010, p. 3.

¹³ Christophe (2004), p. 12.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ See Di Puppò, Lili: Corruption as an instrument of state control in Georgia, Berliner Osteuropa-Info 21/2004, 2004.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Christophe (2004).

After having supported Georgia's reforms for many years, international donors grew increasingly dissatisfied with Georgia's lack of progress, prompting Shevardnadze to open up the government ranks to a wing of young reformers that included current Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili. After occupying government positions, these reformers finally moved to the opposition and increasingly challenged Shevardnadze's regime. The tensions between young reformers and the President and its old guard came to a high during the parliamentary elections of November 2003 that were widely perceived as being rigged. The falsified elections gave the impulse for street protests led by opposition figures such as Mikheil Saakashvili, Zurab Zhvania and Nino Burdjanadze that culminated in the Rose Revolution and the ousting of power of Shevardnadze. Mikheil Saakashvili was elected on 4 January 2004 with 96 percent of the vote, providing him with a strong mandate to launch wide-ranging reforms in the country.

2.2 Post-revolutionary Georgia

2.2.1 An era of conflicts

Post-revolutionary Georgia started as a success story, the story of a post-Soviet state able against all expectations to break free of a legacy of corruption and dysfunctional statehood. It stood as an example of the type of miracle that the strong leadership of a few committed individuals could operate within a short period of time. Flagship reforms in notoriously corrupt sectors such as the traffic police and the education were crucial in producing this image of a new elite ready and able to deliver on its promises. These changes were greeted with an increased public trust towards state institutions, most significantly the previously widely unpopular police.¹⁸ The image of Georgia as a unique success story in the post-Soviet world further translated in rapidly improving indicators and large amounts of donor assistance flowing to the country after the revolution. In effect, Georgia's progress was rapid as shown in a sharp increase in public revenues as a result of improved tax collection. While the tax-take was of 1.19 billion Georgian laris in 2003 accounting for 13.9% of the GDP, it has risen to 4.75 billion Georgian laris in 2009 which amount to 24.9% of the GDP.¹⁹

¹⁸ A February 2007 survey of voters indicated that 66% had a favourable opinion on the police (70% in April 2006) and the police were the fourth most trusted institution after the church, the army and the Georgian media. See International Republican Institute, Baltic Surveys Ltd. / The Gallup Organization, The Institute of Polling and Marketing (IRI et al): Georgian National Voters Study, Tbilisi, February 2007. Available at: <http://www.iri.org/eurasia/georgia/pdfs/2007-04-04-Georgia-Poll.pdf> (accessed 1 February 2010)

¹⁹ See Transparency International Georgia: The Georgian taxation system: an overview, May 2010. Available at: http://transparency.ge/sites/default/files/post_attachments/Taxation%20in%20Georgia%20_ENG_final.pdf (accessed May 2010)

While many observers had hoped that the story of post-revolutionary Georgia would be one of the building and consolidation of democratic institutions, it soon became clear that the new reformers rather saw the strengthening of the state as their immediate task. Georgian President Saakashvili cited Kemal Ataturk and King David the Builder as inspirations behind the project of building statehood in Georgia. Georgia's state-building project had different dimensions: regaining the state monopoly on violence, the restoration of Georgia's territorial integrity and the reform of taxation and customs. The objective was to enhance the state's legitimacy by dramatically improving its capacity to deliver security and public goods such as infrastructure. Attempts at restoring Georgia's sovereignty were successful in the region of Adjara that had previously enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy from the central government and where the local ruler Aslan Abashidze was quickly demised. Similar attempts failed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, most notably during the Russian-Georgian war of August 2008 that has resulted in Russia's recognition of the independence of both breakaway regions. The post-revolutionary period was further marked by a notable concentration of power in the hands of a small team of reformers. The new leadership saw this concentration of power in the executive as a necessary step to implement several wide-ranging and sometimes unpopular reforms, in particular the firing of civil servants in public institutions. Soon after Saakashvili's election, constitutional amendments were introduced in February 2004 that gave increased powers to the President. Under the new constitution, the Parliament is significantly weakened, as the President has the right to appoint the Prime Minister who then appoints and presides over a council of ministers. The President further retains the right to appoint the key positions of Defence and Interior Ministers. It was also given the right to dissolve the Parliament if it rejects its choice of Prime Minister or its budget proposal. These changes raised concerns about the government's intentions. Some observers warned that the quick path of reforms pushed by a determined small elite should not happen at the expense of the strengthening of democratic institutions.²⁰

Furthermore, the appearance of consensus and unity produced by the elite's determination to push forward Georgia's state-building project soon became more questionable. In effect, post-revolutionary Georgia was increasingly marked by a series of conflicts on several fronts. These conflicts started at different levels: 1) inside the government and between government members and other state agencies; 2) at a domestic level, as they opposed the government to the opposition and civil society; 3) at an intra-state level between Georgia and the breakaway regions of

²⁰ See for example International Crisis Group: Georgia: sliding towards authoritarianism, Europe Report No. 189, 19 December 2007.

Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and at an 4) inter-state and international level, as Georgian-Russian relations rapidly started to deteriorate. Conflicts on the domestic scene and inside the government can be interpreted as signs of the failure of the new leadership to create a viable state in the form of stable and predictable governance mechanisms. The new elite also seemed not ready to engage in a constructive dialogue with domestic actors critical of its policies. Most importantly, the new authorities appear to rely on the same mechanisms to retain power and eliminate alternatives that were used in Shevardnadze's times. For example, the high rotation of cadres in the state administration and frequent cabinet reshuffles appear to be used as a way to ensure a control of the centre over the public administration. Efforts to centralise power appear to have a negative effect on the development of stable and predictable power mechanisms and procedures that would allow for the settling of conflicts between political elites. The exercise of power in post-revolutionary Georgia has been rather characterised by spontaneous action and unpredictability. The government has concentrated its efforts on gaining output legitimacy instead of input legitimacy through the establishment of democratic procedures.

The years 2007 and 2008 were marked by a series of events that revealed one by one different strata of conflicts characterising post-revolutionary Georgia. This chain of events started with the arrest of former Defense Minister and key government figure Irakli Okruashvili on corruption charges in September 2007. This arrest directly followed Okruashvili's explosive claims against Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and its team, the gravest of which was that Saakashvili was attempting to murder the oligarch and owner of the opposition television channel Imedi, Badri Patarkatsishvili. With its allegations of corruption and misconduct, Okruashvili was targeting not only Saakashvili, but its rivals in the government and former members of the NGO Liberty Institute such as current Deputy Foreign Minister Giga Bokeria and Tbilisi Mayor Gigi Ugulava. Okruashvili's arrest revealed not only splits within the government's team, but also the fragility of the government's power structure that appeared to rely on constant political manoeuvrings.

Okruashvili's arrest also brought to light a conflict between the government and opposition businessman Badri Patarkatsishvili that peaked during the November 2007 demonstrations. Following the former Defense Minister's arrest, ten opposition parties established a coalition in September 2007 whose major demand was the holding of parliamentary elections in spring 2008. The opposition organised street protests that culminated in the demonstrations of November 2007 in the capital Tbilisi. On 7 November, the police used tear gas and water cannons to disperse protestors camping in front of the Georgian Parliament in order to re-establish traffic on

the main avenue Rustaveli. Opposition parties had previously declared their intention to set up a “city of tents” in the heart of the capital. Following these clashes, more protestors assembled in different locations in Tbilisi and some were reportedly beaten by policemen. The opposition television channel Imedi showed these incidents round the clock and its broadcasting appears to have played a major role in enticing more people to join the protests. The TV station was later closed by Special Forces and its equipment smashed. The government finally announced an emergency rule later in the evening. The November demonstrations showed the government’s failure to respond adequately to the social criticism of its policies, while it also revealed growing tensions between the government and opposition parties. Finally, the events cast a severe blow on Georgia’s image as a champion of democratic reforms in the post-Soviet world. The government advanced the thesis of an attempted coup by Patarkatsishvili and other opposition figures to justify its actions.

The year 2008 was marked by two elections and a war. Presidential elections were held in January 2008 and followed by parliamentary elections in May 2008. The ruling National Movement party won both elections, while reports indicated that the government had deployed some resources to ensure these victories, including limiting the opposition’s access to the media. During this period, tensions were growing in the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Russian-Georgian relations had deteriorated since the Rose Revolution at the same speed at which Georgia had tried to accelerate its integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. With the declaration of independence of Kosovo in February 2008 and the NATO Bucharest summit of April 2008, Russian-Georgian relations hit a new low. Russia responded to the pledge made during the summit that Georgia and Ukraine would eventually join the alliance by taking a series of diplomatic, legal and military steps aimed at reinforcing ties with the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Prior to the Bucharest summit in March 2008, Russia had formally lifted sanctions against Abkhazia, while the Russian Duma had adopted a non-binding resolution urging the government to enhance efforts to protect citizens of the Russian Federation residing on the breakaway territories (referring to those Abkhazians and South Ossetians having taken Russian passports) and consider the possibility of increasing peacekeeping troops. Russia started to move troops to Abkhazia on 30 May, while re-establishing a railroad from Sukhumi to Ochamchira. Starting from April 2008, incidents grew between the Georgian and South Ossetian forces, while Russian fighter jets violated Georgian airspace by flying over South Ossetia in July 2008. All these steps led to a rapid escalation of tensions between all parties that culminated in the August war.

On the night of 7 to 8 August 2008, a Georgian artillery attack struck the town of Tskhinvali in South Ossetia. The attack came after the Georgians had declared a unilateral ceasefire following fights between Georgians and Ossetians and a bombardment of Georgia's positions near Tskhinvali.²¹ Russia immediately responded by moving troops into South Ossetia with Russian tanks advancing from North Ossetia to South Ossetia through the Roki tunnel. Georgian troops withdrew from South Ossetia on 10 August, while Russian forces continued their advance into Georgia proper and started occupying strategic points. The European Union under the French presidency broke a peace agreement between the two parties on 12 August 2008. The ceasefire agreement succeeded in ending the hostilities and obtaining a partial withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia. Russian military forces continue to be stationed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia after Russia has recognised their independence on 26 August. Meanwhile, an international donors' conference was organised at the EU's initiative in October 2008 in Brussels and resulted in a pledge of more than 4.5 billions dollars in aid for Georgia's post-war reconstruction.

2.2.2 Boosting Georgia's external image

Similarly to Georgia under the Shevardnadze's government, the post-revolutionary leaders appear particularly skilled in attracting Western support. At the same time, they differ from the previous regime in the sense that they try to present Georgia as a sovereign country eager to build its own resources and achieve progress on its own terms. However, the August war has damaged Georgia's potential to attract foreign investment, rendering the country again dependent on external resources.

Following the Rose Revolution, the new leaders have engaged in a project of "re-branding" Georgia and presenting it as a model. They first engaged in an attempt to build on the democratic credentials of the Rose Revolution by presenting Georgia as a democratic model. Georgia was named a "beacon of democracy" by US President George W. Bush that had the potential of stimulating democratic revolutions in other regions of the world. The events of November 2007 showed the limits of Georgia's democratic experiment and lost the country some of its credibility in the West. Another important pillar of Georgia's external image was its economic performance. The former oligarch Kakha Bendukidze led the way as State Minister for Reforms Coordination for radical reforms that were focused on deregulating the economy and whose aim was to help

²¹ See International Crisis Group: Russia vs. Georgia: the fallout, Crisis Group Europe Report No. 195, 22 August 2008, p. 2.

Georgia overcome its legacy as a poor country by stimulating rapid growth. These reforms also fitted well with the government's anti-corruption drive and its efforts to break with the Soviet legacy and the legacy of the Shevardnadze's years. For example, the libertarian reforms of Bendukidze and his team consisted of abolishing state agencies that were seen as being entirely ineffective in delivering public goods. Among these agencies were the hygienic food agency and the control and certification of cars. Further, the number of licences was dramatically reduced, it fell from 909 to 159 and then further to 137.²² The tax code and the labour law were also reformed to create a favourable investment climate and boost business activities. The attraction of foreign investments that were expected to bring well-needed capital inflow, the creation of jobs, the transfer of management skills and the building of new infrastructure was an important objective behind the drastic liberalisation of the economy. Rather than taking as models former communist countries in Central Europe, Georgia sought to emulate the rapid growth of Asian economies such as Singapore and Taiwan. Georgia's radical liberalism propelled the country at the top of certain economic rankings, most notably the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index.²³ Georgia's libertarian reforms exemplify the efforts of the new leadership to gain the country an international recognition as well as its can-do attitude and confidence.

While Georgia appeared eager to gain recognition for its progress, the post-revolutionary period was also characterised by an uneasy relationship with international donors. Hence, Georgia sought to emancipate itself from its dependence on external advice. Georgia's relations with international and Western actors is thus characterised by ambiguity. The new leadership understands that Georgia's success depends on it being acknowledged by the international community. At the same time, it wants to emancipate itself from the legacy of the Shevardnadze's regime by refusing the advices of the same actors and trying to achieve success on its own terms. These ambitions are visible in remarks by Saakashvili saying: "*respected ambassadors are often giving us recommendations on how to manage the economy. We are ready to send to some of them our experts so that to enable them to at least slightly move forward, if they can't catch up to us.*"²⁴ He adds: "*For example I would have sent with great pleasure experts to Holland.*"²⁵ These comments show Georgia's eagerness to serve as a model for other countries instead of accepting the advices of external actors. However, Georgia's eagerness to achieve results at a quick speed and its progress in the Doing Business Index can also be seen as concealing the government's shortcomings and the lack of real progress in living

²² See European Stability Initiative (2010), p. 23.

²³ Georgia was ranked 112th in 2005 and 15th in 2008.

²⁴ Civil Georgia: Saakashvili lays out 'act on economic freedom', 6 October 2009. Available at: <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=21541> (accessed May 2010)

²⁵ Ibid.

standards. Rankings do not always reflect accurately the state of an economy as shown in the still high percentage of unemployment in Georgia.

2.3 Conclusion

Post-revolutionary Georgia provides for an interesting case study of global and local anti-corruption efforts, as it encompasses different aspects that are relevant to the study of the interactions between anti-corruption actors. First, the post-revolutionary period is characterised by conflicts that reveal tensions between different groups of actors. Second, the new government that has emerged from the revolution displays a high degree of confidence and a willingness to achieve success on its own terms. However, post-revolutionary Georgia also reveals that this attempt to emancipate itself from external advice, build success and even serve as a model for other countries is a difficult endeavour. Hence, the country remains highly dependent on external resources after the war with Russia and the government's strategy of attracting international attention also demonstrates a constant search for external support. Nonetheless, in its attempt to reject the advices of international organisations, Georgia brings to light the complicated constructions that characterise development as well as its inherent contradictions. Finally, it reveals an important dilemma in the form of the search for ways to solve the problem of an absent notion of public interest. The rejection of the inefficient and corrupt state bureaucracy of the Soviet times leads to certain dilemmas in the building of modern statehood. In conclusion, post-revolutionary Georgia is fraught with different conflicts and contradictions that provide a unique insight into the complexities of development and of the relations between global and local actors in the anti-corruption field.

III Theoretical framework and methodology

In the following, I will review different strands of literature in development and anti-corruption research to explain how I will approach the study of the fight against corruption in Georgia. First, I review instrumental and critical approaches in the development and anti-corruption literature as well as the research on corruption. In a second step, I will examine how structural approaches have been criticised by anthropologists of development who have suggested drawing the attention to the role of agency in development. I go on to explain that instrumental and critical approaches do not provide satisfactory answers to the questions I have developed during my field research and examine how anthropological approaches to development provide first important insights to approach my research puzzle. Finally, I discuss how Bourdieu's theory of the practice can offer a further framework for my study of the fight against corruption in Georgia.

3.1 Theoretical approaches in the development and anti-corruption literature

3.1.1 The development literature

Two main approaches characterise both the development and anti-corruption literature: positivist/instrumental and critical/deconstructionist.²⁶ In the case of development, it is understood as *rational problem-solving* in a positivistic tradition, while it is seen as a “discourse” or a “system of statements” in a constructivist tradition. The instrumental view sees development as a managerial problem, a problem of designing the right policies that will bring certain outcomes such as poverty reduction or a decline in illiteracy. The main concern in the positivistic approach is with linking development targets with outcomes and problems with solutions through the design of policies and implementation models. Instrumental approaches assume that *development policies can directly shape the realities on the ground*. Critical views on development share the same instrumental understanding of development effects, but understand development as a discursive construction that serves to conceal certain hidden agendas. Development is able to shape realities on the ground, but not by achieving its official purposes. Not poverty reduction, but the extension of bureaucratic power constitutes the real effects of development. Critical studies of development such as Escobar's study of the Third World are

²⁶ See Mosse, David: Good policy is unimplementable? Reflections on the ethnography of aid policy and practice, Paper presented at the EIDOS Workshop on ‘Order and Disjuncture: the Organisation of Aid and Development’, SOAS, London 26-28th September 2003, p. 3.

based on Michel Foucault's understanding of knowledge as power.²⁷ For Escobar, the Third World is a discursive construction and knowledge production about the "Third World" corresponds to a project of Western domination on supposedly "non-developed" societies. He studies development as an idea, a social phenomenon that affects the way we see the world. Development as a discourse has succeeded in shaping our perceptions to the extent that it is "taken-for-granted". Development further succeeds in co-opting radical attempts to rethink development relations by emptying concepts such as "participation" and "empowerment" of their political and radical connotations. In the critical view of development, the failure of development programmes is non-accidental as it simply conceals the success of hidden agendas. For example, Ferguson's study of a World Bank project in Lesotho shows how this project has the effect of promoting certain concealed agendas such as the extension of both the state's and the development agency's bureaucratic power.²⁸ Ferguson has termed development "the anti-politics machine". Development's ultimate goal is to *depoliticise* by transforming social and economic relations into technical issues that can be solved by development and state bureaucracies.²⁹ The term "post-development" designs these critical/deconstructionist strands of the literature on development.

3.1.2 The anti-corruption literature

We observe the same division between positivist/instrumental and critical/deconstructionist approaches in the anti-corruption literature. The main body of literature on anti-corruption is instrumental and based on research promoted by the World Bank. This research is oriented towards the practice in the sense of being an applied research. Its aim is the accumulation of data and the development of a knowledge of corruption, its causes and effects. Positivistic anti-corruption research directly serves the purpose of improving the efficiency of anti-corruption programmes. Critical approaches to anti-corruption draw on the work of Escobar and Ferguson on development and studies anti-corruption programmes as Foucauldian discursive fields.³⁰ Tara Polzer's study on the World Bank anti-corruption discourse represents this critical strand in the anti-corruption literature.³¹ Polzer's study is aimed at deconstructing the World Bank's discourse

²⁷ Escobar, Arturo: *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

²⁸ Ferguson, James: *The Anti-Politics Machine. 'Development', Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.

²⁹ See Lewis, David: *Anthropology and development: the uneasy relationship*, London: LSE Research online, 2005, p. 7.

³⁰ See Escobar (1995) and Ferguson (1994).

³¹ Polzer, Tara: *Corruption: deconstructing the World Bank discourse*, Development Studies Institute (Destin) Working paper No. 01-18, London School of Economics, 2001.

and its representation of the rationale that sustains its engagement in the field by uncovering certain assumptions underlying the Bank's conceptions. She says, "*I submit that the World Bank's conception of corruption can be placed within the context, and is a continuation, of, the production and control of knowledge about desirable development outcomes.*"³² For example, the Bank's engagement in anti-corruption is portrayed as a natural and rational reaction to an increasing amount of evidences on the problem of corruption. Polzer instead argues that this production of evidences is in reality attributable to the Bank itself as it concurs with a production of knowledge on corruption.³³ Krastev further views the fight against corruption as a means for international financial institutions such as the World Bank to "reinvent themselves" and find a justification for the failure of the structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s in the development world.³⁴ He remarks, "*it was not the wrong policies but the wrong priorities that were blamed for the policy failures. In the vocabulary of the Washington consensus the weak institutional environment was responsible for the failure of the initial reform package in places like Russia. Corruption served the role of a general explanation for a variety of policies failures in different environments.*"³⁵ Anti-corruption serves to legitimise the continuation of development interventions despite programme failure. The rise of the anti-corruption movement can also be understood as an answer to increasing demands for accountability in development and growing criticism against the strategic decisions of Western powers to support corrupt ally states during the Cold War.³⁶ The classification of the governments of developing countries in "trustworthy" and "non-trustworthy" results from this demand for increased accountability in development aid that is also reflected in the emergence of a "good governance" paradigm in the 1990s. Polzer further observes that corruption is defined in a way that allows the World Bank to engage in the fight against corruption.³⁷ The corruption concept is *depoliticised* and transformed into an economic concept in order to render possible the study of its causes and effects as well as its measurement.³⁸ Krastev also notes the centrality of the emergence of a new "anti-corruption science" that supports the view that corruption is measurable and allows for the accumulation of data on corruption.³⁹ Polzer analyses how the Bank's anti-corruption discourse represents a *production of truth* through the establishment of domains of *legitimate* information, information

³² Ibid, p. 4.

³³ Ibid, p. 6.

³⁴ See Krastev, Ivan: When "should" does not imply "can": the making of the Washington consensus on corruption, Workshop: Honesty and Trust, Collegium Budapest, 2001, p. 8. Available at: <http://www.colbud.hu/honesty-trust/krastev/pub01.PDF> (accessed May 2010)

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Polzer (2001), p. 10.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Krastev (2001), p. 8.

that can contribute to finding the ‘truth’ about corruption.⁴⁰ She describes these “spheres of knowledge”:

“The spheres of knowledge accepted by the Bank are universalising, empirical, quantitative, institutional, and based on the assumption of the calculating and rationally maximizing individual. Alternative views, such as moral, cultural or political understandings of corruption, are considered to be naive, specious or malicious arguments made by interested parties such as corrupt businessmen or politicians.”⁴¹

3.1.1 Different stages in international anti-corruption practice and research

Besides the existence of these two approaches – positivistic and critical – in the anti-corruption literature, Michael further distinguishes between four schools of anti-corruption practice or theoretical approaches that are implicitly adopted by anti-corruption practitioners.⁴² These four schools of anti-corruption practice are: universalistic, state-centric, society-centric and critical. Universalistic approaches view the corrupt transactions involving public and private actors as a universal phenomenon and correspondingly, anti-corruption programmes as universally applicable and replicable. These approaches emphasise the role of the law and the passing of regulations as means to fight corruption. Anti-corruption conventions such as the OECD Anti-bribery convention are representative of this implicit universalism in anti-corruption. Pope’s “national integrity systems” also derive from a universalistic view of anti-corruption models and practices.⁴³ State-centric approaches emphasise the role of the state in generating corrupt practices. These approaches draw on the public sector management literature to develop anti-corruption tools and interventions such as public financial management, civil service reform, judiciary systems and public oversight mechanisms. Unlike universalistic conceptions, state-centric approaches are not directly aimed at the reduction of corruption. Transparency and accountability in the public sector must be enhanced in order to avoid economic opportunity to be transformed into political opportunity. For example, civil service reform models aim at introducing meritocracy. Society-centred approaches see corruption as being socially constructed. These approaches to anti-corruption stress the role of civil society and NGOs as social forces that can promote changes against corruption. Finally, critical approaches view anti-corruption programmes as serving the interests of the organisations promoting them, for example by advancing neo-liberal policies. These programmes serve to extend bureaucratic power and

⁴⁰ Polzer (2001), p. 12

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Michael, Bryane: Explaining organizational change in international development: the role of complexity in anti-corruption work, *Journal of International Development*, 16, pp. 1067 – 1088, 2004.

⁴³ See Pope, Jeremy: *TI Source book: Confronting corruption: the elements of a national integrity system*, 2000.

“governmentality” and are means of control and domination over ‘non-developed’ societies. Michael notes that all these four schools of practice in anti-corruption assume a cause-and-effect relationship in the fight against corruption: they assume that a certain set of causes will lead to a certain set of results.⁴⁴ Universalistic approaches assume that a better “fit” between different institutions and a legal framework will lessen corruption, state-centred and society-centred approaches aim at “fixing” state or social institutional mechanisms to reduce corruption, while in critical approaches anti-corruption programmes are viewed as reproducing the concept of corruption as defined by these institutions.

Michael further identifies two “waves” in international anti-corruption practice.⁴⁵ The first wave starting in the 1990s is characterised by awareness raising and the dissemination of knowledge about corruption and anti-corruption. Michael attributes the end of this first “wave” to “conference fatigue” and few demonstrable impacts on corruption.⁴⁶ The second “wave” starting in the 2000s is characterised by a shift from awareness raising towards capacity-building, homogeneity towards heterogeneity in the implementation of programmes and a diversification of anti-corruption actors from international to national and local organisations.⁴⁷ Schmidt further identifies four periods in anti-corruption research and practice: 1) early scholarly debates on corruption (pre-1990s), 2) the first anti-corruption debates (1990s), 3) a period of reorientation (early 2000s), and 4) a second anti-corruption debate (mid-2000s).⁴⁸ Early scholarly works on corruption have focused on studying corruption as a *domestic* phenomenon.⁴⁹ The beginning of the 1990s marks the start of a discussion on corruption as a *global* phenomenon requiring the development of collective measures such as international agreements.⁵⁰ In particular, corruption has been studied from a development angle and from the angle of democratisation/transformation studies after the fall of communism in the early 1990s. Schmidt then identifies a period of “reorientation” where the attention is turned to other international issues such as terrorism and conflicts.⁵¹ Schmidt also notes a softening of the anti-corruption rhetoric from terms such as “fight”, “combat”, “battle” to “reduce”, “curb”, “control” or “prevent” corruption.⁵² A certain disillusionment towards anti-corruption activity also

⁴⁴ Michael (2004b), p. 1071.

⁴⁵ See Michael, Bryane: Some reflections on donor-sponsored anti-corruption, Linacre College Tallinn, Estonia, October 2004.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Schmidt, Diana: Civil society against corruption in Russia: conceptual and practical challenges, paper presented at the 3rd ECPR conference, Budapest, Hungary, 8-10 September 2005, pp. 4-5.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 5.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 7.

⁵² Ibid.

characterises this period, in particular regarding the fundamental problem of assessing success in anti-corruption measures. After this period of disillusionment and reorientation, anti-corruption debates have focused on *obstacles* to efforts to advance the anti-corruption agenda.⁵³ Schmidt lists these obstacles as “*lacking commitment by the political leadership, corrupt judiciaries, and acceptance of bribery as a business practice, and lack of systematised knowledge on anti-corruption.*”⁵⁴

3.1.4 Positivist corruption research and its critics

The positivistic approach to anti-corruption represented by the World Bank and Transparency International aims at identifying and isolating factors that contribute to corruption such as dysfunctional institutions with a view to design policy prescriptions. This research has resulted in a classification of corruption in different typologies. Corruption has been divided in categories such as *petty corruption* and *grand corruption* or low-level and high-level corruption. *Administrative or petty corruption* occurs at the level of the implementation of laws and regulations where the public meets state officials. Small sums of money are involved in these transactions where public officials use their discretionary power to gain certain monetary or status advantages. *Political corruption* occurs at the higher levels of the public administration where policies and laws are formulated and it involves larger sums of money. For example, laws can be tailored for the benefits of certain politicians or public resources are being embezzled. Corruption can also take place within state institutions at the intersection of the public service and party politics, while it results from a lack of transparency and accountability of public officials. Rational economic models tend to dominate the research on corruption that view corruption as an objective and neutral description of reality.

Anthropologists have criticised the conventional definition of corruption as “*the abuse of public office for private ends*” as being too narrow for it implies a separation between a public and a private sphere. This analytical distinction between “public” and “private” is also present in the distinction between state and society and the public good and private interests. The definition of corruption thus implies the existence of a notion of the public good that is embodied in the state administration. Corruption is seen as a deviation from bureaucratic values of neutrality and equity. For example, the World Bank states: “*Corruption opposes the bureaucratic values of*

⁵³ Ibid, p. 8.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

equity, efficiency, transparency, and honesty.”⁵⁵ It means deviation from the formal bureaucratic rules that regulate the behaviour of civil servants and ensure that these officials serve the public good and not their private interests. As such, the definition of corruption reflects a euro-centric standpoint and is directly derived from a Weberian ideal-type of bureaucratic rationality. Anthropologists have argued that this definition disregards the heterogeneity of cultural contexts, while they have questioned its validity for non-Western contexts.⁵⁶ Certain anthropologists have also questioned the adequacy of the practice of ranking countries according to ‘most corrupt’ and ‘second least corrupt’, arguing that these rankings tend to assert a certain moral superiority of Western countries over developing or transition countries.⁵⁷

Another criticism against the positivistic understanding of corruption as an objective description of reality and the enterprise of fighting it resting on this definition is that measurable corruption is more a subjective phenomenon existing in perceptions. The subjectivity of assessments on corruption levels reflected in surveys of perceptions questions the claims that corruption can be measured and fought. Perceptions of corruption may not be related to actual experiences of corruption. Furthermore, the same act can be perceived by diverse individuals as corruption or as a legitimate exchange of services.

3.2 Studying the fight against corruption in Georgia: in search of a theoretical framework

3.2.1 How to approach the study of the fight against corruption in Georgia?

In my introductory chapter, I have described the evolution of my research question in the course of my fieldwork in Georgia. As has become clear from the observations that I have gathered during my field research, I was in search of a theoretical framework and an appropriate methodology to approach my object of study: “the fight against corruption in Georgia”. As I have explained, the most obvious expectation from my attempt to study the fight against corruption in Georgia was that I could draw some practical lessons from the way the Georgian authorities managed or not to tackle the corruption problem. I started myself my field research with the vague expectation that I would analyse the efficiency of programmes and measures, but

⁵⁵ Polzer (2001), p. 19.

⁵⁶ See Andvig, Jens C. /Fjeldstad, Odd-Helge: Corruption – A review of contemporary research, Christian Michelsen Institute, Report R 2001:7, p. 46.

⁵⁷ Shore, Cris & Haller, Dieter: Introduction – sharp practice: Anthropology and the study of corruption, in Shore, Cris & Haller, Dieter: *Corruption: Anthropological perspectives*, Pluto Press Ltd., 2005, p. 2.

the belief that I was conducting an evaluation of anti-corruption efforts was also widely shared by the people I interviewed during my fieldwork. As the scientific claims in the development field are rising with the idea that the increasing complexity of development problems and their interconnectedness require the use of scientific methods to comprehend them, the expectation exists that research on development will inevitably contribute to a growing practice-oriented literature. Obviously, a study of anti-corruption programmes in Georgia would contribute to the endless search for efficient methods to fight corruption. Interestingly, no-one of the development practitioners I interviewed expected that I would study the workings of development organisations themselves. While being a major actor in developing countries, development organisations appear to attract less attention from the scientific community. As a result of these expectations, the development practitioners that I interviewed often thought that they were providing me with knowledge and expertise on development problems, in particular the problem of fighting corruption, while my study was expected to directly contribute to this knowledge accumulation.

In my introduction, I have discussed how my observations suggested the limits of an instrumental approach to studying the fight against corruption that would focus on the analysis of the efficiency of anti-corruption measures. First, the question of the results and of the real impact of these programmes appears impossible to answer empirically. Second, the different anti-corruption actors do not appear to be saying and doing the same thing. Drawing from these observations, it seemed more promising to analyse the conflicts between these actors and what these conflicts would reveal about the nature of anti-corruption activities. Furthermore, the instrumental approach to the fight against corruption appeared to be too much reflected in the way international organisations presented their projects. One could suspect that the elaborated correlations that were established between different phenomena such as democracy and corruption in project documents and the vagueness of the claims these documents produced were more a part of the way development actors wanted to see their activities represented than a description of events. In effect, the reality of projects as narrated by local participants appeared to diverge from the official and authorised narratives of project documents. By studying the effectiveness of programmes and taking the models presented in project documents as a starting point, I risked taking for granted the way actors described their activities, while uncritically reproducing their explanations of why they might succeed or fail. I would apply their criteria on what constituted success or failure, while seeing their activities only through their eyes. Moreover, the study of the effectiveness of anti-corruption programmes would represent an active validation of the claims that these programmes could be at all successful. My observations

rather suggested the difficulty of verifying the claims of development organisations in terms of the real impact of their programmes on the levels of corruption. If I could not objectively verify these claims, how shall I approach them? By taking a step back, I oriented my study on the analysis of the way actors engaged in the fight against corruption were producing a particular anti-corruption discourse whose purpose was to construct reality.

However, the critical/deconstructionist approach to studying development and anti-corruption also appeared limited to the extent that the project of depoliticising corruption and of asserting a dominant anti-corruption discourse by international organisations *did not seem to succeed in Georgia*. The failure of these organisations to ensure that corruption was talked about and practiced in their own terms was visible in the way local participants in donor projects and government officials seemed unaware of this discourse and of the models propagated by international organisations. For example, government officials, NGO representatives and other participants in donor projects appeared to have only a vague idea of the existence of a national anti-corruption strategy that was supposed to provide a framework for anti-corruption measures. Furthermore, the way local project managers in donor programmes sometimes undermined and contradicted the dominant donor discourses and the official narrative of a project suggested strong limits to the control of development organisations not only over the practice of projects, but more essentially over the outside representation of their activities. A theoretical framework was needed in my study of the fight against corruption in Georgia that would allow me to grasp the contradictions of development in the form of the limited control of development organisations over the practice and their uneasy attempt to construct and secure a particular representation of their activities.

3.2.2 Anthropology of development

The literature on anthropology and development offers me first insights into the way I can apprehend this limited control.⁵⁸ By focusing on the agency and the practice in development, certain anthropologists of development have sought to provide a way out of the homogeneous views that characterise the instrumental and critical/deconstructionist literature on

⁵⁸ See for example Lewis, David & Mosse, David: Encountering order and disjuncture: contemporary anthropological perspectives on the organization of development, *Oxford Development Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1, March 2006; Rossi, Benedetta: Revisiting Foucauldian Approaches: Power Dynamics in Development Projects, *Journal of Development Studies*, 40:6, pp. 1–29, 2004; Long, Norman: An actor-oriented approach to development intervention, background paper prepared for APO meeting, Tokyo 22–26 April 2002.

development.⁵⁹ Even if they represent an attempt to depart from the positivistic approach to development, deconstructionist approaches have also been criticised by anthropologists of development for conceptualising the subject of development as passive, as being embedded in power structures that it cannot acknowledge.⁶⁰ Mosse argues that the critical turn in the anthropology of development therefore, “*merely replaces the instrumental rationality of policy with the anonymous automaticity of the machine.*”⁶¹ Furthermore, the view of development as an all-powerful anti-politics machine that shape development relations and practices ignore the fact that the development practice is rather characterised by “messiness” and unpredictable outcomes.

In the literature on anthropology and development, development practices are seen as being concealed behind the *self-representations* of development. These self-representations of bureaucratic rationality that present development interventions as rational answers to development problems must be set aside in order to uncover the real practices of development agencies.⁶² Mosse and Lewis propose to use the conceptual lens of “order and disjuncture” to draw the attention to the disjuncture between the apparent order of development and its normative expectations and the multiplicity and heterogeneity of the development practice.⁶³ Local actors understand and manipulate the development rhetorics instead of being passive subjects of unacknowledged structures. The study of the role of agency in development allows identifying the “recipient strategies” of local power actors which seemingly adhere to the programmatic goals of projects, while undermining them in the practice. Furthermore, the focus on the agency challenges the view of development as being the product of well-designed policies or of the hidden agendas of development organisations. Instead of being the results of well-thought plans and of intentionality, development outcomes are shaped by actors on the ground and are characterised by unpredictability. For example, Long’s understanding of development as a battlefield which he designs as the “actor-oriented” approach shows the multiplicity of perspectives, interpretations and interests that characterises the practice of projects.⁶⁴ Rossi further discusses this heterogeneity in her study of the development project “AID”: “*AID planners were anxious to make it conform to international discourses to gain international legitimacy; in the recipient country the Project occupied a special role in national environmental policy and its replication was used by politicians to achieve grassroots support; and, to the target population, IRDP offered goods and services which a resource-poor state failed to*

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ See for example Long’s “actor-oriented approach” in Long (2002).

⁶¹ Mosse (2003), p. 5.

⁶² See Mosse and Lewis (2006), p. 3.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 2.

⁶⁴ See Long (2002).

provide.”⁶⁵ Rossi explains how donor discourses constrain the actions of local beneficiaries, but these actors benefit at the same time of a room of interpretation and manoeuvre, while they are able to distance themselves from dominant development rhetorics.⁶⁶ While development represents a source of income and social status for different actors, the apparent conformity to donor discourses does not signify their acceptance. In her study of the export of the “good governance” concept in Thailand, Orlandini further uses the concept of “consumer practices” developed by de Certeau to show the various trajectories followed by local actors to appropriate and “consume” it.⁶⁷ Drawing on de Certeau, she studies development policies as commodities and products that are being re-contextualised in the act of consumption.⁶⁸ She shows the creativity of local actors in her study of the selective appropriation or “fishing out” of elements of a good governance discourse.⁶⁹ The study of the complexity of agency and of the diversity of actors such as development organisations, government bureaucracies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) further reveal the limits of the operational control of development bureaucracies. Development practices are shaped by a multiplicity of interests and agendas and a network of social and political relations between development actors.

At the same time, development actors do not stand in isolation from development representations. They actively contribute as ‘interpretive communities’ to the constitution and maintenance of these representations. Local participants in a development project will contribute to sustaining its official representation by tying their interests to it. They may at the same time undermine this representation in their unofficial narratives on the project. This representation which is the end result of the project does not derive from the logic of policy, but from the interaction between different development actors and the conciliation of various interests. The focus on the practices of development thus allows *breaking with the representation of development projects as being the execution of a well-designed policy.*

The literature on anthropology and development thus offers first insights to study anti-corruption activities in Georgia as representations that are sustained by ‘interpretive communities’ formed during the implementation of a project. Furthermore, these representations tend to conceal the heterogeneity of the development practice or its unpredictable outcomes, as they represent

⁶⁵ Rossi (2004), pp. 23-24.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Orlandini, Barbara: Consuming good governance in Thailand, *The European Journal of Development Research*, Volume 15, Number 2, December 2003, pp. 16–43(28); de Certeau, M.: *The practice of everyday life*, Berkeley and Los Angeles; University of California Press, 1984.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

development activities as deriving from the logic of policy. I will further use Bourdieu's theory of the practice as a framework to approach the fight against corruption in Georgia.

3.2.3 Bourdieu's theory of the practice

While anthropologists of development urge us to focus the attention on the development agency and practices, Bourdieu's theory of the practice provides a further framework to understand the relation between agency and discourse in development. Bourdieu's theory of the practice shares with anthropologists of development a common *rejection of instrumental rationality*.

Bourdieu's attempt to develop a theory of the practice is an answer to his perception of the limits of an intellectual discourse about the social world or what can be termed the "scholastic view". In particular, Bourdieu rejects the dichotomy between objectivism and subjectivism which he associates with Sartre's existential phenomenology and Levi-Strauss's structural anthropology.⁷⁰ He draws the attention to the distortions inherent in the intellectual attitude that is characterised by the distance separating observer from observed. For example, structuralists commit the error of reducing social practices to a set of structural laws that are intelligible only to an impartial observer.⁷¹ In this process, an illusion is created of social practices as being conformed to pre-determined rules. A society is the empirical expression of these formal rules that can only be reconstituted in the mind of the impartial observer that the anthropologist claims to be. As a result, the anthropologist overlooks the fact that these laws constitute for the participant a set of practical problems to be negotiated with relatively unpredictable outcomes instead of a predictable scenery or the mechanical execution of rules to be performed in front of an impartial observer.⁷² Bourdieu's theory of the practice thus originates in a reflection on the problematic of anthropological representation and its inherent ethnocentrism that takes as a starting point his own anthropological studies of Kabylia.⁷³

Bourdieu has sought to find a way out of the dichotomy between objectivism and subjectivism in the study of social practices and of the distortions created by the distance that separates the intellectuals from the object of study.⁷⁴ This implies reflecting on the blind spots implicit in each

⁷⁰ See Lane (2000), p. 88.

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 89.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid, p. 86.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 89.

approach, while transcending their antagonism and preserving their respective gains.⁷⁵ For Bourdieu, the realm of doxa or “practical knowledge” against which science or *episteme* is constructed must be included in a truly scientific account of the social world.⁷⁶ Lane notes an unresolved tension in Bourdieu’s attempt to transcend the dichotomy between theory and practice and the intrinsic assumption in structural anthropology that the quality of knowledge accessible to the detached anthropological observer is higher than the practical knowledge of native agents. These native agents are assumed to have no access to an objective knowledge of their social world, as they remain unconscious of the objective logic of their practices.⁷⁷

With the development of the concepts of “habitus”, “strategy” and “practice”, Bourdieu emphasise the creativity involved in the performance of social practices that cannot be reduced to the mechanical execution of pre-determined rules only intelligible to an impartial observer. At the same time, these practices remain determined by an “objective logic” or the imperatives of social reproduction.⁷⁸

Bourdieu’s theory of the practice thus draws the attention to the inherent distortions involved in the “scholastic point of view”. It allows us to break with the notion that development practices are the simple execution of structural models that are unintelligible to local development agents. As I will examine further in my analysis of the production of success in the anti-corruption field, concepts such as “habitus” and “field” also allows us to explain the naturalness with which development representations become taken-for-granted and the way legitimacy and universality claims are constructed in development.

3.3 Methodology

I have conducted fieldwork in Georgia in the period starting from April 2007 until December 2008. As I have explained, two aspects in particular of the fight against corruption in Georgia have attracted my attention: the *construction of representations of success* by anti-corruption actor and the *conflicts* between these actors. Indeed, I have identified two facets of the question of success in anti-corruption: the *construction of coherence* in representations of success and the *fragility* of these same representations that is revealed in the interactions between anti-corruption actors.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 92.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 93.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 96.

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 96.

In order to research empirically these two aspects of the fight against corruption, I have conducted 94 *semi-structured interviews* with different categories of actors: government representatives, NGO representatives, representatives of donor organisations and members of political parties.⁷⁹ I have conducted the majority of these interviews in English, some were conducted in German, and I used a research assistant for interviews in Russian and Georgian. Further, I have analysed written data: official documents and reports of the Georgian government, donors and NGOs on anti-corruption activities; statements of anti-corruption actors such as official speeches or the presentation of anti-corruption projects on websites and in brochures; the official websites of these organisations; and newspaper articles.

My first objective was to understand the *construction of coherence* or the way the three main anti-corruption actors – Georgian government, donor organisations and NGOs – build a particular representation of their activities.

To do this, I have first analysed their *self-representation as anti-corruption actors* (Chapter IV: 4.2.1). I have studied statements in official documents, reports and websites; the description of the Georgian government's anti-corruption activities in newspaper articles and reports; and the description of the activities of international organisations and NGOs in the anti-corruption and development literature. Moreover, I have conducted semi-structured interviews with the three main categories of anti-corruption actors: Georgian government, donor organisations and NGOs. In these interviews, I have asked representatives of these three groups of actors to describe their anti-corruption activities, their definition of the corruption problem and of the most efficient ways to fight corruption.

In a second step, I have focused my analysis on the way these actors construct a representation of their activities *in opposition* to other actors in the field (Chapter IV: 4.2.2). I have asked interviewees to describe their activities in reference to the activities of other actors. My analysis of these interviews has helped me identify: 1) the *main elements* of their self-representation as anti-corruption actors and of the representation of their activities, 2) the *points of conflict* between various representations of anti-corruption activities.

My second objective was to examine the *fragility* of these representations of success or the dilemmas arising from the interactions between anti-corruption actors. I have focused my

⁷⁹ See Annex I and II for the list of interviews.

attention on *identifying the disjuncture between discourse and practice* that would reveal the *work of interpretation* and the *process of securing the approval of other actors* that underlie the maintenance of representations of success in anti-corruption.

I have employed different ways to bring to light this disjuncture between discourse and practice. First, I have concentrated my research on the way a particular representation of success can be *undermined from the inside*. I have identified *contradictions* between the official presentation of activities in written documents and their description in informal narratives. In this case, I have analysed both official documents and interviews with the participants of a project. A second way of identifying contradictions was to cross-check the interviews with different participants in a project. Their statements would differ. Finally, contradictions could be identified within a single interview, when the interviewee would switch from an official role as a representative of a particular organisation to a more informal one as a simple Georgian citizen. For example, this was the case during interviews with the Georgian employees of donor organisations.

To identify these various contradictions, I have asked interviewees to evaluate and assess the success of their activities. As already stated in my introduction, I understand success in anti-corruption as being *socially produced*. My understanding of success in anti-corruption is thus of the *degree of success in maintaining a coherent representation of activities*. Hence, my focus in the interviews was not on identifying the success of activities on the basis of the assessment provided by project participants or the information provided by official documents, but on identifying potential *contradictions* in representations of success or bringing to light the disjuncture between discourse and practice. In my interviews, interviewees would describe as the successful outcomes of a project other results than those mentioned in the official presentation of the project. Further, they would openly admit that they could not say with certainty whether the project had had any impact on corruption. They would also reveal how certain objectives were gradually abandoned during the project's implementation and replaced by others. Finally, by cross-checking the statements of different project participants, I would identify diverging interpretations of a project's results and diverging narratives on the project's activities. Some project participants would view some activities outside the discursive frame of anti-corruption, while others would place them in this frame. These contradictions were important, as they would show me two things: 1) the fact that an official representation of success can be undermined and is only this, a discursive representation in official documents, 2) considering its fragility, the fact that this representation needs to be secured in project documents and further depends on an "interpretive community" to be maintained. Contradictions would reveal both the fragility of

representations of success and the *work of interpretation* maintaining them. This work of interpretation consists of interpreting the heterogeneous practices of projects so as to render them consistent with official programmatic goals contained in project documents. Contradictions in the statements of project participants thus occurred on three levels: 1) between official documents and informal statements in interviews, 2) between the statements of different project participants, 3) and within a single interview, when an interviewee would switch roles. These contradictions provided me with a glimpse in the heterogeneity and “messiness” of the anti-corruption practice as well as the work of interpretation underlying representations of success and coherence.

Second, I focused my attention on the interactions between anti-corruption actors. As already stated, representations of success depend on the approval of other actors to be maintained and these other actors can use *strategies of delegitimation* to undermine them. I have asked interviewees to assess the anti-corruption activities of other actors and also their success. The description of the activities of other actors has revealed two main elements of the strategies of delegitimation: 1) contesting the knowledge of these other actors and 2) questioning their motives (Chapter IV: 4.2.2).

In a second step, I have selected three case studies of anti-corruption activity in Georgia using Tisné and Smilov’s classification of anti-corruption projects to gain a clearer understanding of the interactions between anti-corruption actors (Chapter V).⁸⁰ These three types of activities were: 1) the adoption and implementation of a national anti-corruption strategy in Georgia, 2) the reform of the audit institution Chamber of Control of Georgia, 3) and two civil society anti-corruption projects. During my interviews with project participants, I have asked interviewees to describe their activities; assess the overall success of the project, in particular evaluate and assess the success of these activities in terms both of the achievement of the project’s official objectives and of their impact on corruption; and identify the factors that have prevented the achievement of the project’s official objectives or the limited impact of activities on corruption. Further, I asked them to provide an assessment of the cooperation with other actors.

On the basis of my analysis of these interviews, I have observed how the representations of success of the different actors can undermine each other, while these actors depend at the same time on a mutual approval to secure them. For example, project managers in donor organisations

⁸⁰ Tisné, Martin/Smilov, Daniel: From the ground up – Assessing the record of anticorruption assistance in Eastern Europe, Policy Studies series, Central European University Centre for Policy Studies, 2004.

would cite the lack of local ownership and frequent changes of management as obstacles to their project's activities. At the same time, they would still assure me that the cooperation with the Georgian government was smooth.

To go beyond this appearance of consensus and an apparent convergence of objectives as outlined in official documents, I focused my analysis on the *conflicts* between anti-corruption actors. In particular, the adoption and implementation of an anti-corruption strategy in Georgia as well as the reform of the Chamber of Control provided arenas to study these conflicts (Chapter V: 5.1, 5.2). My interviews together with my analysis of official documents were first aimed at understanding the different *positions* of actors towards the reform of the Chamber of Control or the anti-corruption strategy. I gathered data on the different measures and steps undertaken by these diverse actors. In a second step, my attention was focused on the instances where these various measures and steps appeared to contradict each other, thus producing conflicts between actors. Hence, the analysis of the different actors' activities revealed contradictions. I identified potential instances of conflicts during my interviews and in Georgian newspaper articles. Conflicts bring to light what actors view as "self-evident", a self-evident course of actions. By disrupting certain behavioural models, they bring actors to reflect on them.⁸¹ Further, conflicts could reveal how an official version of events or the way certain events were framed in an official narrative would differ from the unofficial interpretations of these events. Further, certain practices would be viewed through the frame of anti-corruption by certain actors and placed outside this frame by others.⁸² The different interpretations of conflicts would also show how the question of the motives of anti-corruption actors came under the spotlight. I also used newspaper articles to understand how these conflicts were perceived by a wider audience in Georgia, for example in my examination of the conflict between the Ministry of Education and the Chamber of Control (Chapter V: 5.2.3.1). Finally, conflicts would help reveal whether various representations of success would coincide or undermine each other. The analysis of conflicts was thus a means to see beyond an official representation of convergence between anti-corruption actors.

Through my analysis of interviews and official documents, I could observe how the meaning of a practice is not fixed. The fragility of claims to success in anti-corruption was revealed to the

⁸¹ Christophe, Barbara: *Zwischen Fassaden der Anarchie und regulativer Allmacht - Metamorphosen des Leviathan in der georgischen Provinz*, Habilitationsschrift zur Vorlage bei der Kulturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Europa-Universität Viadrina in Frankfurt Oder, 2003, p. 63.

⁸² In the case of a conflict between the Ministry of Education and the Chamber of Control, representatives of donor organisations would reveal that they were not even aware of its existence, showing that this domestic conflict did not enter their "radar". Interviews with representatives of donor organisations, November-December 2008.

extent that a particular definition of anti-corruption did not succeed in stabilising itself in Georgia.

IV Production of success and actors' strategies in the anti-corruption field in Georgia

Drawing on my observations on the fight against corruption in post-revolutionary Georgia, I have identified two main questions underlying my study of anti-corruption activity: 1) how does anti-corruption achieve the “miracle” of being perceived as successful despite the impossibility of proving its impact on corruption levels?; 2) what explains the tensions between anti-corruption actors in Georgia and what is the nature of these tensions? My study aims at examining how *success is produced* in anti-corruption through a study of interactions between anti-corruption actors in post-revolutionary Georgia. I ask whether claims to success in anti-corruption are stabilised in these interactions and if not, what explains this failure.

In a first part, I will examine the process of producing success in anti-corruption. In particular, I will apply Bourdieu's field concept to the study of anti-corruption activities to examine how a global anti-corruption field appears to emerge. In a second part, I will turn to the study of the interactions between anti-corruption actors in post-revolutionary Georgia. First, I will examine how each actor responds to the problem of demonstrating the impact of its activities on corruption levels by engaging in a particular strategy of building success. I will examine the differences between these strategies. Second, I will look more closely at the nature of the interactions between these actors and how their representations are built on oppositions. The question is whether the different strategies adopted by actors do converge in a *common production of success*.

4.1 The production of success in anti-corruption

4.1.1 The problem of the lack of demonstrable results in anti-corruption

Similarly to other development concepts such as “democratisation”, “good governance”, “participation”, “capacity-building” and “empowerment”, anti-corruption activity is characterised by its *vagueness* and the inherent difficulty of demonstrating and measuring its impact. Three main difficulties are attached to the question of measuring the impact of anti-corruption activity. First, various social relations and practices can be referred to as “corruption”. Anthropologists argue that the definition of social practices as “corruption” cannot be separated

from a particular value system.⁸³ They question the very possibility of developing an objective and neutral definition of corruption that would be valid for different cultural contexts. For example, the classical definition of corruption used by organisations such as Transparency International (TI) and the World Bank is the “*abuse of public office for private interests*”. This definition presupposes the existence of a public domain and a separation between a public and a private sphere that do not necessarily apply to all cultural contexts. Second, an objective measurement of corruption is inherently problematic. Corruption practices are usually hidden practices, while prosecuted crimes of corruption cannot be used as reliable indicators of the levels of corruption. As a result, measurements of corruption remain subjective and are based on perceptions rather than measurable facts. For example, the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index that measures levels of corruption in different countries is based on surveys of perceptions of corruption. Thus, data on corruption only reflect the perceptions of practices.⁸⁴ A third problem is the difficulty of measuring the impact of a specific anti-corruption programme on the levels of corruption. Indeed, the impact of these programmes cannot be isolated from other factors that may also have an influence on corruption. As a consequence, the concrete impact of anti-corruption strategies and programmes on corruption - an inherently vague phenomenon - appears impossible to measure and evaluate. What has been reduced, what has reduced it and how much has been reduced? The vagueness of the concepts of corruption and anti-corruption renders difficult the establishment of causes-and-effects relations and an objective *demonstration of success* in anti-corruption.

Hence, the main dilemma attached with the anti-corruption field is the *impossibility of objectively proving the success of anti-corruption activities* through a reference to a visible decline in corruption levels. No anti-corruption actor can actually claim a knowledge of how to combat corruption by demonstrating that its actions have resulted in a decline in corrupt behaviours. Certain studies on the fight against corruption highlight the inherent difficulty in establishing a causal link between anti-corruption activity and a reduction of corruption.⁸⁵ For example, Tisne and Smilov note in their review of anti-corruption projects in the Balkans: “*donors found it difficult to qualify the impact of a project on a phenomenon like corruption, which is difficult to measure and where any attempt at measurement can be influenced by a*

⁸³ See Andvig and Fjeldstad (2001), p. 46.

⁸⁴ Certain studies have shown that perceptions of corruption do not clearly correlate with actual experiences of corruption, while the perception that an institution is corrupt can even encourage corrupt behaviours. See for example Čábelková, Inna / Hanousek, Jan: The power of negative thinking: corruption, perception and willingness to bribe in Ukraine, in: Applied Economics, 2004 (vol.36), No.4, pp. 383–397(15).

⁸⁵ See Tisne and Smilov (2004).

*number of extraneous factors.*⁸⁶ They further remark: “*In all cases, the projects listed reducing corruption as one of their core objectives; yet based on interview material and project reports, none of the donors claimed that their projects had effectively reduced corruption. Projects listed their immediate objectives as successes, stressing that these contributed to the fight against corruption, but could in no way be seen to have tangibly reduced corruption.*”⁸⁷ These uncertainties concerning the real impact of anti-corruption programmes beg the question of how corruption can be fought at all. However, not only does the idea of fighting corruption receive an unquestioned adherence, but also global anti-corruption activity appears to develop without the question of concrete changes on corruption levels being asked. If doubts are voiced, it is on the question of the methods used to fight corruption. How does anti-corruption succeed in being successful or inscribing itself in categories of success and failure? As Hansen remarks on anti-corruption programmes in Georgia: “*an anti-corruption project may be entirely successful in its own terms and still make no meaningful contribution to lessening or preventing corruption*”.⁸⁸ How claims to success are sustained in anti-corruption and through what processes is anti-corruption activity legitimised?

4.1.2 The production of success in anti-corruption activity

The problem of proving the impact of anti-corruption activity on concrete levels of corruption and of securing an objective and measurable demonstration of this impact confront anti-corruption actors with the question of how to *legitimise their activities*. As Michael notes, anti-corruption activity needs to lead to certain results in order to legitimise itself. He says on the anti-corruption discourse: “*the discourse legitimised anti-corruption activity by noting the harms of corruption and suggesting that anti-corruption activity could promote outcomes – namely reduce corruption (World Bank 1997). Anti-corruption’s legitimacy derived not from anything inherent about anti-corruption itself, but from its function in delivering certain results.*”⁸⁹ Thus, actors engaged in the fight against corruption need to develop a strategy of *producing success* that does not include a reference to concrete changes in corruption levels. To understand this process, I draw on Mosse’s observations on the relation of policy and practice in development.⁹⁰ In his analysis of development projects, Mosse observes: “*one thing is evident, and that is that*

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 27.

⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

⁸⁸ Hansen, Greg: Donor standards in anti-corruption (DSACP): The struggle against negative occurrences: experience with explicit and implicit anti-corruption efforts in Georgia, September 2002, p. 27.

⁸⁹ Michael, Bryane: What do African-donor sponsored anti-corruption programmes teach us about international development in Africa?, Social policy & Administration, Vol. 38, No. 4, August 2004, pp. 320-345, pp. 325-26

⁹⁰ See Mosse (2003).

*whether disciplining or empowering in intent, the operational control which bureaucracies or NGOs have over events and practices in development is always constrained and often quite limited. What is usually more urgent and more practical is control over the interpretation of events.*⁹¹ Since their effective control over their activities and the results of the implementation of a programme is limited, development organisations will try to exert a control over the *representation of them*. Hence, Mosse argues that to understand the relation between policy and practice, one need to *abandon the view that development policy guides or orientates the development practice*.⁹² Instead, it serves to *legitimise* it. He asks: “*what, if instead of policy producing practice, practices produce policy, in the sense that actors in development devote their energies to maintaining coherent representations regardless of events?*”⁹³ Mosse observes that the question in development is not whether, but *how* development works.⁹⁴ Drawing on Mosse, the question in the analysis of anti-corruption activity should be not whether anti-corruption programmes and strategies are successful in tackling corruption, but *how success is produced*.

In my examination of the mechanisms of the production of success in anti-corruption, I identify two pillars that serve to build and stabilise claims to success: 1) the construction of a coherent link between discursive strategies and practices, and 2) the validation of these representations by other actors.

4.1.2.1 Construction of coherence

The literature on anthropology and development draws the attention to the role of agency in development and challenges the instrumental view that the development practice should be seen as a direct result of well-designed strategies. The construction of a causal link between policy and practice in development should be understood as sustaining the representation that development seeks to project of itself as a rational enterprise rather than as a description of development practices. The representation of development activities as deriving from the logic of policy constitutes a legitimisation strategy that serves to conceal the heterogeneity of the development practice and the unpredictability of its outcomes. It is a strategy of constructing coherence out of the actual “messiness” of the development practice.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 8.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid, p. 2.

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 8.

Drawing on these observations from the literature on anthropology and development, I identify legitimisation strategies in the anti-corruption field as being based on *establishing a coherent link between practices and the theoretical models that support anti-corruption programmes*. Since they cannot be legitimised through concrete results and the demonstration of their effective impact on corruption levels, anti-corruption activities are being legitimised through their representation as the *products of well-designed policies*. The formulation of theoretical models on corruption causes and ways to address them and the corroboration of these models with data serve to legitimise anti-corruption interventions rather than orientate and guide the practice. It is the *plausibility and soundness* of the theoretical and practical assumptions on corruption and anti-corruption activity rather than the concrete outcomes of anti-corruption programmes that will ensure a representation of success. For example, civil society anti-corruption projects will be viewed as successful if they have effectively built NGOs' capacities or mobilise the public, assuming that public awareness raising on corruption or the capacity-building of NGOs in itself contribute to the fight against corruption. Tisne and Smilov note on civil society anti-corruption projects in the Balkans: "*projects considered as successes - which include the quasi-totality of projects that we analyzed - were found to have one or all of the following effects: an increase in the awareness of corruption; creation of new structures to fight corruption; and/or strengthening of the capacity of civil society.*"⁹⁵ As I have already quoted, they remark: "*Projects listed their immediate objectives as successes*".⁹⁶ A report on an anti-corruption project in Nepal provides a further example of the way the assumption on which an anti-corruption project is based – namely that awareness-raising constitutes an adequate means to reduce corruption – substitutes the initial objective of reducing corruption as a measure of success.⁹⁷ The report says:

"The project was able to implement a large number of activities, both those that were originally conceived and those added later on. However, the impacts of such activities on achieving the purpose of the project, i.e., "to reduce corruption involving the business community" cannot be known in definite terms. The end-of-year review of the project, made only at output-level, admits that such "an ambitious goal of reducing corruption cannot be achieved within two years." Not least due to the lack of baseline information on the nature and scale of private sector corruption in Nepal, it is impossible to measure project effectiveness in terms of achieving this goal. Therefore, the output review study has softened the goal of "reducing corruption" to mean leaving "some positive impacts" in the field. These were meant to "generate awareness against corruption among the business community and the general public"."⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Tisne and Smilov (2004), p. 5.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ The "theory of change" as an evaluation method is representative of these attempts to measure success by taking as an initial standpoint the assumptions on which projects are based. The evaluation will analyse these underlying assumptions and assess their plausibility in relation to the outcomes that the project aims at achieving.

⁹⁸ Manandhar, Narayan: The anatomy of a failed anti-corruption project: a case study from Nepal, U4 Practice Insight 2009:3, pp. 4-5.

What is at stake in the construction of success is not the results of anti-corruption programmes in themselves, but the process of interpreting project's practices as being the *results of a well-designed plan*. In order for the practices of anti-corruption programmes to concord with theoretical models, a work of interpretation is needed. Practices are interpreted in such a way that they are understood as being the direct result of the application of theoretical models in policies and the translation of these policies in programmes. A coherent sequence between programme objectives and programme outcomes must be constructed. A constant work of interpretation is needed, for example by evaluators and consultants, to establish this coherent sequence. As Shore and Wrights remark "*organisations exist in a constant state of organising*" and they are concerned with the work of making "*fragmented activities appear coherent, so it can be claimed that an intention has been realised and a successful result achieved.*"⁹⁹ Development organisations will strive to present their activities as resulting from *intention* and strategic thinking to conceal the actual "messiness" and unpredictability of programme implementation. In this light, the anti-corruption research promoted by the World Bank can be seen as an attempt to legitimise anti-corruption practices *a priori* rather than guide them and improve the success of programmes in terms of reducing corruption.

4.1.2.2 Securing the approval of other actors

This work of interpretation depends on securing the approval of other actors and building an "interpretive community" of development actors with their interests tied to a project. Claims to success require the immunisation of particular representations from counter-claims. These counter-claims will refer to a reality outside the discursive representations of anti-corruption activity or they will reveal certain contradictions in these representations. Li remarks how the compromises of local agents in development "*enable, but they simultaneously introduce the possibility of exposure and disgrace. [...] They form the uneasy subtext to the political jokes and the cynical reflections on the pomposity of a speech, the tedium of a spectacle or stupidity of a plan - reflections that, while they criticize another, also implicate the self.*"¹⁰⁰ The stabilisation of representations and their immunisation require the enrolment of supporters. This community of heterogeneous actors will validate and sustain the outside representation of projects in the form of official and authorised narratives on project events. As Mosse remarks, "*projects do not fail;*

⁹⁹ Shore, Cris & Wright, Susan (eds.): *Anthropology of policy: critical perspectives on governance and power*, London and New York: Routledge, 1997, p. 5. Quoted in Mosse (2003), p. 17.

¹⁰⁰ Li, Tania Murray: *Compromising Power: Development, culture and rule in Indonesia*, *Cultural Anthropology* 14 (3) 295-322, 1999, p. 299.

they are failed by wider networks of support and validation.”¹⁰¹ He further notes, “success demands the compliance of the beneficiaries”¹⁰², and “interpretations have to be made and sustained socially.”¹⁰³ Success or failure are produced and manufactured, they should not be understood as an objective description of reality, but as an interpretation of events and a work of constructing meaning and coherence out of the “messiness” of the development practice. Mosse further argues that: “development interventions are driven not by policy but by the exigencies of organisations and the need to maintain relationships.”¹⁰⁴ While the vagueness of development terms renders difficult an objective demonstration of a programme’s impact, the same vagueness fulfils certain purposes as it allows for 1) the multiplication of criteria of success, and 2) the conciliation of different interests. Hence, development organisations strive to build partnerships between actors with heterogeneous interests. Mosse notes the mobilising potential of development concepts: “Policy discourse generates mobilising metaphors (‘participation’, ‘partnership’, ‘governance’, ‘social capital’) whose vagueness, ambiguity and lack of conceptual precision is required to conceal ideological differences, to allow compromise and the enrolment of different interests, to distribute agency and to multiply criteria of success within project systems.”¹⁰⁵ The vagueness of the term “anti-corruption” serves to conciliate various and sometimes conflicting agendas. As Sampson remarks, “Definitions of what constitutes corruption and assessments of the effectiveness of ‘fighting corruption’ are sufficiently vague that they can be integrated into many political agendas or private projects.”¹⁰⁶

In order to sustain the representation of anti-corruption activity as deriving from the logic of policy and the application of instrumental rationality, coherence and unity of interests are constructed *a posteriori*. Drawing from this analysis of the construction of success in development and anti-corruption projects, we observe that it is necessary to *abandon the view that anti-corruption practices follow from the implementation of strategies* to understand how success is produced.

¹⁰¹ Mosse (2003), p. 21.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 9.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ Sampson, Steven: Corruption and Anti-Corruption in Southeast Europe: Landscapes and Sites, in de Sousa, Luis/Larmour, Peter/Hindess, Barry (eds.): *Governments, NGOs and Anti Corruption: the New Integrity Warriors*, London: Routledge, 2009, p. 4.

4.1.3 Emergence of an anti-corruption field?

4.1.3.1 Bourdieu's field concept and the question of the representation of interests in the bureaucratic field

In order to understand the process of legitimising anti-corruption activity despite the impossibility of referring to any concrete changes in corruption levels, I further use insights from Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the practice. I will apply Bourdieu's field concept to the study of anti-corruption actors and their practices in Georgia. Bourdieu's field concept allows us to further approach the question of how anti-corruption succeeds in building the representation that corruption can be fought at all, that this can be done by identifying appropriate methods and that an anti-corruption activity can be successful. The concept of field draws the attention to the way its agents succeed in building a particular representation of their actions, thereby legitimising them by securing an unquestioned adherence to the logic that seemingly sustain the field and dictates its practices.

With the concept of *habitus*, Bourdieu questions sociological views that understand regularities in practices as being the results of rules and ideas. Bourdieu explains regularity by reference to the social embedding of the actor. Habitus expresses itself in habits, dispositions to act in certain ways and schemes of perception, instead of rules.¹⁰⁷ Social agents do not follow rules: they are formed and embedded in social fields. These fields shape their ways of acting and seeing the world. Habitus has no independent existence apart from a field; it emerges in the interactions between individuals and the field.¹⁰⁸ The social embedding of the agent reveals itself not only in mental habits, but also in corporeal dispositions. Ways of moving, gesturing and orienting oneself are an expression of habitus.¹⁰⁹

Bourdieu understands a field as a dynamic process of position takings. Fields are a) configurations of social roles, agent positions and the structures they fit into, and b) historical processes in which those positions are occupied by actors.¹¹⁰ Positions in the field are not fixed; they are defined and related to one another by opposition. Agents in the field are related to one another by struggle and competition.¹¹¹ The field is formative instead of being an external fixed

¹⁰⁷ See Hanks, William F.: Pierre Bourdieu and the practices of language, *The Annual Review of Anthropology*, 2005, 34:67-83, p. 69.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 72.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 69.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 72.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 73.

structure. It is a formative input rather than being the external feature of context.¹¹² Hence, actors are shaped by the social positions they occupy in the field, as these positions generate embodied dispositions. Furthermore, fields are bounded by constraints on who can engage in which position.¹¹³ Through the concepts of field and habitus, Bourdieu explains the *naturalness* of symbolic orders and the unquestioning adherence to these orders. What is valued in a certain field is what fits the demands of the field.¹¹⁴ With the example of the literary field, Bourdieu shows how the field is constituted through struggles between actors. He analyses the conflict between Roland Barthes and Raymond Picard, a polemic between two French literary critics in the 1960s.¹¹⁵ Two schools of French literary criticism are opposed in the Barthes-Picard affair which takes the form of a quarrel on the study of a text by Racine reported in the French press. “University criticism” represented by Picard has its roots in a positivistic tradition of literary criticism, while Barthes represents the “new criticism” which draws on structural linguistics and psychoanalysis.¹¹⁶ By analysing this affair, Bourdieu develops a notion of field where positions of individuals and schools of thought are defined in a differential relationship with other participants in the field.¹¹⁷ New entrants in the field situate themselves between these competing positions, not out of a free choice but as a result of the meeting between field and habitus, which ensures their investment in the stakes of the field.¹¹⁸ This investment in the stakes of the field, in its “illusion”, corresponds to a series of “strategies” that are oriented at preserving and accumulating capital in the field.¹¹⁹ The common investment of all participants in the stakes of the game ensures in turn that disputes between these participants contribute in fact to the field’s reproduction. In the case of the dispute between Picard and Barthes, the unquestioned “illusion” in their dispute is the value of studying a classic literary figure such as Racine.¹²⁰ Beyond this, the affair represents a struggle over which type of academic prestige should prevail in the literary field, but both “complicit adversaries” are committed to maintain the prestige of literary study per se.¹²¹

The concept of a dynamic field allows Bourdieu to move beyond classical structuralism by introducing a notion of temporality in the study of regularities in practices. Bourdieu *replaces rules by strategy*. For example, he questions Levi-Strauss’ analysis of gift exchange as following

¹¹² Ibid, p. 73.

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 73.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 78.

¹¹⁵ See Lane (2000), p. 72.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 72.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 73.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p. 73.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 73.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 73.

¹²¹ Ibid, p. 78.

from a structural law of exchange.¹²² Bourdieu argues that Levi-Strauss overlooks how the practice of gift exchange proceeds over time and involves a strategic element. If the gift was returned immediately, this gesture would be perceived as insulting as it would reveal the selfish intention involved in the act of giving and the power exerted by the donor over the recipient through the latter's sense of obligation.¹²³ The practice of gift exchange thus presupposes the *misrecognition* of the truth of this selfish intention. The interval between gifts is thus crucial and reveals a strategy.

Bourdieu's analysis of the bureaucratic field provides further important insights into the way a field succeeds in representing the acts of social agents as following from a particular necessity or logic, while averting the potentiality of this logic being questioned.¹²⁴ Bourdieu examines how the bureaucratic field has the effect of shaping the way we see and think about the state. The study of the state presupposes a study of the genesis and structure of the bureaucratic microcosm and its agents. Bourdieu traces the genealogy of the bureaucratic field to the delegation of power of an absolute ruler to state institutions and personnel.¹²⁵ In this process, the bureaucratic field is endowed with a certain autonomy that its agents have an interest in legitimising and strengthening. This group of agents whose interests are tied to the state is created through the process of redistribution of money accumulated through state taxation.¹²⁶ As Bourdieu remarks, "*the genesis of the state is inseparable from the genesis of a group of agents whose interests are bound up with it, who have a vested interest in its functioning.*"¹²⁷ He thus gives particular attention to the emergence of a group of agents owing their position and professional competency to the state and its culture: civil servants. Bourdieu explains how the representation of the universal is ultimately to be traced back to this group of agents having an interest in "advancing the universal", in according their own particular interests with a universal interest. As he remarks: "*those who made perhaps the clearest contribution to the advance of reason and the universal had a clear interest in the universal; one can even say that they had a private interest in the public interest.*"¹²⁸ Lane further explains how these agents have an interest in giving "*a universal form to the expression of their particular interests, in elaborating a theory of public service and public order, and thus in working to autonomise the reason of state from*

¹²² Ibid, p. 104.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ See Bourdieu, Pierre: Rethinking the state: genesis and structure of the bureaucratic field, *Sociological theory* 12:1 March 1994 and Bourdieu, Pierre: "From the king's house to the reason of state: a model of the genesis of the bureaucratic field", *Constellations* Volume 11, No. 1, 2004.

¹²⁵ See Bourdieu (2004).

¹²⁶ Ibid, pp. 25-26

¹²⁷ Ibid, p. 26.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p. 31.

dynastic reason, from the house of the king, and to invent thereby the res publica and later the republic as an instance transcendent to the agents (the king included) who are its temporary incarnations."¹²⁹ Bourdieu also identifies a paradox at the core of the emergence of the bureaucratic state. While the bureaucratic state represents the emergence of a notion of public good based on the separation between a public and a private sphere and as such, a conquest against the patrimonial logic of the dynastic state, it becomes at the same time the site of a struggle for power over *statist capital* and material and symbolic profits.¹³⁰ Bourdieu thus identifies a two-sided process from which the state has issued and which is inseparably universalisation and monopolisation of the universal.¹³¹ The constitution of the state leads to a "monopoly of the universal" in the sense of a submission to the universal and "*a universal recognition of the universal representation of domination as legitimate and disinterested.*"¹³² Bourdieu defines the major powers of the state as its capacity "*to produce and impose (especially through the school system) categories of thought that we spontaneously apply to all things of the social world – including the state itself.*"¹³³ He defines the symbolic violence that characterises the state as its simultaneous incarnation in objectivity, in the form of specific organisational structures and mechanisms, and in subjectivity, in the form of mental structures and categories of perceptions and thought.¹³⁴ By realising itself in social structures and the mental structures adapted to them, the state take the appearance of naturalness.¹³⁵ The true power of the state rests in this appearance of naturalness, in making state injunctions and calls to order appear "obvious" by imposing the very cognitive structures through which it is perceived.¹³⁶ Bourdieu thus criticises structuralist views for focusing on the *opus operatum*, the end result of a practice, and neglecting processes of symbolic production or the *modus operandi* through which this end result is being produced.¹³⁷ Focusing on the *modus operandi* allows going beyond the appearance of coherence that characterises symbolic order. This appearance of coherence results from a tacit agreement between structuring structures imposed on all agents and objective structures of the social world.¹³⁸ The recognition of legitimacy does not result from an act of consciousness, but is rather a pre-reflexive agreement.¹³⁹

¹²⁹ Lane (2000), p. 182.

¹³⁰ Bourdieu (2004), p. 34.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Bourdieu (1994), p. 17.

¹³³ Ibid, p. 1.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 4-5.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 4.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 14.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 14.

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. 14.

¹³⁹ Ibid, p. 14-15.

The bureaucratic field thus succeeds in representing its practices as resulting from the obedience to certain principles of neutrality and of service to the public good, thereby masking its genealogy and the arbitrary act that marks its origin. The bureaucratic field is governed by the “interest in disinterestedness”.¹⁴⁰ Lane explains how the actions in a field appear to follow from a particular necessity: “As long as objective conditions remained unchanged, Bourdieu argued, an almost perfect fit between objective probability and subjective expectation would ensure that every action had the appearance of a self-evident necessity. Questioning the logic of such actions would thus be precluded...”¹⁴¹ By agreeing to the same rules of the game, social agents in a field succeed in representing their actions as following from a particular logic inherent to the field. This logic remains unquestioned, as the field succeeds in shaping our view of it. It succeeds in making us view and see these actions only through the prism of this particular logic. Representations of the state succeed in portraying bureaucracy as a “universal group” and a *rational instrument in charge of realising the general interest*.¹⁴² This very notion of general interest is not questioned in the way we see and think about the actions of bureaucratic agents. Bourdieu identifies this automatism that will lead us to take for granted the image that the state bureaucracy reflects as upholding universal values of neutrality and disinterested loyalty to the public good.¹⁴³

Bourdieu’s field theory provides important insights for the study of anti-corruption activity. In particular, it draws the attention to the way actors in the anti-corruption field will represent their actions as if they follow from the rational and disinterested purpose of identifying and applying solutions to the corruption problem out of a rational calculation on the best ways to fight corruption. The representation of anti-corruption activity as being the result of the disinterested application of instrumental rationality succeeds in being taken-for-granted and precluding any questions on the logic that anti-corruption actors follow in their actions.

4.1.3.2 Formation of a global anti-corruption field

Drawing on Bourdieu’s field concept, I will further examine how anti-corruption appears to constitute itself as a Bourdieu field. In the analysis of anti-corruption, Bourdieu’s insights urge us to focus on the *modus operandi* rather than the *opus operatum* or end result of anti-corruption

¹⁴⁰ Lane (2000), p. 182.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, p. 107.

¹⁴² Bourdieu (1994), p. 2.

¹⁴³ Bourdieu refers to Marx’s criticism of the bureaucracy as usupartors as ignoring the effects of the obligatory reference to the values of neutrality and disinterested loyalty to the public good. These attacks on the bureaucracy actually reinforce the representation of the state as a site of universality and of service to the public good. Ibid, p. 17.

activity. It draws the attention to the way an end result in the form of a coherent sequence of events and a cause-and-effect relationship is constructed. In order to avoid being “trapped” in the rationalising models of development representations and produce only accounts of accounts, we need to see practices not as deriving from the logic of policy. Policy can be viewed as an end representation that “disguises” itself as a logical cause-effect sequence. In order to construct meaning out of the “messiness” of the development practice, the development practice is constructed as deriving from a *known entity* that can be evaluated: the policy and the assumptions that support programme design. Bourdieu urges us to go beyond an account of the world based on a belief in instrumental rationality to examine the mechanisms that sustain the construction of a coherent order and the unquestioned adherence to this representation. In the examination of anti-corruption activity, our attention should be drawn to the *surprising coherence* between the discursive strategies and the practices of development or what can be called the *order of development*.

If we look at the process of the formation of an anti-corruption field, we observe how anti-corruption succeeds in becoming *taken-for-granted*. The representation of a technical knowledge on corruption and ways to fight it accumulated by organisations such as the World Bank and Transparency International is an essential step in a legitimisation strategy supporting the constitution of an anti-corruption field. This particular anti-corruption knowledge is represented as being instrumental and directly applied to devise effective anti-corruption tools. Anti-corruption is thus represented as a project of identifying the causes and effects of corruption, devising strategies to prevent it, implementing them and using “lessons learned” and “best practices” to further improve them. Drawing on the analogy of a Bourdieu’s field, the anti-corruption field works to reproduce the objective conditions that have partaken in its constitution by calling for the same solutions to fight corruption: the accumulation of knowledge and the building of local capacities. Michael uses the analogy of a “hall of mirrors” to describe how the reference to concrete results is gradually abandoned in favour of a self-reflexive discourse as a strategy of legitimisation in anti-corruption activity:

“If the anti-corruption discourse of the 1990s focused on results and if anti-corruption projects obtained their legitimacy through results-oriented discourse, then by the late 1990s and 2000s, legitimacy was gained through a self-reflexive discourse. Anti-corruption projects no longer needed to refer to results attained (because few had any). Instead, new anti-corruption projects attained their legitimacy from previous ones. Like a hall of mirrors, the anti-corruption discourse

had moved from referring to corruption – and toward ‘best practice’, ‘new approaches’ and ‘new frontiers’.”¹⁴⁴

This self-reflexive discourse in anti-corruption has the effect of reiterating the assumptions supporting anti-corruption activities.¹⁴⁵ The increasing self-referential nature of anti-corruption is framed in a positivistic view as corresponding to a need for more knowledge. Anti-corruption programmes themselves are represented as concurring in this accumulation of knowledge and sustaining a process of results-oriented “learning by doing”. Michael observes on “lessons learned” in anti-corruption: “*many of these ‘lessons learned’ reiterated the positivistic approach to international development in general. [...] lessons learned from Africa included the importance of surveys, cross-validation, social regulation, incentives and organisation.*”¹⁴⁶

The legitimisation strategies used to sustain anti-corruption activity thus appear to signal the emergence of a global anti-corruption field in the Bourdieu’s sense of the term. A field appears to be constructed, as it succeeds in doing two things by securing an unquestioned adherence to the idea that: 1) *corruption can be fought*, and 2) this goal can be achieved through the *application of an adequate technical expertise*. Similarly, development succeeds in building the representation that world poverty can be ended and this can be done by applying a specific technical knowledge, the possession of which is attributed to Western countries and international organisations. Success is produced in the anti-corruption field by constructing a coherent link between the field’s practices and the technocratic logic that sustains it. Anti-corruption practices are legitimised by being represented as directly resulting from this technocratic logic.

4.1.4 Conclusion

My analysis of the question of success in anti-corruption has revealed the mechanisms of its production. This process rests on two pillars: 1) the construction of a coherent representation of anti-corruption activities, 2) securing the approval of other actors. I have used insights from

¹⁴⁴ Michael (2004a), pp. 330-31. Michael distinguishes between two “waves” in anti-corruption activity to explain this evolution. In the “first wave of anti-corruption”, legitimacy was derived from the expectation of tangible reductions in corruption, while in the “second wave” legitimacy is gained through a reference to previous activity. Ibid, p. 331.

¹⁴⁵ Schmidt also notes how anti-corruption debates in the 2000s increasingly focus on identifying obstacles to global anti-corruption efforts. Schmidt lists these obstacles as “*lacking commitment by the political leadership, corrupt judiciaries, and acceptance of bribery as a business practice, and lack of systematised knowledge on anti-corruption.*” The obstacles identified thus call for the same solutions to combat corruption, in particular an accumulation of knowledge, while attributing failure to the lack of “political will” in developing countries. See Schmidt (2005), p. 8.

¹⁴⁶ Michael (2004a), p. 326.

Bourdieu's theory of the practice and its field concept to analyse how anti-corruption activity legitimises itself through its representation as the rational application of technical solutions to the corruption problem.

In the following, I will further apply the concept of field to the study of the interactions between anti-corruption actors in Georgia and of the interplay between global and local anti-corruption efforts. The question is whether anti-corruption succeeds indeed in constituting itself as a field, thereby protecting itself from counter-claims. I will analyse the interactions between three main anti-corruption actors in Georgia: international donors, the Georgian government and NGOs. I will examine whether the struggles that are produced through these interactions *are of a nature that sustains the constitution of an autonomous field*. In his study of the literary field, Bourdieu observes how struggles over particular stakes in a specific field reinforce the rules of the game as well as the dispositions of its players provided these players play by the same rules.¹⁴⁷ With the example of the Barthes-Picard affair, Bourdieu shows how an apparent struggle has the effect of reinforcing the unquestioned "illusion" that constitutes a field. In the case of the anti-corruption field, a conflict between the World Bank and Transparency International or TI headquarters and its national chapters over appropriate methods to fight corruption would reinforce the representation that corruption can be fought with the recourse to a technical knowledge. It would reinforce the legitimacy of anti-corruption activity as a rational process of finding solutions to the corruption problem.

On the question of the constitution of a field, we observe that in spite of succeeding in legitimising itself in the absence of concrete proofs of its impact and by infusing the belief that corruption can be fought at all, *anti-corruption is not immune to counter-claims*. For example, Hansen notes the lack of results in anti-corruption efforts: "*For all the incremental successes and promising processes that donors have underwritten and witnessed in the last decade, in the end there appears to have been little or no tangible reduction of corruption.*"¹⁴⁸ Sampson further observes: "*despite hundreds of millions of dollars and hundreds of programs, projects and campaigns, conducted by an army of anti-corruption specialists, experts and trainers, we have very little evidence of any decline in corrupt behaviour, or even a decline in public perceptions of corruption.*"¹⁴⁹ These statements reveal the inherent fragility of claims to success in anti-corruption and how their stabilisation depends on the validation of an "interpretive community".

¹⁴⁷ See Hanks (2005), p. 73.

¹⁴⁸ Hansen (2002), p. 3.

¹⁴⁹ Sampson (2009), p. 5.

In part 2 of this chapter, I will first examine the strategies employed by the different anti-corruption actors in Georgia to respond to the impossibility of proving the impact of their activities and ask whether these strategies do indeed support the constitution of a field by *converging in a common production of coherence*. Second, I will analyse the interactions between these actors. The main question in the examination of the interactions between anti-corruption actors is whether the representation of global anti-corruption activity that is projected by international organisations is *validated on a local level* and if not, what the obstacles to a successful validation are. Does the global anti-corruption field succeed in *being validated locally* and reinforcing the belief in the necessity of a transfer of anti-corruption norms and standards to developing and transition countries based on technical knowledge?

4.2 Strategies of success and interactions in the anti-corruption field in Georgia

In the following, I will examine the interactions between three main anti-corruption actors in Georgia: international organisations, the Georgian government and NGOs. In my analysis of the production of success in anti-corruption, I have identified two main pillars on which this production rests: 1) the construction of a coherent representation and, 2) the support and validation of other actors. In a first part, I will examine the actors' strategies to build success in anti-corruption and respond to the impossibility of proving the concrete impact of their activities on corruption. These legitimisation strategies aim at building a coherent representation of activities in the form of a coherent sequence between the definition of corruption, the identification of methods to fight it and the representation of practices as resulting from this specific strategy. I will analyse the differences between these strategies.

In a second part, I will study the interactions between three tandems of actors: international organisations/Georgian government, Georgian government/NGOs, and NGOs/international organisations. The study of actors in tandem allows me to look more closely at how these actors deploy strategies of delegitimisation against each other to assert their position in the field, but need at the same time a mutual approval on their representations. It allows me to study the central points of conflict between these representations and the mechanisms of the need for validation. The questions underlying my study of the actors' interactions in the anti-corruption field will be the following. How does the process of delegitimisation and mutual validation occur in Georgia? What do these processes reveal about the nature of the anti-corruption field? What are the dilemmas of a validation of global anti-corruption activity on a local level? In particular, I will examine the paradoxes of the production of success in anti-corruption. I will analyse how actors construct their representations *on opposition* with each other. They try to "subjectify" other actors in their representations and undermine alternative ones. At the same time, they need a validation from these same actors to sustain and stabilise their representations.

4.2.1 Actors' representations

Each actor builds a particular representation of itself as an anti-corruption actor and of its activities by identifying particular causes and factors behind the corruption problem and promoting a specific method to fight it. The way actors represent their activities and respond to the challenge of building success in anti-corruption can further be seen as resulting from certain

objective conditions and constraints that are placed on their actions. Drawing from Bourdieu's field concept, these activities can be seen as the expression of the dispositions and *habitus* of these actors.

4.2.1.1 International organisations: the centrality of technical knowledge

The analysis of the production of success in anti-corruption has revealed how anti-corruption activities are being legitimised not through the demonstration of their concrete impact on corruption levels, but through their *representation as the rational application of technical and scientific solutions to the corruption problem*. This representation forms the basis of the legitimisation strategy of international organisations and of the construction of a global anti-corruption field. Further, the emergence of the field itself and the representation of anti-corruption activity as a technical intervention based on the application of instrumental rationality rather than as a political intervention respond to certain constraints under which international organisations such as the World Bank act and correspond to their particular dispositions as bureaucracies.

A central aspect in the legitimisation strategy of international organisations and their attempt to construct a particular representation of their activities is the project of *depoliticisation* that underlies development. Ferguson has described development as the "anti-politics machine" capturing the way development represents itself as a rational enterprise and its attempt to *depoliticise* the content of its interventions. Ending world poverty is defined as a matter of technical expertise.¹⁵⁰ The emergence of an anti-corruption field where international organisations are the dominant actors presupposes a depoliticisation of the corruption concept. Corruption is defined as an economic, policy and managerial issue and not as a political issue in the discourse of these organisations. Corruption is further defined as a major development problem and as such, primarily a problem of developing and transition countries. Tisne and Smilov describe how corruption is represented: "*corruption is seen as the single greatest obstacle to economic and social development. It undermines development by distorting the rule of law and weakening the institutional foundation on which economic growth depends.*"

¹⁵⁰ For example, Easterly quotes US President Harry S. Truman who announced in his inaugural address on 20 January 1949: "*We must embark on a bold new program for ... the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery... For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people.*" From the start, foreign aid is defined as a matter of ending world poverty through the application of specific skills. In Easterly, William: *The cartel of good intentions: the problem of bureaucracy in foreign aid*, Centre for Global Development, Institute for International Economics, October 2002, p. 7.

Corruption has the most deleterious effect on the poor, and sabotages policies that aim to reduce poverty. Corruption is also portrayed as a grave flaw of the political system that undermines the legitimacy of elected officials and the democratic process in general.”¹⁵¹ Corruption is both the cause and the symptom of underdevelopment and delayed transition.

In her analysis of the World Bank’s anti-corruption discourse, Polzer notes how the definition of corruption as a non-political issue results from the Bank’s categories of thought and practice and reflects the limits put on its non-political mandate.¹⁵² Rather than resulting from a particular definition of the corruption problem and the formulation of specific strategies to fight it, the Bank’s anti-corruption practices are being legitimised *a priori* by defining corruption as a non-political issue. Polzer says:

“”In considering its strategy the Bank sought a *usable* definition of corruption and *then* developed a taxonomy of the different forms corruption could take consistent with that definition.” The definition of concepts according to the needs of an organisation is distressingly common in the “development industry”. The danger of tautology and finding only what one hopes should be clear.”¹⁵³

The definition of corruption as a non-political issue further allows for the identification of its causes and effects and its measurement through the accumulation of data. Hence, this definition supports the emergence of an “anti-corruption science” that in itself supports the assumption that corruption can be measured and fought if one identifies the right methods. As already stated in my remarks on the production of success in anti-corruption, *the positivistic and instrumental anti-corruption research as a means of legitimising anti-corruption activity is a key step behind the emergence of an anti-corruption field*. The construction of a field and of an anti-corruption science also allows for the marginalisation of other actors and their designation as outsiders to the field. As already noted, Polzer observes how the Bank’s anti-corruption discourse represents a production of truth through the establishment of domains of *legitimate* information.¹⁵⁴ I have already quoted her description of these “spheres of knowledge”:

“The spheres of knowledge accepted by the Bank are universalising, empirical, quantitative, institutional, and based on the assumption of the calculating and rationally maximizing individual. Alternative views, such as moral, cultural or political understandings of corruption, are considered to be naive, specious or malicious arguments made by interested parties such as corrupt businessmen or politicians.”¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Tisne and Smilov (2004), p. 19

¹⁵² Polzer (2001), p. 10.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 12

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 12

The legitimate language developed by the World Bank defines boundaries to the field by attaching fixed meanings to corruption and anti-corruption. It represents an attempt to define appropriate ways of talking about anti-corruption and practising it. Alternative ways of talking about and fighting corruption are marginalised by representing outsiders to the field as “interested parties”. Essential to the constitution of an anti-corruption field is the representation that the anti-corruption activities of international organisations are a *disinterested* attempt to find solutions to the corruption problem and presuppose the absence of particular interests.

The definition of corruption and ways to fight it promoted by international organisations can thus be understood as being inscribed in a broader project of depoliticisation that seeks to represent anti-corruption activities as rational and technical interventions. The type of anti-corruption activities implemented by development organisations can further be seen as the expression of the particular dispositions of these organisations that consist of applying a managerial approach to development problems. This managerial view also results from certain constraints and the pressures arising from the increasing demand for development aid to become more accountable. The managerial approach that seeks to link problems with solutions through rational interventions responds to the need of these organisations to account for their actions as well as producing *quantifiable and measurable products*. As already stated, development practices are being legitimised *a posteriori* by representing them as the result of well-thought and rational strategies. Further, development organisations will tend to implement certain types of activities that also reproduce their particular bureaucratic and planning culture. The planning culture of development bureaucracies that results from their need to disburse certain pre-defined budgets will lead them to favour institutionalised reform steps and the drafting of strategy plans.¹⁵⁶ Further, their managerial and planning culture lead them to view development problems as management problems whose solution requires a rational approach in the form of the definition of objectives, results and expected outcomes as well as a specific time sequence to achieve these objectives. The managerial view also responds to the problem of the distance that separates the domestic constituencies of taxpayers in developed countries from the theatre of intervention in developing countries and the particular problem of *reporting and accounting for results*. A

¹⁵⁶ Ribeiro notes on the centrality of planning in development: “*planning is the heart of the rational development initiative, and it relies on the establishment of written rules and instructions that need to be followed if efficiency, bureaucratic accountability and goals are to be attained.*”, in Ribeiro, Gustavo Lins: Power, networks and ideology in the field of development, *Serie Antropologia*, 2005, p. 10. Easterly also draws the attention to the way central planning in development responds to the representation of a “poverty trap” that can only be filled by large aid inflows. See Easterly, William: Planners versus Searchers in foreign aid, *Asian Development Review*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2006, pp. 1-35, p. 1.

managerial culture that seeks to produce evidences of interventions through measurable and quantifiable products and their representation as resulting from rational strategies responds to the accountability needs of development organisations. Hence, the impact of development programmes on vague phenomena such as democratisation and the reduction of poverty or corruption are impossible to measure and quantify. *What is quantified instead are the interventions themselves.*¹⁵⁷ A former high official in an international organisation in Georgia comments on the difficulty of measuring success: *“They [donors] cannot measure poverty reduction; they cannot measure reduction in corruption in any way that they can take credit for. So their products become trainings and conferences. [It is] very difficult to measure the products of donors. What the IMF produce, what the World Bank produce? Projects. The evaluation is very difficult. Usually done 10 years after the project began.”*¹⁵⁸ Evidences and proofs of success are accumulated to show that “something has taken place” and justify the spending of development budgets.¹⁵⁹ The production of project and reporting documents as well as leaflets, brochures, bulletins, the organisation of anti-corruption trainings, workshops and seminars and the drafting of strategies and policy documents can all be seen as partaking in the production of quantifiable products that answer the problem of accountability and the question of *what development organisations actually do*. Activities such as workshops, trainings and the drafting of strategies also sustain the representation of development organisations as “givers of knowledge”. A former NGO leader in Georgia comments on trainings: *“yes, in terms of discourse it [trainings] fits with the conceptualisation that the West will have. If there is that budgetary procedure, if you convince yourself that the problem is that Georgians don’t understand how to have this procedure. They are empty vessels; there is an absence of knowledge. ‘Ok, we will give them this knowledge and then that will be that’.”*¹⁶⁰ Capacity

¹⁵⁷ A typical example of the attempt to measure what anti-corruption activity does by producing quantifiable products and quantifying the interventions themselves instead of their impact can be found in two articles on the new UK aid policy published in the English newspaper the Guardian. Guardian columnist Madeleine Bunting asks *“how do you measure strengthening civil society in a developing country to campaign against corruption?”* to question the new trend towards value-for-money calculations and the search for quick results in development aid. The UK international development secretary Andrew Mitchell answers Bunting’s question: *“There are clear answers: an increase in the number of registered NGOs or civic organisations passing government audits and exposing corruption within the country would show that this project is giving a voice to a country’s citizens as well as providing value for money for UK taxpayers.”* In Bunting, Madeleine: Aid policy is dangerously contradictory, Guardian, 12 November 2010. Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/nov/12/aid-policy-dangerously-contradictory> (accessed January 2011) and Mitchell, Andrew: It’s wrong to assume results-based aid will lead to a culture of quick wins, Guardian, 25 November 2010. Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2010/nov/25/andrew-mitchell-aid-results> (accessed January 2011).

¹⁵⁸ Interview with former high official in international organisation, December 2008.

¹⁵⁹ Mosse notes the constant need for development projects to claim a “reality” and prove that “something has indeed happened”. He says: *“The reality of a development project is always in question. It is always possible to ask, ‘is anything happening, is it sustainable, can it be replicated’? Moreover, projects cannot proclaim their own reality; this is always contingent upon outside judgements and interpretive work of experts who discern meaning from events by connecting them to policy texts.”*, in Mosse (2003), p. 23.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with former NGO head, June 2008.

development projects that involve the training of local agents are also a means by which development bureaucracies can transfer a particular bureaucratic, planning and reporting culture. These projects reinforce hierarchies of knowledge in development or the tacit agreement on what type of knowledge is the most valued.

The sequencing of events that implies the rational application of solutions to the corruption problem can also be understood as a strategy of development organisations to mitigate failure by diffusing responsibility. Polzer notes on the World Bank's anti-corruption programmes:

“The separation into stages of research, policy, and implementation, is exacerbated in the Bank's case because it is correlated with a complete separation of actors. The model dictates that policy should be made by the Bank, whilst national political actors are charged with preparation and implementation of reforms. This separation reduces the amount of co-ordination between different parts of the overall process of “directed change” and allows both sides to accuse the other of faulty work in the case of failure.”¹⁶¹

Problems of poor implementation on the side of developing countries can be invoked to explain the slowness of reforms or the failure of programmes to achieve the required objectives. For example, a report on anti-corruption activities in Georgia prior to the revolution remarks, “*Although a legislation alone did not help to reform the country and rid it of corruption, due to the lack of the institutional and political framework needed to make them functioning, it should be noted that in 2002 Georgia was at the first place among the post-Soviet states in the number of adopted laws.*”¹⁶² The adoption of laws under the pressure of international organisations is seen as a success in itself, while the lack of impact of this legislation in terms of reducing corruption is attributed to Georgia's weak institutional and political framework, a problem which should be addressed through further capacity-building projects. The reference to problems of poor implementation is thus a way for development organisations to absolve themselves of the need to account for the lack of impact of their interventions.

In the discourse of international organisations, corruption is defined as a development problem and an economic and managerial issue that can be fought through an accumulation of knowledge on its causes and effects with a view of devising appropriate solutions. Anti-corruption activity is represented as *a disinterested and rational application of technical solutions to the corruption problem*. However, this construction is also characterised by a certain ambivalence in the role that is attributed to the state in developing and transition countries. The state is viewed both as

¹⁶¹ Polzer (2001), p. 22.

¹⁶² Eurasia Foundation: General Overview of Anti-corruption Activities in Georgia and Major Recommendations, Tbilisi, 2004, p. 4.

the cause and the solution to the corruption problem. Further, the representation of international organisations rests on the representation of a *local demand* for anti-corruption solutions. Polzer identifies the assumed demand for anti-corruption assistance as a key aspect in the legitimisation of anti-corruption interventions.¹⁶³ She notes on the World Bank's engagement in the fight against corruption: "*The novelty which justifies intervention is portrayed as a rise in external demand to which the Bank is responding.*"¹⁶⁴ She further quotes the World Bank 1997 Helping Countries to fight corruption: "*corruption is of growing concern to donors, non-governmental organisations, and governments and citizens in developing and industrial countries alike... a small but growing number of countries has approached the Bank for assistance.*"¹⁶⁵ I will further examine in my study of the interactions between international organisations and the Georgian government how the representation of a *demand* constitutes an "Achille's heels" in the legitimisation strategy of international organisations as it renders them dependent on the validation of the Georgian government.

4.2.1.2 The Georgian government: promoting Georgia as a success story

Following the Rose Revolution of November 2003, the new leadership that came to power in Georgia composed of pro-Western and young officials inherited a country displaying all indicators of failure in the form of inefficient tax collection and extremely low levels of public revenues, a large shadow economy, cross-border smuggling, lack of territorial control over the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and the presence of illegal paramilitary groups in the conflict zones. In the post-revolutionary period, Georgia offers the image of a country in desperate need of success. The new leadership engages in different reforms and followw a strategy of changing Georgia's image from an archetypal failed state to a rapidly modernising country. In this regard, the label of Georgia as a "corruption-free island" in the post-Soviet space plays an important role. Georgia even appears to want to break free of the label "post-Soviet state" by seeking to emulate Asian economies such as Taiwan and Singapore. The new elite in power seeks to move quickly to avoid the country being trapped in slow reforms that do not promise rapid results.

The particular constraints under which the government acts influence its definition of corruption and ways to fight it as well as the type of activities it promotes. Corruption is seen primarily as

¹⁶³ Polzer (2001), p. 13.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

an inheritance of the Soviet past and Shevardnadze's times and the fight against it is portrayed as a process of overcoming this negative legacy. Georgia's success in fighting corruption equals its success in becoming a modern developed state. Success is built on an international and domestic level on the basis of two main pillars: libertarian reforms and a state-building narrative.

The libertarian agenda fits with the government's legitimisation strategy of representing its anti-corruption activities as a break with the Soviet past and a step in Georgia's transformation into a successful state. As a result of liberal reforms, Georgia rises quickly in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index, earning the former Soviet republic the label of "world's top reformer" in 2007. The volume of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows to Georgia triples between 2004 and 2007. Schueth analyses how Georgian officials have skilfully adapted domestic reforms to the ranking's demands and how they used the Index as a strategic resource to promote investments.¹⁶⁶ Reforms were carefully targeted to raise the country's EDBI ranking. The Index provided a valuable channel for the Georgian government to demonstrate success in a short period of time and showing its pro-activeness in adopting best practices. Schueth remarks that the EDBI encourages pro-activity by states by providing information on the reforms that will produce the greatest ascension in the rankings.¹⁶⁷ Further, the EDBI does not take an evolutionary approach and ignores historical and relational contexts.¹⁶⁸ While putting the regulatory practices of a country under the spotlight, the EDBI works to conceal other deficiencies such as insecure property rights and the lack of an independent judiciary.¹⁶⁹ Thus, it allows developing countries marking quick progresses more easily and skipping over intervening "stages of development".¹⁷⁰ It represents a valuable tool to escape the "traps" of development representations that portray the adaptation of technology and policy knowledge from Western countries as a long and incremental progress. Schueth notes the pro-activity of the Georgian government in selecting and appropriating international best practices:

"Successful ascension through the EDBI rankings positioned Georgia as a neoliberal vanguard state able to —catch up and even —leap ahead by transferring the regulatory best practices that create an attractive destination for transnational investment. This vanguard positionality means that the World Bank's neoliberal discourse and ideology was not simply imposed —from above. Rather, the policy transfer was used tactically for accumulating extraterritorial policy credibility,

¹⁶⁶ Schueth, Sam: *Assembling International Competitiveness: the Republic of Georgia, USAID, and the Doing Business project*, *Economic Geography* Volume 87, Issue 1, pages 51–77, January 2011.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 56.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 61.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 56-57.

while simultaneously masking illiberal aspects of doing business in Georgia not measured by EDBI, such as weak property rights and a lack of judicial independence.”¹⁷¹

Georgia succeeded in marketing itself as a new brand for investors, even drawing favourable comparisons between its regulatory environment and the one of Western countries such as Germany in a worldwide advertising campaign.¹⁷² Thus, it projected itself into the premier league of investment places in the world. Schueth observes how the EDBI might reflect little more than a country’s success in transferring adequate policies or playing the rankings’ game rather than tangible progress in its investment climate and its competitiveness as an investment place.¹⁷³ Georgia’s investment strategy rested on challenging conventional views on obligatory stages of development for countries in the developing world by trying to “catch up” with other economies through the skilful use of the Index.

The libertarian agenda further fits with the government’s representation of its fight against corruption as it provided a way of rapidly dismantling what the government saw as an inefficient and corrupt Soviet bureaucracy. Georgia’s reforms were radical and their effects could be immediately felt. For example, the number of licences and permits was drastically reduced. Regulatory agencies such as the Antimonopoly Service and the Food Quality and Control Service were abolished instead of being restructured. The belief was that state intervention must be reduced to a minimum, as it creates more opportunities for corruption than it delivers public goods and services. Characteristic of the libertarian trend is a strong scepticism towards bureaucracy and regulation.

Another major pillar of Georgia’s fight against corruption is the government’s state-building project that is also represented as a radical break with the weak and dysfunctional state of the Shevardnadze’s era as well the Soviet legacy of alienation from the state. The fight against corruption is associated with the strengthening of the state and a rupture with Soviet practices where corruption was perceived as a form of national resistance against an alien state. Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili emphasises the nationalistic dimension of the post-revolutionary reforms in his inauguration speech by saying: “*We must root out corruption. As far as I am concerned, every corrupt official is a traitor who betrays the national interest.*”¹⁷⁴ He further makes references to state-builders such as Kemal Ataturk and King David the Builder and its success in unifying Georgia in the twelfth century. The fight against corruption is also presented

¹⁷¹ Ibid, p. 71.

¹⁷² Ibid, p. 68.

¹⁷³ Ibid, p. 71.

¹⁷⁴ Inauguration speech of Mikhail Saakashvili on 25 January 2004.

as a national security issue. A Georgian analyst explains: “*What Saakashvili did against corruption was a national security issue, I think it was. If it was, then certain limits on democracy are understandable. But it should be limited in time.*”¹⁷⁵ The sense of urgency in fighting corruption is invoked to resort to rapid action and mobilise a small but determined elite. Saakashvili says: “*We need to introduce in the parliament very drastic anti-corruption legislation that would give vast powers to a new elite, small, honest investigative unit that would really tackle high-level corruption.*” Finally, the fight against corruption is represented as a break with the “syndrome of impunity” characteristic of the Shevardnadze’s times. Immediately after the revolution, high officials of the former Shevardnadze’s administration were arrested and these arrests staged as marking a symbolic rupture with the past with these officials paying back large sums of money to the state. Further, the fight against corruption involves the coming to power of a new generation of officials that marks a rupture with the “corrupt mentality” of the Shevardnadze’s era. The integrity of high-level officials is seen as a sufficient guarantee against the danger of corruption in the public administration. For example, one opposition politician describes to the government’s discourse in these terms: “*We don’t need a special agency, we are already good guys, educated, why do we need an agency? We are already good, honest and knowledgeable. All the government is an anti corruption agency.*”¹⁷⁶ The emphasis on state-building has the effect of associating the fight against corruption to the project of building a functional and sovereign Georgian state.

The inscription of the fight against corruption in a libertarian and state-building project that marks a definite rupture with the Soviet and Shevardnadze’s times result in activities that are *state-driven, display quick results and are highly visible*. For example, the reform of the traffic police is a case in point. From the start, the government’s approach consisting of firing all policemen contrasted with the donors’ tendency to institutionalise reforms. The drastic steps taken by the government did not immediately receive the support of international donors which rather favour the training of civil servants.

The government favours localised, well-targeted and publicised actions that will lead to quick results to build a representation of success in fighting corruption. These actions are characterized by their high visibility, for example in the arrests of high-level officials after the revolution or of low level officials in the presence of television cameras. Further, they are drastic and quick as in the reform of the education system and the traffic police. The libertarian reforms are

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Georgian analyst, November 2008.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with opposition leader, June 2007.

characterised by this drive towards rapid results with the abolition of regulatory agencies being favoured over their restructuring. Flagship reforms are being carried out in sensible sectors, where everyday contacts take place between public officials and citizens, such as the State Civil Registry and the police and education sector. They quickly change Georgia's image on the level of domestic and international perceptions. Results are immediately felt by citizens no longer experiencing daily bribe-takings and effectively reporting lower levels of corruption as shown in recent reports by Transparency International, while they are also recorded in international rankings. *Corruption becomes invisible, while anti-corruption efforts are highly visible.*

The type of activities favoured by the government in the form of localised and well-targeted interventions also responds to its actual lack of capacities to engage in deep reforms. By televising the arrests of public officials, the state conveys the impression of being omnipresent even if its capacities are limited. Rapid action and the reluctance to institutionalise reforms correspond to the team in power's unpredictable governing style that does not result in stable governance mechanisms. Thus, the emphasis put on rapid action can be seen as a strategy aimed at concealing the government's actual lack of capacity to generate rule-bound behaviours and predictability in the exercise of power. The way the government portrays the fight against corruption as necessitating non bureaucratic procedures and strong political will mirrors the concentration of power in the executive after the Rose Revolution. Anti-corruption efforts are centralised with a key role attributed to agencies such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Department for Constitutional Security and the prosecutor's office, while independent agencies such as the audit chamber plays a more marginal role. The government's legitimisation strategy thus answers particular constraints: it has few capacities to engage in deep reforms, but a desperate need to demonstrate rapid progress and see its reform achievements validated. The government is less inclined to engage in long-term institutional reforms whose effects will not be visible in a short and medium term and will fail to produce a desired image change.

Further, the post-revolutionary desire to construct a Georgian sovereign state able to set its own priorities implies a change of relations with international donors. Donor advice is not welcome anymore and the new government's slogan is "*our policy is that we don't have any policy*".¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ This slogan can be seen as the expression of the government's distrust towards policy and strategy papers drafted with the help of donors. As an ESI report on Georgia remarks: "*As Saakashvili and his associates saw it, however, Georgia's problems had not stemmed from a lack of policy ideas, but from implementation.*" In European Stability Initiative (2010), p. 12.

The government's legitimisation strategy thus consists of defining corruption as a feature of the Soviet past and Shevardnadze's legacy and representing its activities as state-driven, results-oriented and non bureaucratic. Fighting corruption is represented as the *direct result of strong political will and rapid action and as marking a rupture with the image of Georgia as a failed state*. Georgia's rupture with the Soviet legacy will allow the country entering a family of developed states. One high official in a reformed agency remarks:

“For our government the most important is our citizens' understanding and feeling about our country. Each of our citizens should feel that we are now working in a new way, in a new style, we [changed] everything from the old type of mentality and the old type of system, because we don't want to be anymore like a poor country which is a fully corrupted country, a country in which nothing is working. We want to be one of the strongest country and developed country in the world. We don't want to be a developing country; we want to be a developed country.”¹⁷⁸

Georgia's reforms are aimed at portraying the country as a *sovereign state* able to build its own success and not in need of external solutions.¹⁷⁹ Georgia is able to export its own successful model of development to other countries rather than merely acting as a passive recipient of an external knowledge. It claims the ownership of a particular knowledge in fighting corruption.¹⁸⁰

A high official working on anti-corruption describes Georgia's anti-corruption success:

“I think that it is not fully recognized, but I can state and we can claim that in the last four years, corruption has decreased significantly, and I do not know any other example of a country where.... Of course we are not fully free from corruption. But corruption as a problem does not dominate. It was done in four years and nobody until now has shown me any example of a country that could have done this. Maybe there are successful examples of fighting corruption in some particular sectors in a short period, but to really change the total perception in society and on the other hand not only perception but reality, I don't know any other example.”¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Interview with high official in a state agency, April 2008.

¹⁷⁹ Kvelashvili notes how Georgia's police reform success is closely intertwined with its sovereignty. See Kvelashvili, Giorgi: Success of Georgia's police reform is a function of sovereignty, Jamestown Foundation blog, 21 April 2010 available at: <http://jamestownfoundation.blogspot.com/2010/04/success-of-georgias-police-reform-is.html> (accessed March 2011). A comment on a presentation by former Georgian Prime Minister Lado Gurgenidze on Georgia's success says: “*In the end, Georgia is “still a poor country at a crossroads” that could continue on the “European path” or degenerate into a post-Soviet, corrupt state, he said. Reform was going to stem not only from emulating other models of success but from creating its own.*” In Milken Institute: A conversation with Lado Gurgenidze, Former Prime Minister of Georgia, Milken Institute Global Conference 2009, 27-29 April 2009. Available at: <http://www.milkeninstitute.org/events/gcprogram.taf?function=detail&EvID=1923&eventid=GC09> (accessed January 2011).

¹⁸⁰ Esadze remarks on Georgian efforts to claim an anti-corruption knowledge: “*One of the reasons for the growing criticism of the development interventions in the Caucasus has been the tendency among these organisations to ignore the historic, social and cultural features and differences of the countries that are subjected to either structural adjustment programmes or development interventions. Georgians consider themselves to be experts on the subject of corruption, but when it comes to dealing with this endemic disease, Americans think they know best what to do. However, they don't know what to do when the subject of corruption is their own organisations and implementing partners.*”, in Esadze, Londa: “Anti-corruption” or democracy? Lessons from post-communist Georgia, Discussion paper presented at Octopus Interface conference, Strasbourg, 26 October 2006, p. 10.

¹⁸¹ Interview with high official in the Georgian government, November 2008.

While the Georgian government has been “successful in claiming success” to the extent that the reform drive of the new leadership has earned the country international recognition, it is still caught in a certain dilemma. Success means at the same time sovereignty and emancipation from the advice of international organisations, but also joining a community of developed states and being recognised as an integral member of this community. The Georgian government seeks to reduce its dependence on external advice, but remains highly dependent on outside judgements.

4.2.1.3 Non-governmental organisations: watchdogs and experts

In the NGOs’ anti-corruption discourse, corruption is seen both as a problem of the abuse of power and as a problem of knowledge. Thus, NGOs build a self-representation of themselves as key anti-corruption actors on the basis of different roles. They can enhance the government’s accountability by mobilising the public to combat corruption and exerting a control on the state. Further, they play the role of disseminating a specific knowledge on corruption and methods to fight. NGOs thus present themselves both as watchdog organisations and as experts.

Their understanding of the problem of corruption as a problem of a lack of monitoring on the state and the absence of checks-and-balances as well as the lack of an adequate expertise corresponds to their particular dispositions. Similarly to international organisations, their definition of corruption appears to mirror the type of activities they favour. For example, civil society anti-corruption projects often consist of awareness raising campaigns aimed at mobilising the public or monitoring projects to enhance the government’s transparency. Two main assumptions underlie the NGOs anti-corruption activities: there is a *public demand* for increased anti-corruption efforts and the government needs to be pressured to engage in these reforms. Furthermore, the government is also assumed to be *in demand* of a particular expertise.

The NGOs’ engagement in anti-corruption is thus legitimised firstly by the representation that NGOs can endorse a unique role as mediators between society and the state. They stimulate the public into reacting to cases of corruption in government structures by providing information on corruption and its effects. This provision of knowledge serves to mobilise citizens by “enlightening” them about corruption’s negative effects. For example, Tisne and Smilov remark on the assumptions underlying civil society anti-corruption projects: “*the last assumption is that civil society actors and, more generally, the population at large are either unaware of corruption or aware of it but tolerate it because they do not have the necessary understanding of its true causes and consequences. Once they have been given this information they will be*

motivated to form a constituency that will challenge the government's record on transparency, accountability and integrity."¹⁸² Further, NGOs convey the public demand for increased anti-corruption efforts to the state agencies.

Second, NGOs derive legitimacy in their anti-corruption activities from the assumption that a monitoring of the government's actions is necessary in order to enhance its accountability. Civil society monitoring is represented as an important means to ensure the transparency of the government's reforms. Civil society pressure also ensures that the issue of corruption remains on the government's agenda. A report on anti-corruption activities in Georgia notes the need for civil society monitoring: "*reforms directed at eradicating corruption involve limiting the discretion of state officials. It is idealistic to expect that officials will agree to restrict their authorities with enthusiasm and take active steps in this direction, unless there is a public inquiry and scrutiny. Therefore it is important that donors ensure that financial support goes both to government to implement the reforms and to civil society to monitor them.*"¹⁸³

Finally, NGOs profile themselves as experts. Similarly to the discourse of international organisations, the assumption is that a particular knowledge is needed to implement effective anti-corruption reforms. The report on anti-corruption activities notes: "*the Georgian government seems willing to carry out quick anti-corruption reforms; however, complexity of the corruption problem in Georgia keeps a tight rein on the government's ability to address it in all spheres of state life. The civil society organizations that specialize in different fields embrace the knowledge and experience that can serve as a solid base for the enhancement of the government's efforts.*"¹⁸⁴

Similarly to international organisations, NGOs need to *report success* to the donor organisations that fund them. Typical anti-corruption projects include public discussions with citizens and other activities producing documentation such as leaflets and brochures that can serve as proofs that NGOs have reached out to citizens. Indeed, the grass-roots character of NGOs is a central criterion for donors, as it is seen as a guarantee of the sustainability of projects. Further, budget

¹⁸² Tisne and Smilov (2004), p. 20.

¹⁸³ Eurasia Foundation (2004), p. 8.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 9. Tisne and Smilov note how an anti-corruption coalition in Albania tries to profile itself as a key anti-corruption actor on the basis of its expertise: "*the Albanian Coalition's core objective was to raise civil society's standing to a degree where it could enter into dialogue with the government and be taken seriously. In order to do this, civil society groups first had to have a much better knowledge and understanding of corruption and its different forms, before it could engage the government in a meaningful way.*" Tisne and Smilov (2004), pp. 25-26.

monitoring projects are conducted whose publicised results also tend to reinforce the perception that cases of mismanagement of funds occur and an oversight of the reform process is needed.

In conclusion, NGOs represent successful anti-corruption activity as *resulting from the involvement of civil society organisations in the fight against corruption in their different roles as watchdogs and experts*. This involvement will ensure the soundness of the reforms implemented by the government that also reflect public demands and it will serve to enhance the government's accountability. NGOs thus converge with the representation of international organisations that seeks to portray anti-corruption activity as *resulting from the application of a technical knowledge*. To sustain their representations as watchdogs and experts, NGOs will need both a validation from the public and from the government on their activities. Further, they are accountable towards the donor organisations that fund them. These different sources of validation confront them with certain dilemmas in the way they build a particular representation of their activities.

4.1.2.4 Differences between the strategies

The analysis of the different strategies to build success in the anti-corruption field reveals certain points of conflict between these representations. The Georgian government's fight against corruption is represented as the *direct result of strong political will and leadership*. By contrast, the anti-corruption activities of international organisations are represented as the *direct result of the application of a technical knowledge*. Finally, success in anti-corruption activity is represented as *resulting from the involvement of civil society* in the case of NGOs.

In the case of the government and international organisations, conflicts occur in the juxtaposition of different categories: “long-term”/”rapidity”, “institutionalisation of reforms”/”rapid non-bureaucratic action”, “technical knowledge”/”political will”. The two strategies of international organisations and of the Georgian government also conflict in the question of timing. The Georgian fight against corruption takes place in a particular timeframe that marks the country's rupture with a Soviet past and a post-Soviet dysfunctional legacy. It is inscribed in a narrative on Georgia's de-Sovietisation and presented as one key step in the country's attempt to escape the stagnation associated with the post-Soviet status quo. The fight against corruption is also represented as involving a change of generation to free the country of a “corrupt mentality”.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵ Gia Nodia refers to the idea of a “cultural revolution” in Georgia involving a permanent fight between state and society. In Parsons, Robert: Georgia: Analyst Ghia Nodia Assesses Saakashvili's Attempts To Transform Country,

The image of Georgia as a corruption-free island in the post-Soviet space is a symbol of Georgia's success in turning the back to its past as a failed state. For international organisations, fighting corruption is a "lessons-learning process", a process of identifying ever better solutions to the corruption problem with no clear end. One official working in anti-corruption in an international organisation reflects on the anti-corruption field: "*A field you can never stop working in [...] there will always be corruption [...] [We] keep on thinking. Should we be doing something else? In countries very far ahead, what is actually the best way to do things? [...] [We] keep on thinking on the best way to do things.*"¹⁸⁶

At the same time, we observe elements in all strategies that render these actors dependent on a mutual validation to sustain their representation. In the case of the Georgian government, an international recognition of its anti-corruption record and an external stamp of approval on its reforms are needed. Indeed, the transformation of the country into a modern developed state succeeds on the level of international perceptions. Further, a civil society approval on its reforms will guarantee that they are seen as *democratic*. In the case of international organisations, the representation of a local demand serves to legitimise their interventions as well as validating the representation of a transfer of knowledge as the solution to the corruption problem. International organisations will seek to portray the government's anti-corruption activities as the *result of the acceptance and implementation of external anti-corruption solutions*. In the case of NGOs, they need a government's validation if they want to be perceived as experts on corruption.

I will further examine the interactions between these three actors to analyse the process of the production of success in the anti-corruption field in Georgia. I will focus my analysis on the question of whether the conflicts produced in these interactions do sustain the constitution of an autonomous anti-corruption field.

RFE/RL, 15 June 2007. An official in a reformed state agency also refers to a change of generations. He says: "*We have changed about 80% of our staff members, because it was just impossible to work with people who have a very different mentality and they just want all the time to look for money, how to earn money and they were really corrupted. Not only: they were mentally corrupted people.*" And "*In governmental agencies, mostly young people are working and this people came with a new mentality. Of course, it is a big problem for Georgia that elderly people, they are not employed, they are not wanted anymore. It is a big problem, but otherwise it was impossible to change the mentality in the working process... In Georgia, mentality has changed really radically.*" Interview with high official in state agency, June 2008.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with official in international organisation, November 2008.

4.2.2 Strategies of delegitimisation and the need for validation

In the following, I will examine how the points of conflict that I have identified in my analysis of the different strategies of success in the anti-corruption field support certain strategies of delegitimisation. Actors will try to undermine other representations in the field to assert their position on the basis of certain oppositions. I use statements of representatives of international organisations, the Georgian government and NGOs to analyse these oppositions. I identify two pillars of the strategies of delegitimisation in the field: 1) questioning the anti-corruption *know-how* of the other actor, 2) questioning its *interests* or its motives in engaging in the fight against corruption. In a second step, I will study how the actors in the field also seek a mutual approval on their representations.

4.2.2.1 International organisations-Georgian government

a) Delegitimisation of international organisations

I identify two categories of statements reflecting the discourse on international organisations: 1) those questioning the know-how of these organisations and 2) those questioning their motives.¹⁸⁷

Statements question the efficiency of the methods used by international organisations by contrasting the government's hands-on approach with these organisations' bureaucratic and procedural approach. The need to report success will lead international and development organisations to emphasise reporting and the production of documentation. These practices tend to be equated with inefficiency by government officials or other observers. For example, a statement by a Georgian consultant working in a ministry points to the different time perceptions of the government and donors by saying on Georgian officials:

“They are really young, 28, 29, 30, we have a project department head who is 26. [...] this project department head was like ‘I have no time for donors, I don't want to wait, I want to do it now. I want to do it fast, I don't want to write reports, I just want to get it done, get it done... If I was waiting for donors, I would be here for the next half a year.’ Some of them are just too impatient to work with the donor community. And the donors understand that, they admit that there is bureaucracy involved and it is slow.”¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ Statements from Georgian employees of international organisations that I include in my analysis indicate that the representations of international organisations can also be undermined from the inside, as these statements reflect the government's discourse on donors.

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Georgian consultant, September 2008.

The same consultant explains how the Georgian government tends to reject the “reporting and planning culture” of international organisations:

“There is no report writing culture at the ministry [...] Georgians don’t like to write reports, they just don’t. And the donors still like to work with reports because that’s what they do [...] They need some proofs that things have been done. And Georgians are like ‘but look we did it, what the hell do you want!’ [...] And as much as I am concerned they [donors] ask too much. Every single donor has its own report format, they have certain requirements, so they [the Georgian ministry] need to have a person working full time [writing reports at the ministry].”¹⁸⁹

The government’s supposed preference for non-bureaucratic action is contrasted with the donors’ tendency to produce reports. The statements imply that the Georgians want to deliver, while donors need to produce formal proofs of their activities (“*they need some proofs that things have been done*”). A Georgian working for an international organisation further comments on the methods of international organisations: “*I know several cases when the government asked them for decisions and donors said that they would draft the project and make it cleared by their headquarters and come back with a suggestion and by the time they came back with their own decisions that decision was already made by the government, so the project that the donors was putting in was outdated, so the donor was not welcome anymore.*”¹⁹⁰

A former high official in an international organisation interprets the tendency of international organisations to write strategies as a sign of their helplessness. He says:

“The donor prescription [is]: ‘when in doubt, write a strategy’, they didn’t know what else to ask for, they didn’t know enough about the problems to ask something specific. And this would drive the government crazy, because they didn’t want a strategy. Because when donors wanted a strategy they would hire a consultant to come and write a strategy and there would be no local ownership, waste of time and money. The government said ‘we don’t want a strategy’, strategy had become a four letter word.”¹⁹¹

He further explains: “*They don’t know what to do. If you don’t know what to do, you ask for a strategy because a strategy is a document that donors prepare by an expert who comes up with ideas that donors didn’t have.*”¹⁹² He further refers to the concrete example of a strategy written for a Georgian Ministry:

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Interview with high official in international organisation, November 2008.

¹⁹¹ Interview with former high official in international organisation, December 2008.

¹⁹² Ibid.

“It was 2050 pages; I saw the third or fourth draft. The Minister is a friend. He said: ‘I’ve never seen it before and I have no interest in it’. This strategy costs several thousands of dollars to create. Why? Because [the donor organisation] wanted the strategy, the government didn’t want. But the government doesn’t like to say no. They [donors] give money, jobs, so the government doesn’t like to say no.”¹⁹³

Another statement of a Georgian analyst points to the cynical attitude of Georgians towards strategies that are seen as “papers” without substance: “*there is quite a cynical attitude to strategies, a strategy is something you draft for Westerners, sometimes you hire Westerners to draft it for other Westerners, and you put it in your file and when someone asks [you show it] [...] they [the Georgians] don’t think it’s important.*”¹⁹⁴ The statement implies that strategies are only drafted at the request of donors. A high official in a Georgian state agency further explains its scepticism towards international consultants by questioning their very expertise:

“Sometimes it is happening that some international organisations, they are coming and they are saying that ‘you know I have one hundred thousands euros and I will spend this for you and I will bring ten experts to Georgia’. I don’t need these ten experts and I will say ‘thank you, I don’t need money from your side because I don’t need ten experts’... Sometimes experts are coming and they are not experts in their fields, they are so-called experts.”¹⁹⁵

The same official explains that he actively participates with his staff in the selection of these experts to ensure that they have the required knowledge.¹⁹⁶ A Georgian working for an international organisation further mentions that the European Union had based its recommendations to the Georgian government on inaccurate data: “*some facts are based on incoherent data and incoherent conclusions and then the EU gives some recommendations and the Georgian government is not ready to take these recommendations.*”¹⁹⁷ This account calls the EU’s expertise into question.

Other statements point to the accountability of development organisations to their headquarters and their difficulties to adapt their programmes to local priorities. A Georgian working for an international organisation explains: “*The government decided to dictate the projects that they wanted from the donors, not to take the projects that the donors would have offered. It kind of complicated the donor’s business because they need to be accountable to their own headquarters which have their own different agenda. Donors may not be very happy with a very strong*

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Georgian analyst, May 2007.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with high official in state agency, June 2008.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Interview with representative of donor organisation, July 2008.

counterpart.”¹⁹⁸ A Georgian analyst emphasises the mechanical way in which donor organisations act: “*They just want to implement the strategies they have developed. If the counterpart starts thinking in other ways [...] It is too much time for them. ‘We have no time to waste to discuss this with the Georgian government’.*”¹⁹⁹ The representative of a donor organisation admits to the lack of flexibility of the donor community: “*We came and thought that the Georgians would change to fit us, but not that we would have to change to fit them. As a collective community, we are sometimes not so flexible. We have our governmental priorities for what we should achieve with that money.*”²⁰⁰ A former high official in an international organisation points to the problem of the donors’ accountability to a domestic constituency, noting that they do not necessarily consider the actual needs of the country:

“They have a constituency at home that they need to make happy. You know in the Nordic countries for example, the NGOs are very influential over the overseas development programmes. The NGOs are driving the agendas on women, etc. Worthy causes but may or may not have any relevancy for the countries involved [...] Oftentimes the donors are appealing to a domestic agenda rather than to the client agenda. Some of it is just inevitable, that’s the nature of budget, democracy, lobbying, etc.”²⁰¹

International organisations are also criticised for exporting some identical and ready-made “products”. One Georgian working for an international organisation explains: “*there is a customisation of projects, how they [donors] can customise projects for different customers, it looks like they have the same project for many countries.*”²⁰² She further says: “*because it is much easier, it is much easier to do the same thing in many countries.*”²⁰³

Other statements emphasise shortcomings in donor interventions and reverse traditional development hierarchies by attributing the role of a “teacher” to the Georgian government. A Georgian working for a donor organisation comments on the government’s criticism of donors:

“In many cases Georgian institutions tend to agree with this kind of technical assistance... In the end there are no real commitments. They regard it as a nice chance to have frequent foreign tours abroad. Study tours or nice trips to [Europe]? In a way it is correct [the criticism of the Georgian government to donors]. The message was that we are not against technical assistance, but we need to be sure that it is the kind that we need. We need to make sure that a study tour is a study tour and not some kind of tourism on the expense of the [European] taxpayers!”²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Georgian analyst, July 2008.

²⁰⁰ Interview with high official in donor organisation, October 2008.

²⁰¹ Interview with former high official in international organisation, December 2008.

²⁰² Interview with official in international organisation, November 2008.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Interview with representative of donor organisation, July 2008.

The statement criticises donor activities for not being enough results-oriented and even encouraging corrupt behaviours.²⁰⁵ In this account, the Georgian government appears willing to “teach” donors how to conduct efficient projects. Another statement by a Georgian working for an international organisation indicates that government agencies have not the capacities to welcome various donor projects which are paradoxically aimed at enhancing these very capacities. This Georgian says:

“There is too much donor assistance coming, plenty of projects. The government’s problem is that they don’t want to be imposed some activities. They want to draw up what are their interests and the donor community to follow their interests, not impose. [...] the EU has its agenda and GTZ has its own agenda and [the organisations] are all working with the school for magistrates. He’s just telling [...] the guy [the head of the school] ‘I just don’t have enough classes I understand your interest in implementing as many projects as you can, but also I don’t have the resources, I don’t need that much training.’”²⁰⁶

Statements further point to another weakness in the donor organisations’ approach that has its origin in the constraint to report success: the problem of donor coordination and competition. Donors compete for projects as if they are operating on a “market”. One consultant describes the competition between donors: “*they are some sexy projects and not so sexy projects. There are not enough for all the donors... For example, helping the Ministry of Finance paying for a building is not a sexy project and buying computers as well... They [donors] want to make themselves sound important.*”²⁰⁷ Donor competition allows the Georgian government to challenge its subjectification as a passive recipient, as government agencies have the power to select between different projects. The same consultant says: “*It is the government’s responsibility [to coordinate donor assistance], the donors are like little kids you just have to control them, to get them together, to make sure that they are useful, and make sure that they are not fighting with each other.*”²⁰⁸ The donors’ dependence on the “receiver” put them in a position of weakness.

²⁰⁵ In line with the statement of this Georgian working in a donor organisation, Cooley and Ron explain how study trips are used by donors in Kyrgyzstan, “*Many TAPs [technical assistance programmes] also offer their recipients foreign trips, justifying these expenditures as “institutional instruction.” In 1997, for example, Kyrgyz judges were flown to Paris and Riga, parliamentarians to Washington, privatization officials to New York, healthcare administrators to Denmark, and oblast administrators to Switzerland. The cost of such trips can exceed \$100,000 each, while some seminars can top \$30,000. One contractor acknowledged that these were de facto bribes, saying, “the trips are a very good bargain for us . . . allowing us to continue [the project] with the cooperation of important ministry members.*” In Cooley, Alexander/Ron, James: The NGO scramble: organizational insecurity and the political economy of transnational action, *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Summer 2002), pp. 5–39, pp. 21–22.

²⁰⁶ Interview with representative of international organisation, September 2008.

²⁰⁷ Interview with Georgian consultant, September 2008.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

Certain statements on donor organisations also tend to question the representation of development as a rational enterprise of providing effective solutions to development problems. International organisations are represented as mechanically reproducing their own bureaucratic culture (“*when in doubt, write a strategy*”), thereby securing their dominant position in the development field instead of effectively providing solutions. The rationality of the donors’ interventions is thus challenged. For example, a former high official in an international organisation comments:

“Let’s suppose we have a donor coordination group. We sit there, we are talking: conference on the effectiveness of anti-corruption in the Caucasus, we will pay for it. Terrific idea. How many government representatives are in this donor meeting? Zero. The minister of economy [says] ‘Oh my god, not another stupid conference! No go ahead, as long as it doesn’t do any harm, it keeps the hotel business going, people are paid per diem in Tbilisi, if in Paris much better. People will go listen or not listen and [it will] be forgotten. They [the donors] held a conference on anti-corruption and nobody paid any attention.”²⁰⁹

The act of holding a conference correspond more to the favourite activities of donor organisations than it is the result of a well-thought strategy on ways to improve the fight against corruption. The statement also indicates how the representation of international organisations ultimately depends on the validation of local actors (their participation in the conference).

Other statements are based on the second pillar of the strategies of delegitimation in the anti-corruption field: questioning the *interests* of the other actor. These statements question the real motives pursued by international organisations when engaging in the field. For example, the donors’ tendency to hire international consultants to draft strategies or organise trainings is seen as a way of keeping funds within the donor community. A Georgian analyst comments: “*The experts who nobody needs these experts who write some hundreds of pages and nobody reads them. They never go out of their hotels, apartment and meet just with few people and have no understanding of what’s going on here.*”²¹⁰ He further remarks: “*I don’t think that we need all this donor assistance, most of this money goes back to the donor countries and [they] just call [it] assistance to Georgia.*”²¹¹ He further implies that donor organisations are only interested in prolonging their existence: “*They will always have ideas how to prolong their existence as is*

²⁰⁹ Interview with former high official in international organisation, Tbilisi, December 2008.

²¹⁰ Interview with Georgian analyst, October 2007.

²¹¹ Ibid.

*with all kind of bureaucracy they will always try to justify why their existence is so important and otherwise they will fall down.*²¹²

b) Delegitimisation of the government

On the other side, representatives of international organisations complain about the ‘chaotic’ working style in government agencies, the lack of strategic planning and the absence of clear priorities. One representative of a donor organisation says: *“They don’t take time to discuss and reflect on some of their introduced policies: Is it going still in the right direction? What issues are we forgetting?”*²¹³ Another representative of a donor organisation notes the same lack of vision and planning in the government’s working style: *“Most donors, we want to see a plan ahead and have more long-term planning, we’d like to see strategies and vision for where the government wants to go. And here that’s difficult because the government works on a much shorter time frame. We have difficulties meeting.”*²¹⁴ Other statements emphasise the high turnover of cadres in ministries that impacts negatively on the sustainability of donor projects and their implementation.²¹⁵ A representative of a donor organisation explains: *“People have been in charge of certain issues, they go somewhere else. You hope that the next person in charge will be Ok.”*²¹⁶

Certain statements have also the effect of questioning the government’s representation by asking whether rapid action is really oriented at delivering results or is simply a sign of the government’s limited resources. For example, a representative of a donor organisation comments on the government’s reluctance to adopt an anti-corruption strategy: *“they were reluctant on having a strategy and an action plan in general. It is a big problem to update the strategy and to report on things. It is one of the things that they are lazy to do [...] Updating the anti-corruption action plan and strategy was quite a pain [...] The reforms coordination unit is responsible for hundreds of things. It is a small unit with a few people.”*²¹⁷ The statement points to the lack of organisation and coordination in the government, even mentioning the “laziness” of officials.²¹⁸ The government’s scepticism towards strategies and the need to institutionalise reforms is more

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Interview with high official in donor organisation, October 2007.

²¹⁴ Interview with high official in donor organisation, October 2008.

²¹⁵ Interview with representatives of donor organisations in Tbilisi, 2007-2008.

²¹⁶ Interview with high official in donor organisation, October 2007.

²¹⁷ Interview with representative of donor organisation, November 2008. A team of experts is financed by the Dutch embassy to support the government in implementing the strategy.

²¹⁸ The statement can also be seen as damaging for the representation of international organisations that insist on Georgia’s adoption of a strategy.

an expression of its lack of organisation than a well-thought method to deliver results more rapidly. A high official in a donor organisation also explains how the lack of attention paid to the strengthening of oversight institutions reflects the government's limited capacities: "*It is a small country with small implementation capacities. It cannot cover all reform issues at the same time. [There is] no time for a second round of reforms.*"²¹⁹ A project manager in an international organisation further describes the government's style as being non-inclusive: "*In general, the government's style is, this is my personal opinion, still very much Soviet-like, administrative. Decisions are taken in a small circle with no inclusion of the persons affected by them.*"²²⁰ This statement undermines the government's representation of its working methods as representing a break with Soviet practices. Non-inclusive decision-making is described as being typical of a Soviet governing style. Some statements also question the efficiency of the government's approach to fighting corruption and its claim that corruption has been eradicated. One representative of a donor organisation comments: "*Corruption is not just one thing that you can fight, and then all is settled [...] Corruption has gone on a highest scale, less transparent and less easy to touch.*"²²¹ Another representative of an international organisation expresses scepticism about the government's claim that corruption is no longer a problem: "*When I was in Tbilisi, some people were telling me, 'Why are you still talking about corruption? Corruption is no longer an issue in Georgia'. I don't think that's true.*"²²²

c) *The need for validation*

The analysis of statements has revealed how the two actors, government and international organisations, construct a representation of their activities based on certain oppositions. They deploy strategies of delegitimisation against the other actor to assert their position in the field. However, if we examine the representations constructed by both actors, we observe that their stabilisation also depends on a mutual approval.

For international organisations, the *local demand* is a key element in their representation. The can-do attitude of the new Georgian leadership thus complicates the representation of a local demand for external anti-corruption solutions. Further, Georgia reveals that there is a tension between the two elements of a transfer of knowledge and ownership/demand in the representation of international and development organisations. These organisations portray

²¹⁹ Interview with high official in donor organisation, October 2007.

²²⁰ Interview with project manager in international organisation, June 2008.

²²¹ Interview with high official in donor organisation, October 2007.

²²² Interview with official in international organisation, November 2008.

themselves as “givers of knowledge” by constructing developing and transition countries as “aid beneficiaries” and “recipient countries” in need of external resources to tackle various problems. At the same time, national governments must be committed in order for the reforms implemented to be effective. Thus, a paradoxical image is created of a government being at the same time “passive”, “lacking capacities” and acting as a willing “recipient for knowledge” and as being “committed”, active in implementing solutions and ensuring that the donors’ involvement is effective.

Pre- and post-revolutionary Georgia illustrates the paradoxes in the juxtaposition of the concepts of ownership/demand and transfer of knowledge. Before the revolution, the Shevardnadze’s government concurred in the image projected by donors of Georgia as a weak state, lacking capacities and in need of external assistance. This image helped to ensure a steady flow of donor aid to the country during ten years despite an obvious lack of progress. The recommendations and advices of international organisations were readily accepted, but not implemented. Typically, strategy documents drafted by international consultants were “taking dust on the shelves”. The country’s weak institutional framework and its weak implementation capacities were invoked to justify Georgia’s poor record of implementation calling for the same solutions to be applied: capacity-building programmes sponsored by external donors. The Shevardnadze’s government thus fitted well with the representation of development organisations as “givers of knowledge”, as it readily admitted to Georgia’s deficiencies and its incapacity to solve its problems on its own. The image of a weak state absolved both the donors and the government of the need to achieve results: donors would invoke problems of poor implementation and the government would invoke the country’s weak capacities.²²³ The Shevardnadze’s government strategically used the image of a weak state as well as the complicity of international organisations in perpetuating this image to effectively mask the deployment of informal mechanisms to keep power. However, Georgia increasingly posed problems to donors in accountability terms, as questions on the

²²³ As Christophe notes, international donors embraced the notion of a weak state which formed the basis of a mutual understanding with the Georgian power holders. See Christophe (2004), p. 19. King further observes how the image of a weak state actually benefited both development organisations and the Georgian government, as it ensured a steady flow of aid money. He remarks: “*With so much money to spend, Georgian officials have an incentive to launch new, allegedly reformist programs and projects, but little reason to make sure that their work has a genuinely transformative effect on local politics—for then the aid money would not be renewed. Since the United States has earmarked a great deal of money for development and democracy-building programs—in per capita terms, more than is available to any other country in the former Soviet Union—there is also a substantial incentive for both government agencies and NGOs to oversell their work. The ratchet principle works all the way from Washington to the Georgian village: USAID overstates the success of democratization in Georgia to maintain federal appropriations levels; USAID-- funded organizations overstate their successes to USAID; and local NGOs overstate their successes to their international NGO partners.*”, in King (2001).

effectiveness of donor programmes could not avoid being raised. Indeed, the country's poor performance and the corruptness of the leadership became increasingly obvious.²²⁴

Pre-revolutionary Georgia presents an opposite dilemma for donor organisations. Hence, the new government appears more committed and able to deliver results, but is also more ready to reject external recommendations and advices. Criticism levelled at ineffective donor programmes is seen as a proof of the genuineness of the new team in power and its interest in ensuring that donor money is being spent in an effective manner. This criticism contrasts with the Shevardnadze government's indiscriminate acceptance of donor programmes. One Georgian analyst describes the difference between the pre- and post-revolutionary periods:

“The Shevardnadze's people could not openly criticise or resist any recommendations. They would say ‘oh yes, yes you are right, but we are weak, we don't have the capacities, we don't have the money we don't have this, you understand. Your recommendations are right, we will do our best.’ [...] But they did not do it in reality. While this government is much more daring in confronting some of these recommendations, they are more confident in arguing with these representatives of the international community, ‘we may accept some recommendations but we may not accept everything, we have our own ways’. They can openly debate.”²²⁵

While the Georgian government under Shevardnadze actively validated the representation of donor organisations as “givers of knowledge”, the post-revolutionary government concurs with the representation of a committed counterpart that can effectively implement programmes. However, it rejects its construction as a passive knowledge receiver.

For the Georgian government, validation takes the form of an external stamp of approval on the country's reforms. In order to become a performing economy and a modern democratic state, Georgia needs to be *recognised* as such in an international arena. This recognition succeeds through international rankings reflecting Georgia's performance or the evaluation of its reforms by international and regional organisations. As already observed, a major dilemma for the Georgian government is thus that the recognition of its anti-corruption record necessitates an integration into global policy fields and playing by the rules of these fields which are determined by international organisations. Further, the government is confronted with a certain dilemma

²²⁴ For example, the EU's Country Strategy Paper for Georgia was revised in 2002 with the paper mentioning the lack of results in EU's assistance: “*more than ten years of significant levels of EU assistance to Georgia have not yet led to the expected results.*” In European Commission, Country Strategy Paper 2003-2006, Tacis national indicative programme 2002-2004, September 23, 2003, p. 21. It further notes the lack of commitment of the government: “*more than anything else, the review confirmed that for assistance to be effective, its recipients must be committed to change. There is evidence that influential forces in Georgia, in and outside the government, do not adequately support reform*”, *ibid.*, p. 4.

²²⁵ Interview with Georgian analyst, May 2007.

when presenting its activities as the result of rapid action and the rejection of lengthy bureaucratic procedures. Indeed, its efforts to demarcate itself from what it portrays as the inefficient bureaucratic culture of the previous government and of international organisations raises questions as to the nature of its actions. Its unpredictable governing style where decisions are taken in a close-knit team can lead to accusations of political arbitrariness.²²⁶ As a result, it needs to concur with the representation of bureaucratic rationality as a basis of the Weberian modern state and of the managerial state promoted by international organisations to avoid its actions being perceived as arbitrary and representing only the interests of a small group of elites. As already stated, the bureaucratic reporting and planning culture of international organisations also responds to needs for accountability. The government's need for an external validation thus conflicts with its attempt to portray Georgia as a sovereign country not in need of external solutions. Aware of the fact that failed states can represent a propitious terrain for international organisations to absolve themselves of programme failure, the post-revolutionary government appears to engage in a counterstrategy of criticising these organisations' over-bureaucratisation and lack of effectiveness. But it faces a dilemma in its efforts to project an image as a sovereign modern democratic state.

4.2.2.2 Georgian government-NGOs relations

The Rose Revolution of November 2003 has brought certain changes in the relations between government and NGOs. In particular, NGOs have seen their human and financial resources decrease. Former NGO members have joined the government's ranks, while donor organisations have redirected their funds from the civil society to the government sector. As a result, the Georgian government has acquired a stronger position towards civil society organisations. Furthermore, the new authorities appear more committed and able to deliver. With NGOs acting as important pools of human resources for state agencies, the dividing line between the NGO sector and the government's sphere has also become blurred. Gurgenzidze and Nodia note that this factor has led to the perception in the Georgian public that a certain section of the civil society sector is associated with the government.²²⁷ Georgian NGOs have also become politicised during the revolution through their open confrontation of the Shevardnadze's

²²⁶ A paper on the fight against corruption in Georgia provides an example of the accusations that can be raised against the government: "*the government's highly-publicised fight against corruption is politically motivated and is used to strengthen control over all sectors, and monopolise power. If corruption was more 'pluralistic' and accessible for everyone before from high-ranking officials to traffic policemen, now it has become 'elite' and is concentrated in the hands of a few powerful individuals.*" In Esadze (2006), p. 8.

²²⁷ See Gurgenzidze, Paata/Nodia, Ghia: An assessment of Georgian civil society (2005): strong commitment to democratic values in a challenging environment, CIVICUS civil society index shortened assessment tool report for Georgia, 2005, p. 19.

government. Thus, Georgian NGOs have to rethink their relations with the government and the public after the revolution.²²⁸ One NGO head explains these changes by noting that NGOs benefited from more resources to engage in anti-corruption activities in Shevardnadze's times:

“If you compare with the context before, definitely, at that time we had more resources and more capacities to conduct monitoring and such activities, campaigns against corrupt practices. Because of the resources, human resources. After the revolution, many efficient professionals went to the public service. So after the revolution, we had a weak civil society with regard to human resources. There is a shifting attention of donors. It shifted dramatically from the civil society organisations, mainly the watchdog organisations to the government services.”²²⁹

An extract from a report on civil society in Georgia also describes this new context:

“In the post-revolutionary period civil society's importance, at least in the perception of the public, declined. The government believed that it had already absorbed a large part of the best human resources available in the Third Sector. Thus, listening to the remaining CSO activists was seen as less important, especially as the government did not lack public support. Within the donor community the opinion prevailed that the funding flows should be diverted to the new government, since this would be the shortest and most effective way of achieving the country's goal of democratic development. The media paid less attention to CSO-organized events, as it no longer considered this community an important actor in public life.”²³⁰

A NGO head further refers to the lack of human resources in the NGO sector by saying: “*now the competition has really increased. In Shevardnadze's times, nobody wanted to work for the government and the private sector was also not very strong. Now there is this banking sector which is developing very well, they are more private companies; the government also offers some good jobs and salaries. If you cannot offer a good salary to people, then you are not going to be able to attract any good people.*”²³¹

a) Delegitimisation of the Georgian government

The statements of NGO representatives reveal how they construct a self-representation of NGOs as experts and mediators between the state and society in opposition to the government's approach. These statements question both the government's anti-corruption expertise and the actual motives of its engagement in the fight against corruption by pointing to the phenomenon of ‘elite corruption’.

²²⁸ Ibid, p. 19.

²²⁹ Interview with NGO head, March 2008.

²³⁰ Gurgenidze and Nodia (2005), p. 19.

²³¹ Interview with NGO head, February 2008.

A NGO representative emphasises the NGOs' expertise: *"There is a whole bunch of expertise there. How many lawmakers have a background in anti-corruption? I would say very few and now we have outside expertise."*²³² A NGO head further explains: *"often local public officials are arrested, these cases happen very often. But the government does not do an analysis of the reasons why because of an increase in salaries and because of prosecution, there are still important corruption cases at the lower level. They need to do an analysis, not just say that they are fighting corruption, but analyse the reasons to it."*²³³ Similarly to the discourse of international organisations, the NGOs' discourse represents the fight against corruption as a matter of the possession of an appropriate expertise. The government's methods are criticised for not being grounded in an analysis of the causes of corruption that would help it identify long-lasting solutions. The government fails to address the "root causes" of the corruption problem. The representation of the NGOs' approach as being scientific and objective also constitutes a strategy of averting accusations of politicisation. A NGO head explains: *"So if the government says you are pro-opposition, that is a very general assessment. All our reports, all our assessments are based on facts, on actual facts and we try not too much to advance our opinion about issues. If they are some opinions they are always backed, they are always data."*²³⁴ A further similarity between NGOs and international organisations concerns the criticism of the government's methods. A NGO representative contrasts its organisation's professionalism with the government's lack of planning by remarking: *"like in my organisation. We are doing our plan and we know that we have to do this, this, and this in order to get this. And I am not sure that the government has a similar plan."*²³⁵ This NGO representative adds: *"sometimes I even suspect that they don't have any policy papers written down."*²³⁶ The NGO representative further remarks: *"one minister is changed by another and if you try to arrange a meeting, they say they will meet tomorrow, then tomorrow you call and they say they have no time again. It is even difficult to arrange a meeting with them. It is total unpredictability, you can make no prognoses, you can make no planning. And this is why it is difficult to work."*²³⁷

NGOs further emphasise their role in raising the government's accountability as a means of preventing corruption. One NGO head refers to the government's view that integer high officials are a sufficient guarantee against corruption in the public sector: *"The government says that there is no corruption at the top level, there is still corruption at the lower level because the*

²³² Interview with NGO representative, July 2008.

²³³ Interview with NGO head, February 2008.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Interview with NGO representative, February 2008.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

lower level is more difficult to control [...] They think that top level people are people with integrity, they are motivated and there is much less corruption.”²³⁸ The same NGO head further explains why civil society is important in the fight against corruption and questions the government’s vision: “one reason is that civil society restricts the power of government [...] it [the government] can do whatever it wants without control, it is naïve to believe that people in government will be good and not pursue any private interests and make good decisions in the public’s interest. It is better to have somebody watching over you. You have to think twice before engaging in corrupt activities.”²³⁹ The same NGO head notes that NGOs can be used by donor organisations to monitor the government’s reforms: “When different donors give money to the government, there is nothing wrong with that, but it would make much more sense if for example they give 500.000 to the Ministry of Finance to support a project reform, they could give 5 or 10% of that money to civil society to monitor. To see if the government is using this money and whether or not they are implementing these reforms.”²⁴⁰ Another NGO head describes the main causes of corruption in Georgia: “the lack of development of democratic institutions, be it the Parliament, be it political parties, the lack of awareness of citizens, the lack of control mechanisms inside, I don’t mean only the prosecution, but also the Chamber of Control, the General Inspectorates and [...] the lack of checks and balances between state bodies and different branches.”²⁴¹ The absence of control is further mentioned by a NGO head saying about the defence sector: “Everything is secret, so there is a high risk of corruption.”²⁴² The government’s tendency to centralise anti-corruption efforts and the marginalisation of independent control bodies are interpreted as signs that the government has something to hide. One NGO representative further refers to the problem of the politicisation of anti-corruption efforts: “civil society has always a role to play in a democratic environment. In terms of anti-corruption it relates to the problem of a politicised environment. For the government to avoid accusations to have a politicisation of anti-corruption efforts, then they have to include civil society.”²⁴³

The NGO Transparency International Georgia lists the following shortcomings in the government’s approach in an alternative progress report on the OECD recommendations to Georgia. These shortcomings are:

²³⁸ Interview with NGO head, February 2008.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Interview with NGO head, March 2008.

²⁴² Interview with NGO head, February 2008.

²⁴³ Interview with NGO representative, July 2008.

“a) A lack of transparency of government’s policy-making process, inexistence of predictable procedures in this process, and a lack of political participation; b) lack of research-based fight against bribery and corruption, insufficiency of the efforts invested in studying the causes of bribery and corruption in order to address the roots of the problem; c) insufficiency of governmental checks and balances, concentration of power within the executive, and low public trust in the judiciary; d) a lack of stable and effective mechanism for interaction between the government and civil society; e) insufficient communication of the content of Georgia’s strategic reform documents and government’s priorities to the public; f) weak performance of the democratic institutions at the local level; g) inconsistency related to the protection of legal requirements during TV arrests and other anticorruption initiatives; h) difficulties faced by the civil society in accessing public information, especially in the regions, etc.”²⁴⁴

In this list of shortcomings, TI Georgia focuses on the lack of predictability and procedures, the lack of communication to the public and public participation and the absence of research on the causes of corruption.

Another element in the NGOs’ strategies of delegitimation against the government is the reference to the phenomenon of “elite corruption”. This reference corresponds to the second pillar of the strategies of delegitimation in the anti-corruption field that question the other actor’s interests. In the narrative on “elite corruption”, high-level is seen as having increased at the same time as low-level corruption has decreased. Corruption is described as a resource that was more equally distributed and accessible in Shevardnadze’s times. Before the revolution, everyone was at the same time a victim and a beneficiary of corruption. After the revolution, the use of the resource “corruption” is restricted to a few privileged people and has become less “democratic”. One NGO head comments: *“What we have today in Georgia is a case of reduced petty corruption, petty bribery, strongly reduced petty bribery, but galloping rampant inequality. The new regime after the revolution [...] every revolution produced something like this. Because they divided immediately into pro and contra. Everything is available for pro people and nothing for people who are differently minded [...] Everything is only for people who are in line with revolutionary thinking.”*²⁴⁵ He further explains how assessments on the levels of corruption are subjective, as corruption can be defined in different ways: *“if you look only for bribery, of if you understand corruption only in terms of bribery, then you can say that the regime is bad but bribery is low, so corruption is not a problem of the type of regime. Because you are looking only at bribery. But if you are looking at corruption as a problem of inequality producing, then you see how much bigger all this is in Georgia today.”*²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ Transparency International Georgia: Alternative progress report on the implementation of the OECD ACN recommendations by the Georgian government, September 2007, p. 4

²⁴⁵ Interview with NGO head, October 2008.

²⁴⁶ Ibid. This narrative on corruption in post-revolutionary Georgia can also be seen as a narrative on social exclusion and inequality. Corruption is morally acceptable when it takes the form of a survival strategy that

b) Delegitimisation of NGOs

On the other side, statements on NGOs question the professionalism of these organisations as well as their motives to engage in anti-corruption activities.

Certain statements point to the lack of results in NGOs' projects. For example, they question the efficiency of civil society budget monitoring projects aimed at exposing public corruption and the mismanagement of state funds. A Georgian working for a donor organisation comments on the campaign conducted by the NGO Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) "Georgia under the sunshine" that included the monitoring of the use of the President's reserve funds.²⁴⁷ He says that the presentation of the project's results to the media was too sensationalist.²⁴⁸ In the end, the government has rendered the spending of these funds even more opaque by changing the legislation.²⁴⁹ As a result, the GYLA campaign is seen as having achieved the opposite of its official objective, as the management of these funds has become even less transparent.²⁵⁰ NGOs are thus suspected of seeking to acquire public legitimacy through sensationalist reports on the government instead of following the rational motive of increasing the transparency in the public management of funds.²⁵¹

Other statements that question the NGOs' motives in engaging in the fight against corruption point to their dependency on donor funds. Georgian NGOs are sometimes perceived as being more accountable to donors than to a domestic constituency.²⁵² They are also seen as being potentially disconnected from the real demands of Georgian citizens and failing to attract a broad

compensates for the absence of the state, while elite corruption or the pure accumulation of wealth is condemned. As noted by Scott, the accumulation of wealth by a small elite is seen as corruption in Georgia, even if not illegal, while the practice of helping relatives to get jobs is not exposed as corrupt. See Scott, Erik R.: A culture of corruption?

Anti-corruption rhetoric and revolution in Georgia, in: CCAsP Newsletter Spring 2005, p. 9.

²⁴⁷ Interview with representative of donor organisation, July 2008.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ The NGO GYLA itself admits to the lack of results of its campaign in a report on civil society's involvement in anti-corruption reforms: "Probably, it would have been logical if the actual outcome of our remarks on permanent violation of law and misappropriation of state funds was termination of bad practice by state officials or at least plausible explanations from their side. As a result of our report, legislation was changed to accommodate the demands of the President, making it easier than ever to spend funds without being held accountable to the public." In Chkheidze, Giorgi: Civil society perspectives on public integrity reform, U4 anti-corruption centre, 2007, p. 4.

²⁵¹ The same Georgian also refers to the NGO in market terms: "GYLA in a way is a monopolist on the NGO market." Interview with representative of donor organisation, July 2008.

²⁵² A report on civil society in Georgia explains the problem of the NGOs' dependence on donor money: "This dependence also caused problems for the sector's legitimacy. Certain parts of society, particularly those which, based on political or ideological motives, were apprehensive of the influence of western values on Georgia, criticised the NGO community for promoting interests and values that are foreign to Georgia and accused them of being unprincipled in their use and waste of western money ("grantguzzlers").", in Gurgenedze and Nodia (2005), p. 17.

social base.²⁵³ For example, one NGO representative explains what NGOs should be: *“When I represent the civil society, I should be backed up with the public, the general public and I should communicate with the government, the international organisations. The demand of the public, what the public needs, that should be the role of civil society. Civil society is not a few good guys that gather together to launch wonderful projects, they should voice the public’s demands.”*²⁵⁴ The NGOs’ accountability to donors raises suspicions on their agendas. A Georgian working for a donor organisation explains: *“they are paid to be watchdog NGOs by donors and then they need to justify their existence, they need to be critical or ultracritical sometimes, just criticizing for criticizing not suggesting what is the way out.”*²⁵⁵ One international consultant remarks that *“the government sees itself as more democratically legitimated than these NGOs.”*²⁵⁶ The same consultant comments on the lack of results of watchdog anti-corruption projects in Georgia: *“you get NGOs that have no accountability themselves to people, all they are concerned about is the donors, provide financial report back to the donors. There is no accountability for their own actions.”*²⁵⁷ He refers to a project and says that an organisation *“gives money to produce a monthly bulletin on the finances of the government. The NGO gets information from the Bank of Georgia and they write an index. And they are happy, and they are doing nothing. It does nothing [...] All they think is that donors want to find problems with the government. That’s what donors make them think is their job.”*²⁵⁸

Other statements questioning the NGOs’ motives point to the problem of politicisation. NGOs are suspected of pursuing certain agendas in their criticism of the government. A Georgian analyst observes:

²⁵³ An extract from a report on civil society in Georgia mentions this problem: *“It is notable that the priorities of the core group of the most active and well-developed CSOs diverge from those of the wider public, which would like CSOs to tackle social and economic problems linked more directly to poverty. One could say that the most active CSOs represent the liberal agenda of democracy, human rights and minority protection, rather than articulate and defend prevailing social interests. Therefore, public attitudes towards civil society are rather ambivalent. Part of the public appreciates civil society’s efforts to defend the liberal agenda, while others disapprove and even consider CSOs’ activities detrimental to Georgia’s national interest and identity.”*, in Gurgendze and Nodia (2005), p. 71. The question of whether donor-funded NGOs can be equated with civil society in Georgia is thus disputed. On this question, see Wheatley, Jonathan: *“Civil society in the Caucasus: Myth and reality”*, Caucasus Analytical Digest, 22 January 2010.

²⁵⁴ Interview with NGO representative, December 2008.

²⁵⁵ Interview with representative of donor organisation, July 2008. Michael notes the same problem: *“Given that anti-corruption NGOs live off of donor and government funds, not only are there incentives to exaggerate the effectiveness of NGO anti-corruption activity, but there are also incentives to design programmes sanctioned by donors instead of by the “civil society” they claim to represent.”*, in Michael, Bryane: *The Rise and Fall of the Anti-corruption Industry: Toward Second Generation Anticorruption Reforms in Central and Eastern Europe?*, 2004., p. 7.

²⁵⁶ Interview with consultant, February 2008.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

“There are people in the NGO community, I was there for more than ten years, who were much more happy in Shevardnadze’s times and much less critical towards Shevardnadze than they are now. And that is for me suspicious at least. In some cases, these are ambitions, just individual ambitions, egoism. In some other cases, they were simply sidelined and they think that it was not fair. In other cases, they are not quite against Shevardnadze-style corrupt networks and now they don’t like it and in the fourth case, the government does make mistakes and they would be right.”²⁵⁹

c) The need for validation

The analysis of the relations between government and NGOs has revealed the oppositions on which the representations of both actors are constructed. At the same time, both actors need a mutual approval on their representations.

A central aspect of the strategies of delegitimation deployed by both actors is the reference to the politicisation of anti-corruption activities. We observe how NGOs can be accused of pursuing other motives than the rational purpose of preventing corruption when acting as watchdog organisations. The reference to their scientific approach and their expertise constitutes a means of averting these accusations. NGOs appear to alternate between these two roles as watchdogs and experts. One NGO head explains the difficulty of combining these two roles: “*it is not easy. Starting from the post-revolutionary period, definitely it was difficult to combine these two types of activities. Because when you criticise, it becomes difficult to sit down at a table with the government and discuss some of the initiatives, some solutions for the reforms.*”²⁶⁰

The government also makes itself vulnerable to accusations of politicisation through its ad-hoc methods. The remark of a NGO representative “*for the government to avoid accusations to have a politicisation of anti-corruption efforts, then they have to include civil society*” refers to this problem.²⁶¹ Hence, both actors need a mutual approval on their representations as a protection against these accusations of politicisation.

²⁵⁹ Interview with Georgian analyst, November 2008. This analyst further says that NGOs do not always employ constructive methods: “*I had lots of arguments for example with GYLA [the NGO Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association]. I have respect for them, sometimes they are quite right. They are not people interested in corrupt networks, but sometimes I think that they do not simply look at the many reasons of why something happens. They simply say ‘here is the checklist, here are the best practices, do it or you are a dictator’. When in reality, it is much more complex. And I told them ‘it is much easier if you stay outside and criticise [...] if you don’t make your shoes a bit dirty’.*” Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Interview with NGO head, March 2008.

²⁶¹ Interview with NGO representative, July 2008.

4.2.2.3 International organisations-NGOs relations

The Rose Revolution has also brought changes in the relations between donor organisations and NGOs, as donors have redirected their funds to the government sector. At the same time, we observe that civil society is an important element in the representation that international organisations build of the fight against corruption. NGOs tend to adhere to this representation and validate the donors' discourse. However, certain statements of NGO representatives on donors reveal a dissatisfaction with the new donor priorities and tend to undermine their representation.

Statements point to the donors' interest in building an outside representation of projects rather than achieving concrete outcomes. NGO representatives complain about the donors' practice of funding trainings rather than the salaries of NGO staff and other administrative expenses. A NGO leader says, *"many donors tell us to cut salaries and cut administrative expenses and just try to spend more money on activities."*²⁶² Another former NGO head remarks:

*"Monitoring are salaries. You want to monitor something; you pay people to do it. Many donors will make it extremely difficult to fund salaries. They will always try to get you to give money for trainings. Donors for whatever reason love training [...] Americans always want to fund you for training, so they can send lots of Americans. Have a nice trip to Tbilisi, and talk to Georgians for the 47th time about not being corrupt."*²⁶³

The same former NGO head explains why donors prefer to fund trainings: *"you can do a training and then an event happened, you can take photographs. There were people in the room. In the end you have to make sure that something happened. If there are documents in English, showing that there was monitoring, that something happened."*²⁶⁴ He further says that the documents produced by NGOs have to be written in English in order to make the projects' results more easily accessible: *"For us, the most expensive of our operations is the production of English documents for donors. The most expensive part because finding people who can write English is very difficult."*²⁶⁵

Another NGO member questions the efficiency of international organisations: *"you know it is the system when international organisations don't care about the real results, efficiency, but follow*

²⁶² Interview with NGO head, February 2008.

²⁶³ Interview with former NGO head, June 2008. In this statement, this former NGO head makes himself vulnerable to accusations that NGOs are interested in favouring a certain type of activities for private benefits by saying *"monitoring are salaries"*.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

*step-by-step budget items and the only one goal is to receive funding. Not only in Georgia, it is typical for development countries.*²⁶⁶ A NGO head further suspects donors of promoting their own interests when funding civil society budget monitoring projects. When asked why donors fund these projects, he says: *“because it is their money and the money of investors. It is an issue of business development, economic development and investment climate to have transparent and efficient budgetary spending.”*²⁶⁷ This statement undermines the representation that monitoring projects are aimed at enhancing good governance and the government’s democratic accountability in Georgia.

Similarly, the representatives of international organisations question the motives of NGOs by describing them as actors competing in a “market for grants”. For example, one Georgian working in an international organisation remarks: *“I used to work for NGOs myself, when there are calls for proposals, it is a kind of market relations, ideas must be packed so we will put the money.”*²⁶⁸

4.2.3 Conclusion

I have started my analysis of the actors’ representations and their interactions in the anti-corruption field in Georgia with the question of *whether the conflicts that are produced during these interactions are of a nature that sustains the constitution of an autonomous anti-corruption field*. Further, I ask whether the representation of global anti-corruption activity succeeds in being *validated on a local level*. In a first step, I have examined how the different actors in the field build a particular representation of their activities as a strategy of producing success. In a second step, I have analysed their interactions to study whether these actors do *converge in a common production of success*.

My first observations on the interactions between anti-corruption actors in post-revolutionary Georgia suggest the difficulty of engaging in a common production of success and coherence. The two-sided process of the production of success in the field based on the building of representations of success and strategies of delegitimisation deployed against other actors and the simultaneous need for validation creates contradictions. Most crucially, the diverse representations of success appear to undermine each other, while strategies of delegitimisation

²⁶⁶ Interview with NGO representative, March 2008.

²⁶⁷ Interview with NGO head, March 2008.

²⁶⁸ Interview with project manager in donor organisation, October 2007.

revolve not only around the question of the possession of an adequate know-how to fight corruption, but also ask the question of the motives to engage in anti-corruption. We observe that the anti-corruption field appears to be embedded not only in the development field with its technocratic logic, but also in the field of politics by asking the question of the politicisation of anti-corruption efforts. Strategies of delegitimisation that centre on the question of the actors' motives appear problematic for the field as a whole. Indeed, they have the effect of constructing other actors as outsiders to the field. For example, the Georgian government tends to portray the two other actors international organisations and NGOs as irrelevant to the project of fighting corruption by emphasising the centrality of the political will. Further, they are suspected of responding to other interests such as the need to report to a domestic constituency (international organisations) or the promotion of a political agenda (NGOs) instead of being engaged in combating corruption. However, the Georgian government also needs the approval of these two actors to avoid accusations of politicisation in the fight against corruption.

I identify two elements that appear to render a common production of success in the field problematic. First, we observe a contradiction between the categories "technical knowledge" and "ownership/demand" in the interactions between international organisations and the Georgian government. Second, the representation of the actions of anti-corruption actors appears complicated by strategies of delegitimisation centring on the question of these actors' motives. We observe that the representation of global anti-corruption activity as a disinterested and rational attempt to apply technical solutions to the corruption problem appears difficult to validate on a local level.

I will further examine these dilemmas in the production of success in the anti-corruption field through an empirical study of anti-corruption activities in post-revolutionary Georgia. I will analyse three different types of activities: the adoption of a national anti-corruption strategy, the reform of the audit institution Chamber of Control and civil society anti-corruption projects. These case studies will serve to shed light on contradictions that are revealed in the interactions between anti-corruption actors. In particular, I will ask the following questions. *How does the tension between technical knowledge and ownership/political will affect the coherence of the field? What are the dilemmas involved in the local validation of the representation of global anti-corruption activity as a rational enterprise of applying solutions to the corruption problem? How does the question of the actors' motives complicate the representation of anti-corruption activity in the local context of Georgia?*

V Empirical study of anti-corruption activities in Georgia

In the following chapter, I will analyse three different types of anti-corruption activities in Georgia based on Tisne and Smilov's classification of anti-corruption programmes: 1) omnibus programmes, 2) institutional reform projects, 3) and civil society projects.²⁶⁹ First, I examine the adoption of a national anti-corruption strategy in Georgia. This case study serves to shed light on the tensions between international organisations and the Georgian government that arise from the opposition between "technical knowledge" and "ownership/demand/political will". Second, I analyse the reform of the audit institution Chamber of Control of Georgia. The different reform steps reveal conflicts between anti-corruption actors as well as shedding light on the problematic of the representation of anti-corruption activity in the domestic context of Georgia. Finally, I study civil society anti-corruption projects to further examine the difficulty arising from the representation of the actors' motives in a local context as well as the dilemmas involved in the maintenance of a representation of success.

²⁶⁹ Tisne and Smilov (2004).

5.1 The framework: Georgia's anti-corruption strategy

My analysis of the adoption of an anti-corruption strategy in Georgia serves to further explore the paradoxes that I have identified in the interactions between the Georgian government and international organisations. In a first part, I analyse anti-corruption documents before and after the Rose Revolution to understand the differences in the representations that the Georgian government constructs of its anti-corruption activities in these two periods. In a second part, I examine the position of different actors towards the 2005 anti-corruption strategy. In a third part, I study the conflicts arising between the Council of Europe and the Georgian government during the adoption of the strategy and the question of the strategy's value. In a fourth part, I conclude my study with an analysis of the difficulty of a common production of coherence.

5.1.1 *Anti-corruption strategies in Georgia*

Anti-corruption strategies are part of “omnibus programmes” or instruments specifically geared at fighting corruption launched in the 1990s by international organisations in different countries. Tisne and Smilov define the attributes of an omnibus programme: “*Omnibus anti-corruption programmes generally contain all or a selection of the following attributes: an anticorruption law; a national anticorruption strategy or program, a ministerial commission; specialized unit or dedicated agency; an action plan to implement the program; and/or a monitoring mechanism.*”²⁷⁰ The assumption behind these programmes is that “*corruption needs to be tackled through a comprehensive set of institutional and legislative measures encompassing most of the jurisdictional areas of government*”, “*there exists a standardized list of measures to fight corruption*”, and that “*there is a common understanding between the donors and the aid recipients on those measures.*”²⁷¹ Omnibus programmes thus aim at *institutionalising* anti-corruption measures in a specific legal framework. This framework, so the assumption behind these programmes, will ensure that pressure is exerted on reluctant governments to engage in anti-corruption activities, while it provides directions for a more committed government. Once institutionalised, anti-corruption measures can be activated at will. Further, strategies provide a monitoring tool for civil society and international organisations to review the progress accomplished in the fight against corruption. They set certain standards in anti-corruption activity. Anti-corruption strategies also entail a democratic element to the extent that civil

²⁷⁰ Tisne and Smilov (2004), p. 40.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

society actors are included in their drafting and monitoring and they serve to enhance the government's accountability.

5.1.1.1 Anti-corruption efforts before the revolution

Initial steps to establish an anti-corruption framework in Georgia were taken during the presidency of Eduard Shevardnadze from 1995 to 2003. An Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG) established in 2000 with the support of the Open Society Foundation Georgia was charged with developing guidelines for a national anti-corruption strategy. The ACWG sent a draft of the strategy to 150,000 recipients throughout Georgia and received about 40,000 responses.²⁷² It published the document “the guidelines for the national anti-corruption programme” in 2000 that includes a preamble written by Eduard Shevardnadze.²⁷³ The ACWG eventually self-dissolved, while an Anti-Corruption Council and an Anti-Corruption Bureau charged with conducting research on corruption were officially established. The Bureau received funding from international organisations, while the Council worked on a voluntary basis. A presidential decree “On Immediate Anti-Corruption Activities” was eventually approved by Shevardnadze in 2001 that was based on the guidelines developed by the ACWG. A negative assessment was given on its implementation by a coalition of Georgian NGOs formed in 2001-2002 to monitor it.²⁷⁴ As Horoschak of Transparency International Georgia notes: “*The NGOs discovered that most of the state institutions responsible for implementation of the Decree either completely ignored it, or did only the minimum required to comply.*”²⁷⁵ A report on anti-corruption activities in Georgia further remarks: “*despite of the time and resources put into the Council and the Bureau, their work rarely delivered any tangible results. The major reason to that was the lack of political will to take real actions against corruption.*”²⁷⁶ In reaction to the lack of progress in implementing anti-corruption measures, Shevardnadze publicly threatened to punish corrupt government officials. The report on anti-corruption activities in Georgia notes: “*the president's statement, however, was never translated into action. In these circumstances local and international images of the Georgian government and its president deteriorated significantly, and public trust in the ruling forces declined severely.*”²⁷⁷ The same report comments on the strategies of international organisations and civil society before the revolution:

²⁷² Eurasia Foundation (2004), p. 3.

²⁷³ Horoschak, Lauren: Fighting Corruption in Saakashvili-era Georgia: Successes, Challenges and Public Perceptions, U4 Anti-corruption resource centre, May 2007, p. 2.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Eurasia Foundation (2004), p. 4.

²⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 2.

*“the primary goal of the international community and the Georgian civil society was to demand greater political commitment in the fight against corruption by pushing the government to put out a comprehensive document on its line of attack against corruption.”*²⁷⁸ The idea behind the drafting of an anti-corruption strategy was to oblige the government to put certain commitments on paper, while mobilising the public to create a pressure for increased anti-corruption efforts. However, these initiatives appear to have had little results except in diminishing public trust in the government. Furthermore, Shevardnadze appears to have used the establishment of anti-corruption bodies and the issuing of a decree as gestures of good will directed at the international community, while discharging the government from the responsibility for the lack of implementation of these measures by pointing to the corruptness of public officials. As Horoschak notes: *“the government’s anti-corruption activities were of a formal nature only, with the only apparent goal to put something on paper about Georgia’s ongoing struggle against corruption.”*²⁷⁹

5.1.1.2 The 2005 anti-corruption strategy

After the Rose Revolution, international organisations such as the Council of Europe’s Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)’s Anti-Corruption Network for Transition Economies stressed the need for Georgia to formally adopt an anti-corruption strategy. The Georgian government has also committed to ensure the implementation of its strategy in the EU-Georgia European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan of 2006.²⁸⁰ As Horoschak notes, the strategy was a response to certain gaps and weaknesses that were identified in the government’s fight against corruption.²⁸¹ She says: *“in the year following the Rose Revolution local and international observers alike identified the Georgian government’s lack of a comprehensive reform strategy, and resulting tendency to institute reforms within isolated sectors rather than state-wide, as a major weakness of the anti-corruption efforts.”*²⁸² Despite its formal commitments, the Georgian government appeared reluctant to adopt a strategy. A document was quickly drafted in 2005, as Georgia risked violating its GRECO obligations. Georgia was the first country subjected to GRECO’s non-compliance procedure after a report adopted by the organisation in December 2003 noted that it was not in compliance with the Group’s recommendations. A working group

²⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 3.

²⁷⁹ Horoschak (2007), p. 2.

²⁸⁰ EU-Georgia ENP Action Plan, p. 6. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/georgia_enp_ap_final_en.pdf (accessed January 2010).

²⁸¹ Horoschak (2007), p. 6.

²⁸² Ibid.

composed of government and NGO representatives was quickly set up to draft the strategy in January 2005.²⁸³ The national anti-corruption strategy was approved by a presidential decree in June 2005. Karosanidze notes: “*In the end, the outcome of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy development process was a document hastily prepared by the National Security Council and government representatives. The President approved this document on June 24, 2005 according to Presidential Decree #550, shortly before a GRECO assessment group was scheduled to assess Georgia’s compliance with GRECO recommendations.*”²⁸⁴ The organ in charge of drafting and implementing the strategy was initially the National Security Council (NSC) with a special Anti-Corruption Policy Division created by presidential decree within the NSC. The Office for the State Minister for Reforms Coordination under Kakha Bendukidze then took over the responsibility for the implementation.²⁸⁵ An implementation action plan was subsequently adopted in September 2005. A new action plan was adopted in March 2006 that included timeframes for completing the different actions outlined in it as well as defining the bodies in charge of their implementation.²⁸⁶ The action plan envisaged that each ministry would submit a ministerial action plan, while the national action plan would be updated each year. Karosanidze notes that certain ministries did not draft any action plans or some were not very detailed.²⁸⁷ The Office of the State Minister for Reforms Coordination organised a conference in November 2006 to present a progress report on the implementation of the action plan.²⁸⁸ A new progress report was released in April 2007 indicating the measures achieved and the ones awaiting completion, while a new action plan was drafted.²⁸⁹ An Anti Corruption Council was established under the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice in January 2009 which is tasked with implementing and updating the anti-corruption strategy.

5.1.1.3 Differences between anti-corruption documents before and after the revolution

The anti-corruption document “Guidelines for the National Anti-corruption Program” of 2000 drafted by the Anti-Corruption Working Group and published under Shevardnadze appears to reflect the anti-corruption discourse of international organisations. The preamble to the guidelines written by Shevardnadze says: “*if we fail to avoid this national disaster, if we fail to*

²⁸³ Interview with representative of international organisation, September 2008.

²⁸⁴ Karosanidze, Tamuna: National anti-corruption strategy and action plan: elaboration and implementation, U4 anti-corruption resource centre, 2007, p. 3.

²⁸⁵ Kakha Bendukidze is a Georgian oligarch who previously lived in the Russian Federation and has actively promoted libertarian reforms in Georgia after the revolution.

²⁸⁶ See Karosanidze (2007), p. 5.

²⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 6.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 7.

²⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 7.

*cure the nation, public and State from horrible, poisoning malady of corruption – Georgians, as a civilized nation, and Georgia, as an independent, democratic state will have no future.*²⁹⁰

Corruption is portrayed as a “disease” and an obstacle to Georgia’s development. The document is further described as being based on a “scientific” analysis of the problem:

“These materials describe the present realities with a high degree of professionalism and scientific methodology. Corruption with all its multidimensional ugliness is completely uncovered. The origins of corrupt activities, their interrelation with the system of public activities, socio-psychological and ethno-psychological characteristics, complex legacy of the past, contemporary social problems and unresolved issue of poverty and hardship are all identified in the document. It describes the structure of the “pyramid” of corruption, its nature, the necessary “circumstances” and principal mechanisms of corrupt relations.”²⁹¹

The document further notes that: “*genuine, strong, developed democracy is the best tool to fight corruption*” and “*anti-corruption fight in Georgia is the same as strengthening and improving the Georgian democracy.*”²⁹² Democracy is thus described as an important “remedy” against corruption. The document also stresses the role of civil society in fighting corruption: “*a developed civil society provides an important tool to exercise control over the process of governance and restrain corruption.*”²⁹³ It further lists key factors behind the corruption problem in Georgia: the legacy of the communist regime, state weakness, the special role of the “power ministries”, the underdevelopment of civil society, the economic crisis and the moral climate.²⁹⁴

This list of factors tends to emphasise the *helplessness* of Georgian public officials by attributing the problem of corruption to the general instability of the transition process, the legacy of corrupt behaviours inherited from the Soviet period and the role of “lobby groups” and other private actors in capturing the state. Corruption is viewed as being deeply embedded in social behaviours: “*while grand corruption can prompt public protest, the majority of population endures wide-scale corruption and considers it an inevitable part of life.*”²⁹⁵ Corruption is a systemic and multifaceted problem that has its origins in a series of deficiencies of the Georgian state and diverse historical legacies. Corruption is a problem typical of transition countries and it indicates a lack of democratic and economic development in Georgia. This analysis tends to support the solutions offered by international organisations, while providing justifications for the lack of progress in Georgia so far. International organisations will help weak states like Georgia overcoming their deficiencies as a solution to the corruption problem. The document further

²⁹⁰ Government of Georgia: The guidelines for the national anti-corruption programme of Georgia, 2000, p. 1.

²⁹¹ Ibid, pp. 1-2.

²⁹² Ibid, p. 2.

²⁹³ Ibid, p. 6.

²⁹⁴ Ibid, pp. 5-7.

²⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 7.

defines corruption as a problem of the absence of control of the state and deficient institutional structures: “*state weakness and/or ineffectiveness are the major sources of corruption. The inability of the State to exercise adequate control over its employees’ activities constitutes the most obvious feature.*”²⁹⁶

The national anti-corruption strategy of June 2005 identifies as priorities corruption prevention, the creation of a competitive business environment, the institutional reform of the law enforcement agencies, the cooperation with international organisations and public involvement in the fight against corruption.²⁹⁷ The part dedicated to the liberalisation of the business environment reflects the government’s priorities, while other sections appear to incorporate the recommendations of international organisations. The major difference between the two anti-corruption documents before and after the Rose Revolution can be seen in what is absent from the 2005 strategy. Indeed, the new strategy does not contain any background analysis of the causes, manifestations and “cures” against corruption. It does not mention the link between democracy and corruption neither does it provide a definition of corruption, its causes and consequences. The new document appears to be more focused on immediate actions and is more a reflection of the government’s priorities. Instead of listing the causes and consequences of corruption, it lists the reforms that the government would adopt independently of the existence of a specific framework to fight corruption. These reforms do not appear to be “specific anti-corruption measures” and can be achieved in a rather short period of time. On the contrary, the old document stresses the complexity and systematic character of corruption and defines the fight against corruption as a long-term process. It says: “*the struggle against corruption is a long-term endeavor that must rest upon strong political will and a consistent strategy. Nobody should expect the rapid elimination of corruption through emergency measures.*”²⁹⁸ The document argues that no quick-fix solutions can be found to the corruption problem and rapid measures even present some risks. It remarks: “*in light of current conditions, launching of any serious measures against corruption poses some political risks for the authorities*” and “*dismantling ingrained corrupt systems in some sections of government in a sweeping manner may cause critical new impediments to the functioning of the State.*”²⁹⁹ The document also warns against the dangers of an “undemocratic” fight against corruption:

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 5.

²⁹⁷ Government of Georgia: the national anti-corruption strategy of Georgia, 2005. Available at: http://www.georgia.gov.ge/pdf/2009_07_27_14_08_18_1.pdf (accessed January 2010)

²⁹⁸ Government of Georgia (2000), pp. 7-8

²⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 8.

“Despite a specially critical feature of Georgia’s corruption problem, it must not be forgotten that demands to take emergency measures against corruption and political manipulations of related themes have in many historical cases created a social and ideological background for rejecting democracy and establishing dictatorships. Consequently when planning and implementing anti-corruption measures, a “witch-hunt” must be avoided and human rights must be protected, with the presumption of innocence strictly observed.”³⁰⁰

The old anti-corruption document appears to fit in the representation of the fight against corruption of international organisations, as it aligns itself with mainstream views of corruption. It has the effect of emphasising the helplessness of the Georgian state that has still not recovered from its various legacies and requires international assistance to tackle its problems. Hence, the fight against corruption is presented as a long-term and complex process that the Georgian state cannot face on its own. No rapid results can be expected. An effect of this representation is that it justifies the lack of immediate results, while emphasising the need for external assistance. Interestingly, the document notes this possible effect and the way this representation can absolve domestic actors from the responsibility for failure: “*since fighting corruption is a long-term, complex task, it must not become an excuse for postponing anti-corruption measures and not holding State agencies responsible for a failure to show actual results in the short term.*”³⁰¹ Instead, the new strategy appears more focused on immediate actions, measures that the government would take with or without a strategy.

5.1.2 The actors’ positions towards the 2005 strategy

5.1.2.1 International organisations

As already stated, for international and regional organisations, anti-corruption strategies represent a means of institutionalising anti-corruption reforms and allowing their monitoring by civil society actors.

Strategies fit in the representation that international organisations want to project of their anti-corruption activities, as they constitute a transfer of a “universal knowledge” from these organisations to a recipient country and they are assumed to respond to a *local demand* for anti-corruption assistance. The commitment of the recipient country on paper opens the door for future interventions in the form of the training of civil servants or the conduct of local surveys on

³⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 9.

³⁰¹ Ibid, p. 9.

corruption. Furthermore, they fit with the planning and reporting culture of international organisations and their vision of the fight against corruption as a rational and long-term process that requires the institutionalisation of reforms. The document in itself can be seen as an evidence of the assumptions that underlie the anti-corruption discourse of international organisations, namely that “*there exists a standardized list of measures to fight corruption*”³⁰², and “*there is a common understanding between the donors and the aid recipients on those measures*”.³⁰³

In a constructivist perspective, anti-corruption strategies constitute a framework and a means of demarcating the boundaries of the anti-corruption field by attributing fixed meanings to corruption and ways to fight it. The strategy obliges the government to define a set of measures as “anti-corruption activities” and receive the approval of international organisations on them. As one representative of a donor organisation explains when referring to the anti-corruption strategy, “*they [government officials] have to define what they do.*”³⁰⁴ The government’s anti-corruption measures lose their spontaneous character by being fixed in a specific framework. Thus, the government formulates its fight against corruption in the *language of donors*.

5.1.2.2 The Georgian government

As already stated, the Georgian government is reluctant to adopt an anti-corruption strategy. Indeed, the strategy constructs the government as a receiver of knowledge, automatically admitting to certain gaps and deficiencies in its fight against corruption. Thus, this construction contradicts the Georgian government’s effort to be perceived as a sovereign state capable of tackling corruption with its own resources. Furthermore, the strategy conflicts with the government’s emphasis on rapid action and its scepticism towards bureaucratic procedures and strategy documents. The example of the failure in implementing the anti-corruption guidelines and decree under Shevardnadze illustrates this problem. The adoption of a strategy conflicts with the government’s attempt to demarcate itself from Shevardnadze’s Georgia, while it raises the suspicion that it has not been as successful as it claims in fighting corruption. Tisne and Smilov remark that the adoption of anti-corruption strategies represents a signal of incapacity: “*the appearance of anticorruption strategies, accompanied by commissions or agencies to monitor them, signal a dramatic inability on the part of the existing government institutions to deal with*

³⁰² See Tisne and Smilov (2004), p. 40.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Interview with representative of donor organisation, November 2008.

corruption“.³⁰⁵ By adopting a strategy, the government sends the signal that corruption is still a problem and it has not the resources to fight it. As one representative of an international organisation explains on Georgia’s anti-corruption strategy: *“It is also a political document and a political instrument. Again [it is about] showing that there is a commitment from the government side and we don’t pretend that corruption has disappeared.”*³⁰⁶ The adoption of the document thus means acknowledging that there is a corruption problem in Georgia. Tisne and Smilov remark on Albania and Macedonia: *“Both in the Albanian and Macedonian cases, the implementation of a national anticorruption strategy was meant by the governments in question as a signal to the international community, as well as to its own public, that it acknowledged the problem of corruption, had taken the first steps to control it, and thus was to be considered as a trusted partner and efficient government.”*³⁰⁷ Finally, the government also wants to claim a certain knowledge in fighting corruption, one which is more directly derived from the practice than being theoretical. The strategy conflicts with the representation of an indigenous anti-corruption knowledge.³⁰⁸

5.1.2.3 Non-governmental organisations

NGOs are a third actor interacting with the government and international organisations in the framework of the anti-corruption strategy. The anti-corruption strategy fits with the representation of NGOs, as it acknowledges the role played by civil society in monitoring the government’s efforts. As already observed, it is also an admission from the government’s side that it has not been as successful as it claims in eradicating corruption and the fight against corruption needs to be institutionalised. For example, Karosanidze describes the government’s approach:

“One of the major concerns regarding the Georgian government’s initial anti-corruption strategy was its rather ad-hoc nature. Often it seemed more curative than preventive in focus. Early reforms initiated by the government addressed isolated cases of corruption and fought them on a case-by case basis, but relatively few systemic measures were taken to analyze and address the root causes of corruption. Without a unified anti-corruption strategy initiated at the level of the

³⁰⁵ Tisne and Smilov (2004), p.52

³⁰⁶ Interview with representative of donor organisation, November 2008.

³⁰⁷ Tisne and Smilov (2004), p.52. Government officials in Georgia tend to argue that the problem of corruption has disappeared and therefore, no specific strategy is needed.

³⁰⁸ A statement by a Georgian consultant working with donor organisations provides an illustration of the Georgians’ attempt to claim a certain knowledge in fighting corruption: *“We do not use any international experience. We don’t need this [...] we are Georgians and we find our own roles and our roadmaps to fight corruption. And to fight Georgian national corruption, no Europeans and no Americans can help us! Sure. To fight Georgian corruption, you need Georgian experts [...] One has to find specific tools to fight corruption. There are no universal methods.”* Interview with Georgian consultant, April 2008.

central government, the individual ministries worked in isolation, choosing their own pace and strategy for institutional reform. In some cases they failed to reform altogether. This issue was often highlighted as a major obstacle in both local and international assessments of Georgia's anticorruption efforts.”³⁰⁹

This account underlines the “ad-hoc nature” of Georgia’s fight against corruption, the lack of analysis, the failure to see corruption as a systemic problem, and the lack of institutionalisation and coordination of anti-corruption measures. NGOs further criticise the government for its failure to honour its international commitments. For example, Transparency International Georgia has drafted in September 2007 an “alternative progress report on the implementation of the OECD Anti-Corruption Network recommendations by the Georgian government”.³¹⁰ The report criticises the government’s non-inclusive approach during the drafting of the anti-corruption strategy: “*during 2005 and 2006, TI Georgia expressed its concerns over the lack of transparent and participatory process of elaborating these anticorruption documents, as well as over the lack of coordination of and reporting on their implementation.*”³¹¹ The same report notes shortcomings in the establishment of a working group charged with supervising the implementation of the activities listed in the Action Plan: “*due to an inadequate instruction on the exact role and the status of this working group, some of the named government offices assigned their deputy heads to the working group, while others established their own, internal working groups.*”³¹² The report also notes the failure of ministries to report adequately to the Office of the State Minister for Reforms Coordination on their progress in implementing the action plan.³¹³ Furthermore, the report criticises the government for being too vague on the benchmarks and criteria of success in the action plan: “*given that the Action Plan itself failed to specify concrete benchmarks for measuring success and in many cases lacked detail on implementation methodology, the terms in which progress was reported at the conference were also very general.*”³¹⁴ Finally, the NGO notes certain progress in the new updated action plan of 2007, but lists the following shortcomings: “*a) like the previous Action Plan, it provides no comprehensive examination of the causes and types of corruption in priority sectors, b) in a number of places it talks about developing or strengthening targeted areas, but says nothing about how, or based on what principles, this should be done, and c) it contains no provisions for ensuring public involvement in the design, implementation and assessment of anti-corruption*

³⁰⁹ Karosanidze (2004), p. 1. Tamuna Karosanidze is the former executive director and current board member of the NGO Transparency International Georgia.

³¹⁰ Transparency International Georgia (2007).

³¹¹ Ibid, p. 9.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

reforms.”³¹⁵ The lack of research on the causes of corruption and the failure to include civil society actors and the public are described as shortcomings in the government’s approach. These comments thus reflect the NGOs’ strategies of delegitimisation against the government.

5.1.3 Conflict areas and strategies of delegitimisation

The different positions towards the strategy translate in certain tensions in the interactions between actors, in particular between the Council of Europe and the Georgian government. I will study two conflicts that have emerged during the adoption and implementation of the strategy as well as statements from government and donor representatives on the strategy to examine these tensions between actors. In particular, two conflicts reveal how the representations of the Council of Europe and the government tend to undermine each other. Further, statements asking the value of the strategy reveal the need of both actors for a mutual validation, but also their difficulty to engage in a common production of coherence.

5.1.3.1 “Anti-corruption” or “good governance” strategy?

A first conflict emerged between the government and the Council of Europe on the labelling of the strategy document. The Georgian government wanted initially to name the document a “good governance strategy”. A representative of an international organisation comments on the government’s motives:

“The supporters of this idea were against using the term corruption, because if you are saying ‘anti-corruption’, it means that there is widespread corruption and there is no widespread corruption anymore, so it is better to call it ‘good governance strategy’ from that point of view. Because ‘good governance’ means also elimination of corruption. They [government officials] were against using ‘anti-corruption’ as if corruption was as widespread as during the Shevardnadze’s government.”³¹⁶

By using the label ‘good governance’, the government sought to demarcate itself from the Shevardnadze’s era as well as conventional approaches to fighting corruption adopted by international organisations. Indeed, the demarcation with the Shevardnadze’s era and the claim to success in fighting corruption are key elements in the government’s representation. The label “good governance” would better fit with the government’s attempt to posture itself as being a

³¹⁵ Ibid, p. 10.

³¹⁶ Interview with representative of international organisation, September 2008.

step ahead of other neighbouring countries and knowing what measures to adopt. On the contrary, the label “anti-corruption strategy” means that Georgia is still struggling to combat corruption. I have already quoted how a high-level official in the government describes Georgia’s anti-corruption record:

“I think that it is not fully recognized, but I can state and we can claim that in the last four years, corruption has decreased significantly, and I do not know any other example of a country where.... Of course we are not fully free from corruption. But corruption as a problem does not dominate. It was done in four years and nobody until now has shown me any example of a country that could have done this. Maybe there are successful examples of fighting corruption in some particular sectors in a short period, but to really change the total perception in society and on the other hand not only perception but reality, I don’t know any other example.”³¹⁷

The same high-level official further explains how Georgia adopted a specific approach to fighting corruption:

“This was not really understood and we could not articulate, it was our fault also in 2004-2006, to the international community until we really delivered results. It was also difficult to explain to us. We were learning by doing and you need some experience to draw some conclusions and so on. What I explained I needed two-three years to explain it to myself what was the difference between them and us, so they wanted us to have an anti-corruption strategy. There was some mismatch between what we were doing and their requirements, and at the end of the day the end result was... what was the difference, the difference was that they wanted us to have a negative policy and we had a positive policy.”³¹⁸

The Georgian government claims a particular knowledge in fighting corruption that differs from conventional “negative approaches”. Instead of targeting corruption, Georgia simply needs to adopt “positive” reforms that will further remove the ground for corruption. The same high-level official remarks: “*one of the key of our success was that we did not just simply fight against corruption, we had a positive goal approach. Fighting corruption is a negative approach.*”³¹⁹ He further explains that reforms aimed at improving the business environment and healthcare constitute anti-corruption measures in themselves, as a good business environment and healthcare cannot function with corruption.³²⁰ He says: “*I know that in healthcare there is corruption. One way is to go and fight corruption. The other way is: if I have corruption there, something is wrong; corruption is a product of a problem. Like a thermometer: if the thermometer shows that you are sick, you don’t fight the thermometer, it is better to take*

³¹⁷ Interview with high official in the Georgian government, November 2008.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Ibid.

medicine.”³²¹ Georgia’s “positive approach” thus consists of reforming public institutions to improve their overall performance without the necessity of “singling out” the corruption problem. The drive to reform suffices in itself to tackle corruption without the need for specific instruments.

On the other side, the Council of Europe rejects the labelling “good governance”. One representative of an international organisation comments on the Council of Europe’s motives: “*The Council of Europe was against it. ‘Good governance’ is more the profile of the World Bank, so the Council of Europe didn’t want to enter into somebody’s domain so it concentrated on corruption [...] Because GRECO has this profile.*”³²² In this statement, international and regional organisations are described as being in competition and being driven by a certain market logic. The Council of Europe is interested in strengthening its profile in the “anti-corruption field” instead of competing with other players in the “good governance field”.³²³ Further, the COE’s position can be explained by the fact that the new label contradicts the representation that the organisation wants to project of its activities. Hence, it conflicts with the idea that corruption remains a problem in Georgia and the country is in need of external solutions. In addition, if we use again a market analogy, the anti-corruption strategy can be understood as a ‘product’ that is exported to different countries.³²⁴ The act of offering the same solutions to different countries reinforces the belief in the existence of universal anti-corruption methods. The adoption of similar products in different contexts is a proof in itself of the existence of this universal knowledge, while their replication constitutes a proof of their success. Georgia’s “good governance strategy” would threaten this appearance of coherence and success in the field.

The strategy document was finally named an “anti-corruption strategy”. The conflict on the labelling of the document thus shows how the government’s commitment to fighting corruption is finally expressed in the *language of donors*. International organisations succeed in setting certain discursive boundaries that allow them to occupy a dominant position in the field. The

³²¹ Ibid. A report from the anti-corruption centre U4 supports the Georgian government’s perspective: “*It is not easily understandable why development partners in the case of Georgia would urge the government to call its de facto good governance strategy an anti-corruption strategy when the goals clearly go beyond corruption.*” Hussmann, Karen (ed.): “Anti-corruption policy making in practice”, U4 report 1:2007, Christian Michelsen Institute, p. 34

³²² Interview with representative of international organisation, September 2008.

³²³ The “evaluation fatigue” of recipient countries that need to report to different organisations on their progress can also be seen as an indication of donor competition. For example, the Council of Europe and the OECD are both working on anti-corruption in the same countries, a fact that can create some overlapping.

³²⁴ Tisne and Smilov also use the market analogy when describing anti-corruption strategies as “products” that donors want to market to different countries: “*the risk is that donors should continue to market a seemingly successful product, while its added value and tangible effects have yet to be determined.*”, in Tisne and Smilov (2004), p.51.

government's will to fight corruption can only be expressed in the particular language of an "anti-corruption strategy" on an international arena. At the same time, the representation of international organisations remains difficult to stabilise, as the government cannot easily adhere to it.

5.1.3.2 Lack of a counterpart

Another conflict in 2008 between the Council of Europe and the government revealed this problem of the local validation of the representation of international organisations. The conflict centred on the question of the counterpart or the organ responsible for the implementation of the strategy. The Office for the State Minister for Reforms Coordination in charge of implementing the strategy was namely abolished in February 2008 and no new organ was designated to take over this responsibility. The situation remained unclear during the whole year.³²⁵ During this period, the action plans were not updated, while the contracts of the local experts assisting the government in implementing the strategy were temporarily suspended.³²⁶ The responsibility for implementing the strategy was finally attributed to the head of the State Chancellery under the Prime Minister in autumn 2008. The responsibility thus remained temporarily in the hands of Kakha Bendukidze who had been named as the new head of the State Chancellery until he was replaced in February 2009 and an Anti-corruption council was established. A steering committee for the implementation of the strategy was convened in October 2008 that was positively assessed by international organisations.

Tensions between the government and the Council of Europe characterised this period. Indeed, the lack of a counterpart contradicted one major element in the representation of the COE: the *local ownership of the project*. By delaying the designation of a new body in charge of implementing the strategy, the government indicated its lack of interest and the fact that the strategy's implementation was not in the top list of its priorities. A representative of an international organisation comments on the need for a counterpart in the case of the strategy: "*It is very important to have a counterpart [institution] in the country present, because otherwise you get very much this idea of another organisation flying into the country and telling people what to do. And it is not the way it should work [...] You need someone to feel responsible and*

³²⁵ A project manager working on the anti-corruption strategy attributes this delay to certain major events in 2008: "*when there is war in the country, it is difficult to go and ask someone. Or in the period of elections, it is difficult to contact ministries and ask them to do something. Many heads of department would not be there after a week, so how could they decide something?*" Interview with expert, December 2008.

³²⁶ Council of Europe: support to the anti-corruption strategy of Georgia (GEPAC), CoE Project No. 2007/DGI/VC/779: 3rd narrative progress report, 2 April 2009, p. 6.

*not just an international organisation telling people what to do.*³²⁷ The lack of ownership of the project threatens the representation of international organisations, as their interventions are seen as the imposition of certain instruments with no clear value instead of a response to a demand for assistance.

5.1.3.3 Value of the strategy?

Tensions resulting from the disagreement on the labelling of the anti-corruption document and the absence of a counterpart institution in 2008 show how the representations of both actors tend to undermine each other. I will further examine certain statements on the value of the anti-corruption strategy to shed light on the dilemmas faced by both actors and their difficulty to engage in a common production of coherence.

Statements on the value of the strategy bring to light the dilemma faced by the Georgian government: it cannot officially reject the strategy, but its evaluation of the real value of the document as an instrument to fight corruption is ambiguous. The formal adoption of the strategy implies that the government recognises the need for a specific anti-corruption strategy, but some statements by government officials and observers close to the government reveal that it also refuses to attribute a clear value to the instrument in terms of fighting corruption. It wants to demarcate its own approach to fighting corruption from the use of external anti-corruption instruments. For example, a high-level official in the Georgian government states:

“If I try to be as frank as possible, the anti-corruption strategy in part was a tribute to the request of the international community. It was not really the tool that we really daily used, of course you need to comply with formal criteria, you need to have an anti-corruption strategy, an anticorruption action plan and so on. But [...] I must be frank. It would be really mediocre to say that the anti-corruption strategy is a very good tool [...] I don't know any country where there was no political will and these tools were only paper. First and foremost and decisively there should be a political will and the second is, it is not only way to go [...] to follow the negative goal approach which is the mainstream. Organisation comes to country and says to fight against corruption you need strategy, action plan...”³²⁸

This account emphasises the centrality of the political will over the use of specific instruments to combat corruption. However, this position presents certain problems as shown in other statements on the strategy. For example, a representative of an international organisation questions the government's commitment: “*Although they have taken all the GRECO*

³²⁷ Interview with representative of international organisation, November 2008.

³²⁸ Interview with high official in the Georgian government, November 2008.

recommendations by heart, I have sometimes the feeling that they just do it because these are Council of Europe kind of conditions. They feel they have to do it to be on good side with the international community. What I lack is proper commitment to institutionalise these reforms.”³²⁹

In this account, the government is represented as being only motivated by the need to oblige the COE. At the same time, the representation of a local demand as a key element in the representation of international organisations is also undermined. The account of a former NGO head shows how the representations of both actors are ultimately undermined when the strategy’s value is questioned:

“It [the strategy] is some b...t that Bendukidze’s office did just to keep everyone happy. [...] Nobody cares about that, nobody looks at it, the same with the European Neighbourhood Action Plan. Nobody cares, sitting in Bendukidze’s office, it is not real. It’s just paper [...] They say you really need some paper, and the Georgians say ‘Ok, we’ll come up with some paper.’ ‘You have to own it, it has to be your paper, you need a plan, do it in your special way.’ ‘Yes, yes, we love it, we’ll do it, we just need some guidelines.’ ‘Ok, so here are a few ideas and stuff like that.’ ‘Ok, great, these are great ideas, give us some more ideas.’ And the next thing you know Europeans have written a piece of paper and the Georgians, ‘here is the piece of paper do you like it?’ And the Europeans ‘Great, finally I can come back to work.’ But, they can’t really have them to own it. Because they don’t know enough about the political environment to understand how things work.”³³⁰

This account describes the ownership of the strategy as a simple construction (“*they can’t really have them to own it*”), while it questions the reality of the strategy as a tool to fight corruption (“*It is not real. It’s just paper*”). The act of questioning the existence of a local demand has the effect of depriving the strategy of any reality; it becomes a “simple piece of paper”. However, questions on the ownership of the strategy will also have the effect of raising doubts on the government’s commitment and its motives to adopt anti-corruption instruments. Further statements on strategies illustrate the problem of both actors being exposed to questions about their motives. A former high official in an international organisation comments on strategies: “*I’m of the view that one of the major lessons to come out of the Rose Revolution for donors is never, ever write an anticorruption strategy for a government. Never.*”³³¹ The same observer says: “*Because it’s been written, one has been written by donors or by a government on the request of donors it has been a complete failure, we counted one time the number of anticorruption documents the government prepared for IMF, EU, World Bank and it was between 2000 and 2010, something like ten. The ownership was zero. It was ‘ok you want a strategy we will produce one, we have one, and give us the money’.* There was total cynicism

³²⁹ Interview with representative of donor organisation, October 2007.

³³⁰ Interview with former NGO head, June 2008.

³³¹ Interview with former high official in international organisation, December 2008.

about it.”³³² In these statements, the value of anti-corruption instruments is questioned, but these doubts also expose the government to accusations of cynicism.

The comments of a local expert working both with the government and international organisations further reveal contradictions in the government’s position:

“In my opinion, I would say it [the anti-corruption strategy] has nothing to do with fighting corruption. This is my personal opinion. If the government has the will, the prosecutor’s office has the main working units there, if the government has the will. If they have a strategy they will work better, it is not like this. They can do [it anyway]... If they have the will they can fight corruption, even without a strategy. But the strategy helps to put together, to coordinate their work. It’s a tool. This is also my opinion, it is a good tool to put those reforms together in one document, to publish it for NGOs. To have a more transparent way, a six-month report. A tool to coordinate and to make it more transparent.”³³³

He adds on the strategy:

“Good tool to coordinate the fight against corruption between units. But the main thing to fight corruption is the will to fight corruption. If there is no will, they can put a perfect strategy, a perfect action plan... There will still be corruption in the country [...] I can imagine that the government is fighting corruption without, but it is a good tool to be there. And to do it in a transparent way.”³³⁴

These statements on the strategy are contradictory. The real value of the strategy is questioned, as the expert emphasises the centrality of political will. At the same time, he sees a value in the strategy as a tool to coordinate reforms and render the fight against corruption more transparent. Thus, the government’s position oscillates between questioning the strategy’s utility, while acknowledging its use, but not directly in terms of its impact on corruption. Thus, in the expert’s statements, the strategy appears to be more a means to secure the approval of NGOs and international organisations on the government’s measures. A Georgian working in an international organisation further comments on the strategy: “*if the government has the will, they are going to do it without the strategy. But they don’t have to reinvent the bicycle. If you have a clear agenda you are doing it better. Better organized way and it is much more visible. The predictability is a very good thing. This is a public document, you can show this document to someone interested... you can show the document and say what kind of measures are going to be taken.*”³³⁵ In this statement, no clear anti-corruption impact is attributed to the strategy, but it is

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Interview with expert, December 2008.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Interview with representative of international organisation, September 2008.

seen as a means to render the government's commitment more visible (“*you can show this document to someone interested*”) and formulate it in the *language of donors* by incorporating elements of their rational planning culture such as predictability and organisation. At the same time, a certain anti-corruption knowledge is attributed to international organisations (“*you don't have to reinvent the bicycle*”).

The analysis of statements has shown how the strategy's value is questioned, but it is not directly rejected. These statements thus mirror the dilemmas in the government's position. It does not want to be seen as simply obliging donors, as its acceptance of anti-corruption instruments that it believes are devoid of any value would raise questions on its ability to set its own priorities. It contradicts its efforts to portray Georgia as a country capable of defining its own priorities. At the same time, it does not admit to an anti-corruption value in the strategy, as this admission would threaten the representation of political will as the key element in the fight against corruption. Statements on the strategy thus oscillate between scepticism (the government does not need the strategy if it has the will) and an acknowledgement of the document's benefits.

5.1.4 Conclusion: the limits of a common production of coherence and success

The example of the adoption of an anti-corruption strategy in Georgia shows the limits of a common production of coherence in the anti-corruption field.

First, it reveals the dilemma faced by the government. Indeed, the strategy undermines its representation of the fight against corruption as being successful and being the *direct result of strong political will and rapid non-bureaucratic action*. At the same time, the government cannot simply reject the strategy, as it represents an important and the single mode of validation of its anti-corruption commitment on an international arena. A Georgian working for an international organisation refers to this link between the strategy's adoption and the recognition of Georgia as a member of an international community of democratic states. He says: “*the international community has stimulated the government to have this in place. The question was 'do you want to be a part of us?' Then you have to do this, that, and that.*”³³⁶ As already stated, the Georgian government risked being subjected to a non-compliance procedure by GRECO if it would not adopt an anti-corruption strategy. The example of the strategy thus shows the difficulty of the Georgian government to sustain two different claims as being simultaneously a

³³⁶ Interview with expert, December 2008.

champion of anti-corruption efforts and a member of a community of democratic states. The government's attempt to assert its position in the anti-corruption field by emphasising the centrality of the political will and claiming a know-how in fighting corruption cannot be easily reconciled with its need for the approval of the Council of Europe on its reforms. Hence, the government appears to be "trapped" in the representation of international organisations: both the act of accepting and of rejecting the strategy implies that corruption is a problem in Georgia. By rejecting it, the government will raise suspicion on its commitment to fight corruption. By accepting it, it admits to the corruption problem and its lack of knowledge in fighting it. The analysis of statements on the value of the strategy has shown how the government tries to escape this dilemma by officially adopting the strategy, but implicitly questioning its use. But this attitude creates another problem, as the government can be suspected of cynicism. The strategy thus shows that the position of national governments in the global anti-corruption field is ambiguous and the local validation of the representation of international organisations presents some inherent dilemmas.

On the side of international organisations, the government's dilemma creates a contradiction in their representation, as it undermines a key element sustaining them in the form of a *local demand* for anti-corruption solutions. As the strategy cannot claim any intrinsic value in terms of its impact on corruption, the local demand constitutes this "magical power" that can transform the document from being a simple "piece of paper" to an effective tool to fight corruption.³³⁷ An "interpretive community" is needed for the strategy to be able to claim a reality. Only the local demand does protect the document from being exposed in counter-claims as a piece of paper devoid of any value and being imposed on a third country. The anti-corruption strategy further reveals the contradiction that arises from the juxtaposition of the two categories of "transfer of knowledge" and "political will". A former high official in an international organisation explains this contradiction: "*donors are talking about anti-corruption, but unless the government is serious it is a waste of time. If the government is serious, they don't need the donors!*"³³⁸ The value of anti-corruption instruments thus remains uncertain. Without political will, they have no clear value, as they risk not being implemented. With political will, they appear irrelevant.

We observe that while the process of validation is central to the production of success in the field, it creates contradictions in the representation of anti-corruption activity. Anti-corruption

³³⁷ A representative of an international organisation admits on the strategy's impact: "*Very hard to say, because you never know what is going to happen without. Setting out what needs to be done. Those things taken together can have an impact but how much I don't know.*" Interview with representative of international organisation, November 2008.

³³⁸ Interview with former high official in international organisation, December 2008.

instruments become “real” only when locally owned and a country’s performance acquires a “reality” only when recognised on an international arena. But the adoption of anti-corruption instruments threatens the image of performance and success that the Georgian government wants to project.

Their failure to find a fit between their representations and the difficulty of the government to adhere to the representation of international organisations render both actors vulnerable to counter-claims that question their real motives to engage in anti-corruption activity. The Georgian government’s adoption of the anti-corruption strategy constitutes a means of securing the approval of NGOs and international organisations on its reforms. By institutionalising reforms in a specific framework that is approved by other actors, the government protects itself from accusations that its actions are too spontaneous and thus possibly arbitrary and selective. It can present the fight against corruption as a *rational process* and not as being motivated by any particular interests.³³⁹ At the same time, we observe that even if it concurs with international organisations in presenting anti-corruption activity as a rational process resulting from the application of a technical knowledge, the government is not immune to counter-claims. Both in its acceptance and rejection of the strategy, the government can be accused of not being serious about fighting corruption. Indeed, the strategy’s adoption can be interpreted as a cynical gesture aimed at an international audience rather than a genuine and rational attempt to tackle the corruption problem. For example, an article in a Georgian newspaper reports on the opposition’s reaction to the establishment of an anti-corruption council in 2009. The article notes:

“President Saakashvili has appointed a new anti-corruption council composed entirely of governing party members. The opposition has protested against such an approach and announced that it does not trust this council to act impartially. [...] The opposition is particularly angry to see that the head of the State Chancellery, Kakha Bendukidze, is a member of the new council. Republican Levan Berdzenishvili thinks this is a mockery. New Rights representative Manana Nachkebia calls the appointment ‘cynicism’. One of the leaders of opposition party United Georgia, Eka Beselia, openly accuses him of being a source of corruption. Labour leader Shalva Natelashvili goes even further, suggesting that now nobody except Saakashvili and Bendukidze will be allowed to be corrupt.”³⁴⁰

³³⁹ The description by a Georgian official of Georgia’s “positive approach” as a specific way of fighting corruption can be seen as an attempt to rationalise this process *a posteriori* by deriving a practical knowledge from Georgia’s experience. The statement “we were learning by doing” may let appear the government’s actions as spontaneous and lacking direction. This spontaneity can lead to accusations of arbitrariness.

³⁴⁰ The Georgian Messenger: Controversy over Anti-corruption Council, 13 January 2009. The former State Minister for Reforms Coordination Kakha Bendukidze is often accused of having personally benefited from the privatisation of state-owned companies after the revolution as a result of the liberal reforms he has actively promoted. Opposition politicians see him as personifying the alleged corruption of the Saakashvili’s government. Their accusations of “cynicism” show that the adoption of anti-corruption instruments is rather seen as a “parody” in the Georgian domestic context.

The article remarks that the creation of the council “*satisfies the demand of the international community, and the current administration cares about this opinion a lot.*”³⁴¹ Both the representations of international organisations and of the Georgian government are undermined in this comment. Political motives are attributed to the government’s decision, while the adoption of anti-corruption instruments is not seen as corresponding to a genuine local demand. We observe how the act of unveiling political motives and calculations behind the strategy’s adoption has the effect of locating the anti-corruption field in the field of politics away from the development field. Seen from the angle of the development field, the strategy is an export of technocratic knowledge aimed at improving anti-corruption measures. However, it is attacked as a cynical attempt of the Georgian government to please donors when located in the field of politics. The logic behind the actions of anti-corruption actors is thus questioned instead of the field succeeding in obtaining an unquestioned adherence to the representation of rational calculations on the best ways to fight corruption as motivating the adoption of anti-corruption instruments.

As a result, not only is the government’s adherence to the representation of international organisations problematic, but this adherence does not immunise it from domestic accusations that it is pursuing political motives instead of engaging in a genuine and disinterested attempt to fight corruption with the help of donors. The strategy thus illustrates the difficulty for actors in the field to converge in a common production of coherence.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

5.2 The reform of the Chamber of Control of Georgia

The analysis of the reform of the audit institution Chamber of Control of Georgia (CCG) serves to further shed light on the paradoxes of the production of success in the anti-corruption field. The Chamber of Control reform represents an interesting arena to study interactions between anti-corruption actors. Indeed, the Chamber of Control was an integral part of the corruption system of the Shevardnadze's era in the 1990s and early 2000s, while its reform after the revolution aims at transforming it into a modern audit institution and an instrument to prevent corruption. The CCG's history thus lends an ambivalent role to the institution and this ambiguity about its place in the fight against corruption can give rise to conflicts about its reform. Different anti-corruption actors are involved in the reform of the Chamber of Control: donors, the government, NGOs and the opposition. All these actors adopt different positions towards the institution's reform. In my study of these actors' interactions, I will examine how the ambiguity created by the "two faces" of the CCG, as a modern audit institution and an instrument for the political exposure of corruption in Shevardnadze's times, leads to confusion in the representation of the actions of the different actors involved in its reform. This confusion which is strategically used by certain actors as a means of delegitimising others sheds light on the problematic of the representation of actions in the anti-corruption field and the nature of the struggles involving actors in the field.

In a first part, I examine the history and functions of the CCG as well as analysing its ambivalent role in the fight against corruption. In a second part, I study the position of different actors towards the institution's reform and the way the place they attribute to the CCG in the context of the fight against corruption fits with their representations. In a third part, I examine how these different positions translate in conflicts and incoherence in the reform measures that are implemented at the CCG. In particular, conflicts occur over the use of the CCG and its value as an instrument to fight corruption. These conflicts further reveal certain strategies of delegitimation in the anti-corruption field. Finally, I draw some conclusions on the nature of the anti-corruption field from my analysis of these conflicts and the incoherence in the series of reform steps undertaken at the CCG.

5.2.1 The Chamber of Control and its reform

5.2.1.1 Institution's history

The Chamber of Control was first designated as Georgia's supreme audit institution (SAI) in the 1921 constitution of the Republic of Georgia. It was re-established in 1992 and named as the supreme audit institution in the Georgian constitution of 1995. A law on the Chamber of Control was adopted in 1993 (amended in 1996) and replaced by a new law in 1997 (amended in 2004). Finally, a new law was passed again in December 2008. The CCG's independence is guaranteed in the Constitution and it is only accountable to the Georgian Parliament. The CCG's functions are defined in the article 97 of the Georgian constitution of 1995 that reads: "*The Chamber of Control of Georgia shall supervise the use and expenditure of state funds and of other material values. It shall also be authorised to examine activity of other state bodies of fiscal and economic control, submit proposals on improving tax legislation to the Parliament.*"³⁴²

Before the Rose Revolution, the CCG's informal activities significantly differed from its formal auditing duties. The CCG appears to have fulfilled two different functions within the corruption system of the Shevardnadze's years: collecting bribes from state agencies and recording or producing compromising material ("*kompromaty*") on political and economic rivals. For example, the Chamber of Control conducted an audit of the Ministry of Justice in 2001 and found instances of "unwarranted budget expenditures" including the payment of 8.000 Georgian laris towards the expenses of journalists accompanying the ministry on an official visit.³⁴³ Mikheil Saakashvili had occupied the post of Justice Minister in the audited period and was profiling himself as a serious opponent to the Shevardnadze's government in the time when the audit took place.³⁴⁴ The CCG's auditing report on the Ministry of Justice can thus be seen as an example of the practice of producing compromising material for political purposes.

After the revolution, reform measures were initiated at the CCG by three different chairmen with the official objective of transforming the Chamber into a modern supreme audit institution and bringing its work in line with international standards. Zurab Soselia, the first chairman after the revolution, reportedly took the initiative of enrolling the support of donor organisations in its

³⁴² Article 97 of the Georgian constitution of 1995.

³⁴³ See Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newslines 26/10/2001.

³⁴⁴ Saakashvili was also accused by the former CCG Chairman Sulhan Molashvili of using an unspecified amount of state funds to build houses for religious sects. See Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newslines 22/08/2002.

efforts to reform the institution.³⁴⁵ Soselia later became ill and was unable to perform its duties as a chairman. Levan Choladze replaced him in 2007 and undertook to reorganise the institution, notably by firing about 400 employees. Levan Bezhashvili took over the chairmanship in the summer of 2008. A new law on the Chamber of Control was passed in December 2008 and a strategic development plan for 2009-2011 was approved. The plan outlines as objectives: “*to build capacity of the CCG and harmonize its activity with modern western systems; to gradually introduce and coordinate modern forms of external state audit, thus improving management of state funds; to boost the trust of Georgian population toward the CCG through increased professionalism and transparent activity.*”³⁴⁶

5.2.1.2 The Chamber’s functions

The CCG as a supreme audit institution is responsible for the audit of government revenue and expenditure and ensuring the proper use of state resources. Traditionally, audit institutions are responsible for “checking the books” or controlling whether state revenues are spent in accordance with legal procedures. Financial audits focus on reviewing the accounting procedures and financial statements of public organisations, while compliance audits scrutinise the *legality* of the transactions made by these organisations. In recent decades, audit institutions have expanded their activities to scrutinise the efficiency and effectiveness of programmes by conducting performance or *value for money* audits.³⁴⁷ A modern state institution gives recommendations to state agencies to help them achieve the most cost efficient use of public funds. It has a limited investigative authority, as the prosecution of corruption cases is generally undertaken by law enforcement agencies or other specialised anti-corruption agencies. In Georgia, the CCG conducts “controls” (“*revisia*” in Georgian) of state agencies focusing on the respect of accounting procedures, while it does not conduct any performance audits.³⁴⁸ The new law adopted in December 2008 foresees the introduction of performance audits as from 2012. Before the revolution, the CCG was acting more as a financial control body with certain investigative functions. One former project manager at the CCG explains: “*During the Shevardnadze’s period, it [the CCG] was mainly a control organisation with limited audit competences and skills, mainly it was a financial management control. It was an institution for*

³⁴⁵ Interview with former project manager, December 2008.

³⁴⁶ Chamber of Control of Georgia: Strategic Development Plan for 2009-2011, 2009, p. 4.

³⁴⁷ See Evans, Alastair: The role of supreme audit institutions in combating corruption, U4 helpdesk answer, U4 Anti-corruption resource center, 18 June 2008, p. 2.

³⁴⁸ In the following, I will use the term ‘control’ instead of ‘audit’.

*controlling budgetary funds, for monitoring budgetary funds [...] 'revisia' is the Georgian term, it means ongoing financial monitoring in accounting. This is the definition maybe.*³⁴⁹

The CCG conducts controls according to an annual plan, but the performance of controls outside this plan can also be requested by other state organs. While most of the requests should normally come from the Parliament, the prosecutor's office reportedly often issued requests after the revolution.³⁵⁰ The new law of December 2008 foresees that only the President and the Parliament will have the right to ask for unplanned audits as well as the opposition twice a year during a parliamentary session.

Certain limits exist to the CCG's powers. First, the institution's competencies were not clearly defined prior to the new law of December 2008. The 2005 CCG law conflicted with other laws limiting its ability to perform controls in state enterprises, the local budget and taxes and customs. A law on local self-governance adopted in 2005 allowed local authorities hiring private auditing companies to control local government bodies.³⁵¹ A new tax code adopted in 2004 has a clause on "tax confidentiality" that prevented the Chamber from controlling the taxpayers' documents as well as the activities of the tax and customs agencies. In contradiction with the article 97 of the Georgian constitution, the CCG was not included in the list of agencies defined by the new tax code that are allowed to control state economic and fiscal bodies.³⁵² Finally, the CCG had no authority to control state enterprises following a ruling of the Georgian Supreme Court. The CCG reportedly asked the Parliament to clarify its competencies, but did not obtain a response from the legislative body.³⁵³

Second, the CCG is perceived as being only formally independent. Some observers suspect that the executive or other political figures might be interfering with the work of the Chamber.³⁵⁴ For example, one NGO representative suggests that the CCG employees are asked to perform certain controls or avoiding others as a result of informal phone calls.³⁵⁵ One opposition member says about the CCG's independence: *"Today government, parliament and CCG is like one team, so it's kind of funny that one hand would steal and one hand would control it [...] It is one team, so if they ask to do a control, they will really do it, and if they ask to be nice, they would do the*

³⁴⁹ Interview with former project manager, December 2008.

³⁵⁰ Interview with project manager at the CCG, November 2008.

³⁵¹ Interview with NGO representative, December 2008.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Interviews with former and current project managers at the CCG and NGO representatives, November-December 2008.

³⁵⁵ Interview with NGO representative, December 2008.

same. They are kind of doing somebody's request. They have no opportunity to decide who they are going to control."³⁵⁶ He further explains that the CCG reports are written in an opaque language that makes it difficult for non-experts to read them.³⁵⁷ He comments on the relevancy of these reports: "After the revolution, for some time it was kind of a better situation, but then the situation changed for the worst. After that nobody even tried to discuss the reports of the CCG. Nobody was asking the Parliament if it is real what is written in these reports, nobody was interested in it. Nobody cared."³⁵⁸ An ad-hoc commission established to examine the activities of the CCG in 2005 gave a negative assessment of the reports in an opinion: "the majority of reports sent by the Chamber bear formal character and does not contain any suggestions."³⁵⁹ The opacity of the reports can be seen as indicating that the CCG controllers are acting under different pressures. They try to avoid revealing corruption facts, while producing at the same time reports that are factually correct. Indeed, they could lose their position should another government come to power and find errors in their reports.

As a further proof of the lack of independence of the CCG, some observers claim that the nomination of the Chairman of the Chamber is the result of a bargaining between the President and the Parliament. The Chairman of the CCG is formally elected by the Georgian Parliament on the proposal of the Parliament speaker for a period of five years.³⁶⁰ One consultant having worked in different public agencies in Georgia says about the nomination: "You have to know that always in fact the chairperson of parliament has a special conversation, a special consultation with the President when he chooses the candidate. It is two persons. The parliament is choosing the candidate for chairperson, they chose together, maybe [there is a] conversation with the Prime Minister as well. Three persons decide and the parliament votes."³⁶¹ He further explains: "the chairman of the CCG is an important position: you have to oversee the government's budget execution, to oversee the money, to oversee the central bodies, the central agencies. They have to control the Ministry of Defense funds and the Ministry of Finance funds. It is important to have someone loyal, close to the government and not to civil society."³⁶² An article further reports the opposition's reaction to the nomination of Choladze in 2007: "The opposition approves Choladze's candidature, though states that the decision has been made by the President and not by the Parliament. According to the statement of the opposition leaders,

³⁵⁶ Interview with member of opposition party, November 2008.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Georgian Young Lawyers' Association: The Georgian government under the sunshine, Final Report VI, 2007, p. 9.

³⁶⁰ Article 9 of the Law on the Chamber of Control (2008).

³⁶¹ Interview with former project manager, December 2008.

³⁶² Ibid.

*Bejuashvili's team [former Foreign Minister] is strengthening by appointing Choladze.*³⁶³ When the first Chairman after the revolution Zurab Soselia became ill, it took a certain time to nominate its follower. Observers suspect that the nomination of Levan Choladze as new Chairman represented a compromise between President Mikheil Saakashvili and former Parliament speaker Nino Burdjanadze.³⁶⁴ At the time of his nomination, Choladze was acting as the deputy of former Foreign Minister Gela Bejuashvili and can be seen as a compromise figure.

A further indication of a possible interference of the executive in the work of the CCG concerns a former deputy chairman of Zurab Soselia at the Chamber, Roman Bokeria. Bokeria was apparently committed to the reform of the CCG into a modern audit institution. An article of 2005 notes: *“Genuinely upstanding government ministries are about as common in Georgia as honest tax returns. Which makes cherubic, dashing Roman Bokeria, 31, all the more conspicuous. As deputy chairman of Georgia's Chamber of Control, the equivalent of the Government Accountability Office in the U.S., Bokeria regularly flags wrongdoing at state-owned businesses and in the offices of fellow bureaucrats. His phone messages often contain loosely veiled threats about his career and life.”*³⁶⁵ He later resigned from his position to pursue a Master's degree in the United States. Opinions diverge on the motives behind his resignation: certain observers accuse him of corruption, while others believe that the executive did not welcome his reform drive.³⁶⁶ One consultant in Georgia argues that Bokeria believed that corruption allegations would be fabricated against him. He says: *“reports were produced by the CCG that implicated various parts of the government in corruption activities. Suddenly there was a case of corruption within the CCG that was fabricated. Roman Bokeria was chastised out of the country because he knew very well that he would be made a victim of that. The idea was to create a corruption scandal in the CCG to distract the attention from reports inside the CCG that implicated ministries in corruption. It was also [meant] to give a reason to come with a new chairman.”*³⁶⁷

³⁶³ Imedinews: “Levan Choladze to be appointed to position of Chairman of Chamber of Control of Georgia”, 7 June 2007 <http://geotimes.ge/index.php?m=home&newsid=4237> (accessed January 2009). The appointment is seen as a means to strengthen the position of former Foreign Minister Gela Bejuashvili in the government. It is seen as following from political motives.

³⁶⁴ Interview with former project manager, April 2008.

³⁶⁵ See Swibel, Matthew: The bribe buster, Forbes.com, 1 October 2005.

<http://www.forbes.com/forbes/2005/0110/078sidebar.html> (accessed May 2010)

³⁶⁶ Interviews with current and former project managers and former consultants at the CCG, November-December 2008.

³⁶⁷ Interview with international consultant in Georgia, Tbilisi, September 2008. (Zane Kanderian)

5.2.1.3 The role of the CCG in the fight against corruption

A functioning state audit institution contributes to the prevention of corruption by ensuring that public finances are being well managed and spent. It can prevent corruption cases in the public administration such as illegal transactions or falsified statements by acting as a deterrent for corrupt behaviours. It serves to enhance the transparency and accountability of the public sector. An audit institution can also identify and publicise areas where corruption risks are higher.

These functions of a modern audit institution largely differ from the role played by the CCG in the Shevardnadze's period. A Eurasianet article quotes opposition leader David Usupashvili referring to the use of the Chamber against former opposition politicians Mikheil Saakashvili and Zurab Zhvania in 2002:

“”The Chamber of Control, which was created to be a parliamentary vehicle overseeing government spending, has instead become an instrument of presidential power”, explained David Usupashvili, formerly Shevardnadze's chief legal adviser. “The Chamber of Control has a clear plan to discredit everyone around Saakashvili and Zhvania.””³⁶⁸

A report on anti-corruption activities in Georgia also reports on the political use of the CCG:

“Existing level of corruption in Georgia and the government's acceptance of corruption in its day-to-day dealings severely challenged the normal functioning of all public institutions, including the Chamber of Control and Procuracy, two agencies responsible for detecting and prosecuting corruption crimes. Officials of different levels shared the money and property acquired through the committed legal offences with each other. These deal cuts did not go unnoticed by the auditing and investigating state agencies, however, they did not hurry with publicizing the detected malpractices. The Chamber of Control and Procuracy chose to keep the information in files, for later release, in case someone would decide to go against the System. This way the auditing and investigative agencies fully dropped their primary functions of strengthening the law enforcement, and simply turned into the System's punishing machines against its opponents.”³⁶⁹

In these reports, the CCG is depicted as a political instrument with the function of discrediting rivals through the exposure of corruption dealings. Before the revolution, the CCG also acted *a posteriori* by disclosing cases of mismanagement of public funds rather than preventing these practices by giving recommendations on a more efficient use of funds. The CCG resembled more a financial police with the powers to punish officials. The new Strategic Development Plan of

³⁶⁸ Stier (2002).

³⁶⁹ Eurasia Foundation (2004), pp. 1-2.

the CCG for 2009-2011 notes this previous role by saying that the Chamber is still perceived as a “*punitive agency*”.³⁷⁰

After the revolution, the function of collecting bribes from state agencies appears to have disappeared, but the institution is still perceived as having the potential to be used for political purposes. For example, the former Foreign Minister in the Saakashvili’s government and prominent opposition politician Salome Zurbishvili declared to the media in 2007 that the Chamber might be preparing an audit of the Foreign Ministry in order to find compromising evidences of corruption against her.³⁷¹ Zurbishvili was dismissed from her position as Foreign Minister in 2005 and joined the opposition ranks by founding her own political party “Georgia’s Way”. This declaration shows that the perception exists that the Chamber could be used to discredit political rivals. The CCG issued an official denial on its website, a sign that it took this declaration seriously.³⁷²

Thus, it is possible to draw a distinction between the old CCG as a *political tool for the exposure of corruption* and a new CCG as an *audit institution and an instrument to prevent corruption through a better management of public funds*. This distinction is important, as it sheds light on the different positions towards the CCG reform in Georgia.

5.2.2 The actors’ positions towards the CCG and its reform

Two main anti-corruption actors are involved in the reform of the CCG: donor organisations and the Georgian government. NGOs and opposition parties also take part in the debate on the Chamber’s reform. I will examine the different positions of these actors towards the institution’s reform.

³⁷⁰ Chamber of Control of Georgia (2009), p. 6.

³⁷¹ An article notes: “*United Opposition’s candidate for Prime-Minister’s position, said that the Chamber of Control discovered some documents according to the government’s order. “The documents demonstrate that I was taking journalists abroad during official visits while I was a Minister of Foreign Affairs; they claim it was a crime,” said Zurbishvili.*”, in Humanrights.ge: United opposition blames government for persecution, Humanrights.ge, 7 December 2007.

³⁷² The statement reads: “*The Chamber of Control of Georgia refuses categorically the information spread by the mass-media and states that the Chamber of Control has not carried out the complex revision of the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2007 and is not intending to conduct such revision in the nearest future either.*” Available at: http://www.control.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=851&info_id=31600 (accessed January 2008).

5.2.2.1 Donor organisations

Three main development organisations are involved or have been involved in the reform of the CCG: the World Bank, the German development cooperation agency GTZ, and the UNDP. Donor activities at the CCG are aimed at *strengthening the institution's capacities* through the training of staff, the development of an audit methodology and an audit manual and the support to the reform of the Chamber's legal basis and its organisational structure. The GTZ project "supporting the Central Auditing Authority of Georgia (CAAG)" is running since 2003. The project's objective is that "*the utilisation of public funds is better controlled by the Georgian Chamber of Control together with the Georgian parliament.*"³⁷³ Its expected outcome is defined as "*a transparent, efficient and effective control of the use of public funds.*"³⁷⁴ The project aims at improving the functioning of the institution by providing consultancy on the CCG's legal basis and its organisational structure, training the CCG personnel to ensure that auditing procedures respect international standards and developing an audit methodology. The project shows how development organisations view the question of the CCG's reform and its contribution to the prevention of corruption as a *problem of capacities*. A project document notes: "*due to its insufficient legal and technical competencies, the CAAG can do little to fight corruption.*"³⁷⁵ The project document further establishes a link between improved auditing procedures and an increased transparency in the use of public funds: "*new auditing procedure already increased the transparency of the use of public funds, which in turn limited the willingness to be corrupt.*"³⁷⁶ The document further notes that a better functioning CCG can reduce incentives for corrupt behaviours: "*an increase in transparency and obligations to report the acquisition and use of public revenues reduces the willingness to be corrupt.*"³⁷⁷ The strengthening of the CCG is further linked to the achievement of broader development goals. The document says: "*the improvement of the controlling function of the Georgian Parliament can support the country's development of democracy*"³⁷⁸ and "*a better function of the CAAG is directly relevant to good governance and indirectly relevant to poverty reduction.*"³⁷⁹

By viewing the CCG's reform as a problem of capacities in the form of the lack of qualified personnel and inadequate auditing procedures, development organisations tend to *depoliticise* the

³⁷³ Project's presentation on the GTZ website available at: <http://www.gtz.de/en/weltweit/europa-kaukasus-zentralasien/georgien/25888.htm> (accessed January 2010).

³⁷⁴ GTZ: Evaluation of ongoing project 2006 "support to Central Auditing Authority of Georgia", Brief report, 29 May 2007, p. 5.

³⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 4.

³⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 6.

³⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

³⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 3.

³⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 5.

institution. They tend to associate the reform of public institutions with a change of incentive structures.³⁸⁰ Further, the institution's weakness is attributed to legal and technical deficiencies that can be improved through the provision of expert knowledge. As a result, donor organisations at the CCG do not appear to consider the potential use of the Chamber as a political instrument for the exposure of corruption. The GTZ project document mentions the problem of the political interference by saying: "*the risk remains that for example a blockade of the democratization process limits the CAAG's authority and its independence.*"³⁸¹ While acknowledging that the lack of democratic commitment of the government could affect the CCG's independence, donors still not consider the problem of the use of the CCG as a political tool. Hence, donor organisations assume a separation between the public administration and the sphere of politics. The administrative capacities and the good management techniques that are being introduced through donor interventions do not consider the political content of what is being managed.³⁸² Bureaucratic decisions are assumed to be apolitical. Only the problem of the restriction of the CCG's powers is being considered, but not of the political content of the daily bureaucratic decisions at the CCG. However, party politics appear to play a role in the CCG's functioning since employees apparently show loyalty to certain government members or can be subject to conflicting loyalties.

The vision of the CCG's reform as a problem of capacities is consistent with the way international organisations represent their activities in the anti-corruption field. The prevention of corruption is essentially a problem of knowledge, while countries in transition such as Georgia suffer from this deficit of knowledge and capacities. The introduction of adequate standards through trainings and consultancy projects will ensure the better functioning of public institutions. In the case of the CCG, the provision of expert knowledge will improve the institution's capacity to conduct professional audits which in turn will contribute to the prevention of corruption. The CCG's reform in itself is further consistent with the representation of the fight against corruption as a problem of the lack of control on the state. It fits with the

³⁸⁰ Tisne and Smilov note how the reform of public institutions in Balkan countries is disconnected from the political context in which these reforms take place: "*The institutional reform projects that we analysed aimed at reducing corruption as a by-product of the institutional changes that they would implement. By changing the incentive structures provided by the institutional environment and the working ethos of public servants and employees, corruption would be reduced in the medium and the long run. By implication, the assumption was not that the sources of corruption lay in external political, socio-economic forces shaping their work environment. The assumption was that institutions could be fixed more or less separately from those underlying forces.*" In Tisne and Smilov (2004), pp. 54-55.

³⁸¹ GTZ (2007), p. 6.

³⁸² See Polzer (2001), p. 20. Polzer quotes a statement from the World Bank on the management of the public sector: "*The concern here is not with the exercise of state powers in the broad sense, but specifically with the appropriate management of the public sector and the creation of an enabling environment for the private sector.*", Ibid.

definition of corruption as a problem of the abuse of public office. Independent control institutions are seen as playing a major role in preventing corruption in the state administration.

5.2.2.2 The opposition

Opposition parties are not directly involved in the reform of the CCG, but they position themselves in the debate on its reform. They are in favour of strengthening the institution. For example, an opposition member notes that the CCG exists only formally and complains about its lack of real powers. He says:

“In Georgia, we have a lot of institutions because of Western tradition, because France has a CCG and something like that and as a European country, Georgia should also have it. Because you have judicial system, we also have. But really it does not work in Georgia. Because in France these institutions are independent from the government. In Georgia, they are just dependent from the government. So the Georgian government wants these institutions for propaganda for Western countries, we have CCG, we have judiciary, public TV, but really they are fully under the government.”³⁸³

The opposition member further says that the CCG should be placed under the control of the opposition. He explains “*because when the CCG is controlled by the opposition they are always motivated to do research. Now they do not have this motivation.*”³⁸⁴ A Transparency International Georgia report further notes that “*Kakha Kukava of the opposition Conservative Party told TI that giving the parliamentary opposition control over the Audit Chamber would render the institution a lot more efficient than it is now.*”³⁸⁵

An opposition member comments on the role played by the CCG before the revolution:

“It was not an excellent job what they did, they did not check the Interior Ministry that was under Shevardnadze, but at least they checked and had other ministries [under control]... we had a lot of very scandalous research and at the time this CCG was at the centre of media attention... Maybe somebody liked it and somebody not, but there were always scandalous reports. Now you can never find, you can search in *google*, you cannot find any news about the CCG.”³⁸⁶

He further explains how the Shevardnadze’s regime produced a “natural system of checks-and-balances”:

³⁸³ Interview with leader of opposition party, December 2008.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Transparency International Georgia: Anti-corruption policy: recommendations by civil society representatives and experts, 30 March 2009, p. 4.

³⁸⁶ Interview with leader of opposition party, December 2008.

“You cannot imagine that in Shevardnadze’s period we had democracy, but we had a natural system of checks and balances because now the problem is that Saakashvili, one person is controlling everything, NGOs, media. At that time, there was no monopoly under the Shevardnadze team. Shevardnadze was the most powerful person in Georgia, but there were other very powerful persons, businessmen, some natural checks and balances. Some institutions were controlled by a political team, other institutions controlled by other teams. Media channels were controlled by political groups. So we had competition. And now everything is controlled by one family, the Saakashvili family.”³⁸⁷

In these accounts, the old CCG of the Shevardnadze’s years is being attributed a certain function. Its enhanced powers are being acknowledged. Its role in producing “scandalous reports” is seen as a potential deterrent against corrupt behaviours. The description of the “system of checks-and-balances” in the Shevardnadze’s years reveals that the CCG and its production of evidences of corruption are recognised as having supporting a “healthy” process of competition between political groupings. Thus, certain segments of the opposition appear to understand the CCG’s role as acting as a kind of Damocles sword with the ability to fall on every politician without distinction. A certain democratic function is thus attributed to the old CCG in its function of exposing corruption and deterring corrupt behaviours. Competition in the form of an equal access to the CCG’s function of exposure is seen as discouraging these behaviours. This vision fits into the narrative on corruption that distinguishes between the “elite corruption” of the post-revolutionary period and the more “democratic” and equal access to the resource corruption and its exposure in the Shevardnadze’s years. By being visible, corruption could be used as a resource and its exposure fed the competition between different political groups. Furthermore, this vision of the CCG’s role reveals a notion of the fight against corruption as being inevitably politicised. The CCG should thus be placed under the control of the opposition to ensure that it will control high-level corruption in the government instead of acting as a bureaucratic façade without real powers.

5.2.2.3 The Georgian government

The Georgian government’s position towards the reform of the CCG is more difficult to read. While the government appears to favour a reform of the CCG into a modern audit institution as shown in the different reform steps initiated since the revolution, the slow pace of reforms reveals uncertainty in the way the reform should be handled and a certain lack of commitment. For example, a new law on the CCG needed to be passed in 2005 in order to provide a legal

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

framework for the institution's reform. However, the law was passed only in December 2008. Further, the reform steps undertaken under the various chairmanships since the revolution do not appear to follow from a clear strategy, but present certain contradictions.

Contrary to donor organisations, the government and the different managements at the CCG appear to consider the role of the institution in Shevardnadze's times. The objectives of the CCG strategic development plan for 2009-2011 read: "*to build capacity of the CCG and harmonize its activity with modern western systems; to gradually introduce and coordinate modern forms of external state audit, thus improving management of state funds; to boost the trust of Georgian population toward the CCG through increased professionalism and transparent activity.*"³⁸⁸ These objectives align themselves with the vision of donor organisations of building the CCG's capacities and introducing Western auditing standards, but the problem of the lack of public trust in the institution is also mentioned. Hence, the strategic plan further identifies the problem of trust as a key aspect in the reform of the institution: "*the mistrust towards the CCG among political groups, even state institutions and the population of Georgia: the CCG is perceived as a punitive agency*".³⁸⁹ A member of the new management further explains this lack of trust in the CCG: "*The CCG was identified with bribery from society and executive.*"³⁹⁰ Another member of the new management notes that "*the CCG was part of and a mechanism in a system that was corrupt*", referring to the corruption system of the Shevardnadze's years.³⁹¹

These statements reveal that the CCG is associated with the corruption system of the previous government, while the executive's position towards the Chamber is characterised by a certain mistrust. This mistrust can be seen in the wave of forced resignation that has characterised the chairmanship of Levan Choladze in 2007 and that I will analyse further. The restructuring of the institution was apparently motivated by the belief that it was corrupt and a change of staff was needed. In the view of the government and the CCG management, the CCG is as much a *target of the fight against corruption as a potential instrument to prevent it*. The government does not share the opposition's view that attributes a certain anti-corruption role to the CCG in its previous shape.

On the contrary, the old CCG with its potential to expose corruption for political purposes appears problematic for the government after the revolution. In Shevardnadze's times, the

³⁸⁸ Chamber of Control of Georgia (2009), p. 4.

³⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 6.

³⁹⁰ Interview with member of new management at CCG, November 2008.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

function of exposing corruption served the political game and was not overtly damaging to the previous government. It participated in an informal system that promoted corrupt behaviours. Hence, the exposure of political corruption encouraged the social acceptance of corrupt practices. Corruption was publicly condemned, but informally encouraged. As a report on anti-corruption activities in Georgia notes: “*while continuously declaring a crusade against corruption, Shevardnadze clearly tolerated and even showed special support for the state officials, constantly accused in media investigations for dirty deals.*”³⁹² Political accusations and counter-accusations of corruption thus created the impression that everyone was participating in it and no-one was to be trusted. In post-revolutionary Georgia, these accusations appear more damaging, as the government has built its legitimacy on the promise of eradicating corruption and on the image of integer and honest high-level officials.

The CCG reform does not easily fit in the representation that the Georgian government projects of its anti-corruption activities. I have already quoted the description of the government’s vision by an opposition politician: “*We don’t need a special agency, we are already good guys, educated, why do we need an agency? We are already good, honest and knowledgeable. All the government is an anti corruption agency.*”³⁹³ The CCG reform does not fit well with the representation of success in anti-corruption as resulting from *strong political will and rapid non-bureaucratic action*. Further, the institution’s reform contradicts the libertarian agenda that favours the abolition of corrupt regulatory agencies that are seen as not having any real capacity to deliver public goods and services.

5.2.2.4 Non-governmental organisations

While not being directly involved in the CCG reform, NGOs participate in the debate on its reform. For example, the NGO Georgian Young Lawyers’s Association (GYLA) has conducted a project aimed at monitoring the CCG’s work within its campaign “the Georgian government under the sunshine” in 2007 and has published the results in a report.³⁹⁴ Similarly to donor organisations, NGOs support a strengthening of the CCG and its reform into a modern audit institution. They appear to consider not only the formal restrictions that are put on the CCG’s powers in the absence of a legal basis, but also possible informal pressures. For example, the organisation GYLA comments on its monitoring’s results by saying: “*the state restricts the*

³⁹² Eurasia Foundation (2004), p. 1.

³⁹³ Interview with opposition leader, June 2007.

³⁹⁴ Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association: The Georgian government under the sunshine, Final Report VI, 2007.

*functions of the Chamber both legally and illegally.*³⁹⁵ At the same time, the limited activity of NGOs concerning the Chamber's reform indicates that the issue has not attracted the interest of the NGO community. One possible explanation for this lack of interest is that NGOs see themselves as fulfilling the role of a watchdog organisation through their budget monitoring projects. Hence, they fulfil the function of the audit institution and can even see the Chamber as a "competitor" in the field of monitoring. By profiling themselves as "neutral watchdogs", they seek to fill the void created by inefficient controlling institutions.

5.2.2.5 Differences in the positions towards the CCG reform

The different actors diverge in their view of the CCG's role in the fight against corruption. Donor organisations do not appear to consider the distinction between the role played by the CCG before and after the revolution. Opposition parties appear to acknowledge the function of the old CCG in exposing corruption. While both actors diverge in their actual vision of the CCG, they seemingly converge in their desire to strengthen the institution as a democratic counterweight that can ensure an effective control on government spending. The government's position towards the CCG's reform is more ambivalent. While seemingly adhering to the representation of donor organisations and the objective of modernising the CCG, it also acknowledges the institution's previous role in the corruption system of the Shevardnadze's government. These actors thus adopt different positions towards the question of the use of the CCG and its value as an instrument to prevent corruption.

5.2.3 Conflicts and reform steps at the CCG

In the following, I will analyse certain conflicts and reform steps at the CCG to examine how differences in the actors' positions translate in conflicts and incoherence in the reform measures implemented at the Chamber. This incoherence reveals the difficulty of the Georgian government and donor organisations to engage in a common production of success.

First, I will analyse a confrontation between the CCG and the Ministry of Education in 2007. Strategies of delegitimisation used during this conflict show how political motives are attributed

³⁹⁵ GYLA press release: The Georgian government under the sunshine – the final reports VI and VII, 24 September 2007. Available at: http://www.gyla.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=168:the-georgian-government-under-the-sunshine-the-final-reports-vi-and-vii&catid=45:news-eng&Itemid=186&_ka (accessed January 2010).

to actors. The chairmanship of Levan Choladze in 2007-2008 brings to light conflicts between the CCG management and donor organisations, showing how the representations of these two actors tend to undermine each other. Finally, the chairmanship of Levan Bezhashvili starting from the summer of 2008 can be read as a government's attempt to secure the approval of international organisations and sheds light on the problematic of the process of validation in the anti-corruption field.

5.2.3.1 The Ministry of Education scandal

A scandal involving the CCG and the Ministry of Education (MoE) broke out in 2007 shortly before the chairmanship of Levan Choladze. The scandal caught the attention of the media. Interpretations of the events that provoked it and the motivations of the different actors involved in it differ. The root of the scandal was a negative report written by the CCG on the MoE that pointed to some irregularities in the spending of money allocated for education programmes. The CCG noted the absence of accounting documents proving that funds allocated to buying material for Tbilisi schools had been effectively spent for this purpose. These funds were allocated within a project for secondary education co-financed by the World Bank. In the account of a former MoE employee, school representatives attended an exhibition presenting the material and put together a list of the material they needed.³⁹⁶ This material was later sent to the schools through a private company. The school material was supposed to be handed in directly to the school director. This happened in the majority of the schools, but in some schools the material was left to the education department. As a result, the MoE could not provide a record of signatures from every single school director stating that the material had been received.³⁹⁷ The CCG wrote in its report that the material had not reached certain schools. According to the former MoE employee, the ministry suggested to the CCG to go to each school and ask whether the material had been received.³⁹⁸ The CCG apparently refused to go to the schools or check with the private company whether the material had been indeed distributed.³⁹⁹ The former MoE employee explains that the Ministry was ready to collect attestations in each school, but the CCG answered that they had no time to wait for these documents.⁴⁰⁰ The World Bank had conducted an evaluation of the project, but the CCG apparently refused to consider the evaluation's results on the ground that the

³⁹⁶ Interview with former employee of the Ministry of Education, November 2008.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Ibid. The private company in charge of distributing the material had asked each school to provide a document attesting that the material had been received, but this attestation apparently did not specify which material had been distributed.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

document was written in English.⁴⁰¹ In the account of a World Bank employee, the financial management problems at the MoE were more a case of poor filing than a case of mismanagement.⁴⁰² Hence, the World Bank evaluation did not report any irregularities or cases of mismanagement at the Ministry.⁴⁰³

Different stories circulate about the CCG report and the subsequent scandal involving the MoE. These interpretations differ on the question of the *impartiality of the report's findings*. Does the exposure of a potential corruption case in the Ministry follow from certain political purposes and was the CCG acting under the order of some political groups or is the report only the result of a routine work? The CCG employees themselves deny that the institution was following any interests when producing the report.⁴⁰⁴ They argue that the report was simply used by opposition parties to create a scandal before an elections' period, as it served them to mobilise teachers against the government.⁴⁰⁵ Observers in the opposition ranks suspect the existence of political interests, but they advance two different explanations. One opposition member claims that the former Parliament speaker Nino Burdjanadze and other government members were interested in sidelining the Education Minister Kakha Lomaia as a potential candidate for the post of Prime Minister.⁴⁰⁶ One opposition member explains: "*When the CCG has something against a Minister, it means that somebody in a very high position has something against the Minister for Education.*"⁴⁰⁷ The same opposition member says, "*At [the] time Nino [Burdjanadze] maybe or people from Nino's team asked the CCG to control the Ministry of Education and to throw out Mr. Lomaia.*"⁴⁰⁸ The same opposition member explains that the CCG acted after it received a signal whose origin is unclear: "*They control one time in the year and there is no problem with that. But sometimes they have permission to control you once in a year, anytime they like. This was this situation [...], after some signal they had and nobody knows what it was.*"⁴⁰⁹ Another opposition representative mentions the existence of political pressures, but in a different context.⁴¹⁰ He says that the CCG employees sent their conclusions on the MoE to the opposition

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Interview with World Bank employee, December 2008.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Interview with current and former members of the CCG management, November-December 2008.

⁴⁰⁵ Interview with employee of the CCG, November 2008. See also Civil Georgia: Opposition Demands Education Minister's Resignation, Civil.ge, 29 May 2007.

⁴⁰⁶ Interviews with opposition representatives, November-December 2008.

⁴⁰⁷ Interview with member of opposition party, December 2008.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid. He also attributes the report to a possible conflict between different groupings in the ruling National Movement party. He refers to these groups as the 'aristocracy' and the 'proletariat' of the National Movement, the 'aristocracy' referring to 'Tbilisians' (Lomaia and other former members of the NGO Liberty Institute) and the 'proletariat' being composed of provincial party members. This inner struggle was also revealed during a conflict over the nomination of the president of the football association in 2007.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ Interview with member of opposition party, November 2008.

faction in the Parliament, as they feared that someone in a high position would try to hide these documents.⁴¹¹ They apparently sent the documents anonymously to avoid risking losing their positions. In this account, the CCG report is correct, but its employees are aware of the risk of political interference. A consultant having worked in different state agencies in Georgia also views the report as correct, but suspects that the threat of pressures from the executive interfered with the work of the CCG. He says: “*They [the CCG employees] tried to do a loyal report. In reality it was a much more difficult situation, much more facts to be audited. But I think they produced a diplomatic and loyal report.*”⁴¹² He adds: “*They don’t want to be in conflict with the President and the government.*”⁴¹³ In this account, the CCG report is not viewed as incorrect, but neither is it correct, as this observer implies that certain facts were consciously removed. The CCG report thus appears to be an exercise in hiding facts behind an appearance of truthfulness. Finally, a person working at the CCG describes another scenario: certain members of the close governmental team not including former Parliament speaker Burdjanadze were interested in sidelining Lomaia or refraining his ambitions, but the opposition was quicker in using the CCG’s findings for its own benefits.⁴¹⁴ He says that these government members were hoping to kill two birds with one stone: sidelining Lomaia while showing that the CCG acts independently and no politician is above the law in post-revolutionary Georgia. These government members would have shown the government’s ability to “punish” one of them. However, the opposition was quicker in using the report, while Lomaia made the unusual move of refusing to sign it and defending himself against these accusations by trying to discredit the CCG. He resigned after the scandal, but only after the opposition had used the report to discredit its reforms.

These different accounts reveal that *hidden political motives are being easily attributed to the different actors*. For example, the scenario consisting of killing two birds with one stone narrated by one observer actually reveals how the government has difficulties acting without being suspected of following political interests. Even by applying the law and demanding the resignation of Lomaia on the basis of the CCG report, it would be suspected of promoting the personal ambitions of the team in power and of using formal institutions to punish political rivals, a practice reminiscent of the Shevardnadze’s times. As a result, Lomaia’s resignation is inevitably being perceived as resulting from power games, rather than being a necessary response to the facts reported by the CCG. The CCG is perceived as a tool in the fight between different factions in the government. Furthermore, accounts differ on the real value of the CCG

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Interview with former project manager, December 2008.

⁴¹³ Interview with former project manager, December 2008.

⁴¹⁴ Interview with project manager, October 2008.

report, but most observers agree on viewing the CCG's independence as only formal. They see a political interference directly in the writing of the report or in attempts to hide it. Only the CCG employees themselves refuse to adhere to the perception that they are being subjected to political pressures in their work, thus trying to preserve the institution's reputation. The different accounts thus reveal the use of strategies of delegitimation aimed at attributing political motives to the actions of the different protagonists of the scandal.

I will examine in particular two strategies of delegitimation: the opposition against the MoE and the "MoE camp" against the CCG. Certain opposition parties use the CCG report as the basis of a strategy of delegitimation that aims at questioning the government's claims to success in fighting corruption. The opposition concludes on the basis of the CCG report that up to 40 million Georgian laris have been embezzled from the MoE budget.⁴¹⁵ One opposition leader describes the MoE scandal:

"It became one of the greatest scandals, you know that the Georgian government made a lot of propaganda inside and outside the country that education reforms were one of the most successful reforms of the Georgian government and one of the most important achievements. And unexpectedly everyone found that it was not great reform, but great corruption and reported not only by opposition faction and parties but reported by official state body, government-appointed body CCG. And after that, Lomaia was dismissed from the post very soon after a few months. The president made statement that main key issues of education reforms were revised and reviewed and limitations about Georgian history and language were cancelled. But the CCG was also stopped and the head of the CCG was also dismissed."⁴¹⁶

This account reveals how certain opposition actors strategically use the ambiguity in the position of the CCG. While they imply that the government interferes with its work and certain opposition members suspect the report of being the result of political pressures, they also present the institution as a guarantee of impartiality that can provide credit to the opposition's allegations of corruption in the government. Hence, the report is used to question the government's claims to success in the flagship sector of education in the statement of the opposition leader: "*it was not great reform, but great corruption*". The opposition leader also implies that the CCG was hindered in performing its controlling functions after the MoE scandal. The CCG is thus presented as a modern audit institution that is hindered in performing its auditing work. Furthermore, this supposed interference of the government is interpreted as a proof that something needs to be hidden and corruption still exists in Georgia. As a result, the government's representation of its fight against corruption is undermined: the government's

⁴¹⁵ See Civil Georgia (2007a).

⁴¹⁶ Interview with member of opposition party, December 2008.

claims to success are untrue, it further hinders independent controlling bodies in exposing these corruption cases and the integrity of high-level officials is an illusion.

On the other side, the MoE team and observers close to the government engage in a strategy of delegitimising the CCG as an instrument in the fight against corruption. They use two lines of argument: the CCG's professional standards are too low to allow the institution to make a valuable contribution to the prevention of corruption and its exposure of corruption serves political purposes. The doubts raised on the professionalism of the institution's employees allow undermining the representation of a bureaucratic institution ensuring in a disinterested manner the application of transparency and integrity standards in the management of public funds. It allows questioning the real motives followed by the CCG bureaucrats. Hence, the distinction between the old CCG as a political instrument for the exposure of corruption and the new CCG as a modern audit institution is the basis of this strategy of delegitimation. The "MoE camp" discredits the institution by exposing the deficiencies of the old CCG.

First, the CCG is presented as a corrupt institution staffed with non-professionals whose transformation into a modern audit institution appears illusory. A high official in the education sector says: "*This CCG was created for corruption and you can't just use a tool that was created for corruption and use it for good means.*"⁴¹⁷ Lomaia's reaction to the CCG report is in line with this argumentation as he contests its validity by refusing to sign it and asks for a second commission to be sent implying that the members of the first commission are not professional enough. He sends a minivan to the Parliament before a hearing, loaded with 70 folders containing 20,000 pages of documentation to prove that the CCG report is false.⁴¹⁸ As one article relates: "*The Education Minister criticized the state audit agency for being staffed by many 'non-professionals' who have been engaged in 'corrupt deals'.*"⁴¹⁹ Another article notes: "*Minister Lomaia said that he welcomed the audit process, but disagreed with its conclusions, citing a lack of 'objectivity and preciseness.'*"⁴²⁰ In this account, Lomaia does not reject the principle of state auditing *per se*, but he questions the objectivity of the report by invoking the lack of professionalism and integrity of the CCG employees. A Georgian analyst further provides this account of the MoE scandal:

"As I remember a long time ago, what I saw was a sort of monumental example of Soviet

⁴¹⁷ Interview with high official in the education sector, December 2008.

⁴¹⁸ Civil Georgia: MPs Angered over Minister's Assertive Speech, Civil.ge, 29 June 2007.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Civil Georgia (2007a).

stupidity. The CCG was accusing the government that they did not have accounting at all because the Ministry of Education was carrying accounting in accordance with the World Bank standards, they were spending the World Bank money, so the World Bank was asking them to do accounting in their standards, while the CCG was not recognizing these standards because it was in contravention with some Soviet standards. There was a Ministry of Finance decree which was allowing any state body which was involved in that kind of international projects to carry out accounting in accordance with international standards. The accounting reform was going on. Businesses were asked to switch from a Soviet accounting system to international accounting standards [...] But it was not implemented in the public sector, so the public institutions still used some Soviet-type accounting standards. That was the main confusion: the CCG was not accepting the accounting documents which were not in conformity with their understanding of what accounting was about.”⁴²¹

The analyst explains that the CCG still uses Soviet-style accounting standards and not international ones. He adds: “*They have no understanding of what audit is about [...] They just look for some small technicalities and are not capable of evaluating the efficiency of some various governmental programmes.*”⁴²² The high official in the education sector explains that the CCG staff refused to take into account the World Bank evaluation: “*[It is] true that the education of the people working at the CCG is very low... They considered as non-existent the documents which were in English language. They say we don’t know English so it means that this document does not exist for us.*”⁴²³ The same high official further comments on the lack of professionalism of the CCG employees: “*Of course the people working in the CCG are mostly lawyers or economists. The salaries are very low. At that time very low in comparison with the salary rise in Georgia. By definition it can be that this people more or less are not successful. There is a big lack in Georgia of economists and lawyers, so why would they work in the CCG?*”⁴²⁴ A former MoE employee explains that Lomaia wanted to show that the CCG was not doing its job properly: “*It is not that he wanted to defend himself, he wanted to show that what the CCG is doing is not correct.*”⁴²⁵ This employee explains that Lomaia’s refusal to sign the CCG’s findings was unexpected: “*Of course nobody had ever made such a strong and demanding answer [to a CCG report] before. Before at the CCG there was a practice, when there were auditors, the ministry would offer a supra...*”⁴²⁶ This former employee hints at the possibility that the CCG might have agreed to not disclose the report in exchange of certain favours. The same former employee explains that the CCG based its report on old laws of the Shevardnadze’s era whose juridical value is doubtful: “*...I don’t want to imply that the*

⁴²¹ Interview with Georgian analyst, December 2008.

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Interview with high official in the education sector, December 2008.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Interview with former employee of the Ministry of Education, November 2008.

⁴²⁶ Ibid. The reference to the “supra”, a Georgian traditional festive meal, hints at former corrupt practices when CCG controllers would be invited to such meals by the employees of state agencies in order to avoid negative reports.

*ministries should not respect the circulaires. But another problem was that they [CCG staff] were referring to documents which had been annulled several years ago, so these controllers were people who were still stuck in the seventies.*⁴²⁷ This former employee adds: *“It was really weird and even funny: they took it seriously, they were referring to two presidential decrees, one concerning the organisation of circulation of documents and the second one concerning the design of programmes to be achieved first.”*⁴²⁸ In these accounts, the low professional and integrity standards of the CCG are contrasted with the modern working ethic that was introduced after the Rose Revolution in flagship institutions such as the Ministry of Education. These statements are consistent with the government’s attempt to represent its anti-corruption activities as marking a radical break with the practices of the Shevardnadze’s times.

In a second step, the CCG is delegitimised by presenting it as a political instrument. The high official in the education sector explains, *“this system we just inherited from the Shevardnadze’s times. Of course that was one of the tools of the corruption game and of the bargain between the President and the Parliament in this system, of course you can say that the CCG is independent, but you cannot say that it is independent from politics, not at all.”*⁴²⁹ He adds, *“if an organisation is by definition and by structure a political tool it will remain a political tool whatever you do [...] You need this function but it is very dangerous to have this function and to use it as a political tool.”*⁴³⁰ One observer further mentions the problem of the politicisation of “independent” agencies in Georgia by referring to the composition of a board in the statistics department:

*“They are five people on board. We want three of them to be government appointed. I said this will weaken the independence and the perception of independence. They [the government] say the risk of a politically motivated person getting appointed to that position and making trouble with statistics is too great. And that’s the risk, the risk that a politically motivated person will get appointed to the CCG. Someone who looked good but then changed their mind is too great.”*⁴³¹

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid. The former employee argues that the authorities had forgotten to officially publish the first presidential decree dating from 1999. The document had therefore no juridical value. The MoE asked the Ministry of Justice to check whether the document had been published or not and received the confirmation that this was not the case. The CCG staff was apparently angry at the MoE for making this issue public. It was a practice of applying this decree, but its non-application could not be seen as a violation. The second presidential decree was also a product of the Shevardnadze’s period. It concerned the design of programmes to be implemented as a priority from the budget. Since the initial budget plan could never be respected due to a lack of money during Shevardnadze’s times, a cut was made at the end of the year. Certain programmes were designated as a priority: they could not be suspended while others could. A law was regulating how these programmes should be presented to the government. The former employee argues that the application of this regulation on the design of programmes was rendered obsolete after the revolution: *“We have changed the financial system, we have changed the rules of budget planning, these are not the rules before 2004.”* Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Interview with high official in the education sector, December 2008.

⁴³⁰ Ibid.

⁴³¹ Interview with former high official in international organisation, December 2008.

Considering the deficiencies of the CCG, certain observers advance the idea of outsourcing auditing functions to the private sector in line with the government's preference for market competition as a solution to the corruption problem.⁴³² Hence, the MoE camp regards the World Bank evaluation that was conducted by a private international auditing company as more trustworthy and impartial than the CCG report. One analyst explains: "*the best way to checks and balance is market*".⁴³³ This analyst also argues that the CCG cannot attract qualified auditors: "*I think these institutions should be abolished, there is not need to retain this CCG, there should be somebody called auditor general appointed by the Parliament and accountable to the Parliament and then these audit functions can be easily outsourced. I don't think that it is possible to retain in the public service the highly qualified auditors that are capable to do the kind of audit which would be up to [international] standards.*"⁴³⁴ He adds: "*why the person would work for the CCG in Kutaisi?*" referring to the decision to move the CCG to the second largest town in Georgia and an unattractive provincial nest.⁴³⁵

The MoE scandal reveals how the perception still exists that the CCG is used as a tool to produce political evidences of corruption. The opposition appears to strategically blur this distinction between the CCG as a political tool and the CCG as modern auditing institution when presenting its report as a trustworthy basis to support its corruption allegations against the government.

5.2.3.2 Levan Choladze's chairmanship

Levan Choladze's chairmanship in 2007-2008 further illustrates the apparent distrust of the government for the CCG. In effect, Choladze's measures appear to target the old CCG and view the institution as an *object* instead of an *instrument* in the fight against corruption. Thus, they conflict with the vision of donor organisations that regard the institution as an apolitical tool whose capacities need to be strengthened. Both actors appear to deal with a different institution, creating incoherence in the measures implemented.

⁴³² An ESI report notes that the decision to abolish inefficient state agencies in the post-revolutionary period was considered a cost-effective solution. The report says: "*In a country where the state was corrupt and unable to perform most of its functions, where citizens had to pay out of their own pockets for supposed public services like health care, disbanding state institutions was easier than reforming them. Abolishing public institutions not only saved money and reduced corruption; it was also a driver of development.*" European Stability Initiative (2010), p. 21.

⁴³³ Interview with Georgian analyst, December 2008.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

Choladze's reform initiatives aimed at reorganising the institution are presented as *anti-corruption measures*. Similarly to the radical reforms that have characterised the post-revolutionary period, they aim at "purging" the institution from certain corrupt elements. During Choladze's chairmanship, two employees of a CCG department dealing with road construction are arrested by the Constitutional Security Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on charges of corruption and in the presence of television cameras. In the account of CCG employees, these arrests were aimed at creating fear among the personnel and forcing the staff to resign.⁴³⁶ About 400 employees left the CCG, while only three members of the old management were allowed to stay.⁴³⁷ Choladze could apparently justify this wave of resignation under the pretext of restructuring the CCG, as a state agency under reorganisation has special provisions to fire employees under the Georgian legislation.⁴³⁸ Further, Choladze created a new organigramme for the agency. The CCG departments were given numbers instead of being divided into sectors of expertise such as "defence spending", "education" or "social services".⁴³⁹ CCG auditors were not allowed anymore to perform controls in their sectors of expertise, but a permanent rotation between different sectors was established. Choladze's reforms proved unpopular at the CCG. He was reportedly distrustful of the staff and had no contacts with the majority of the employees.⁴⁴⁰ The reforms apparently affected the efficiency of the organisation, as almost no controls were performed during this period.⁴⁴¹

Donor programmes were also affected by Choladze's measures. He did not show a strong interest in the donors' projects.⁴⁴² For example, he was apparently not interested in meeting a high-level delegation of a foreign partner institution of the CCG.⁴⁴³ He also reportedly omitted to sign certain project documents of the donor organisations.⁴⁴⁴ This created problems for the donor organisations, as they needed the approval of the CCG management on their activities and the signatures were a proof of their actual cooperation with a counterpart. Choladze's measures

⁴³⁶ Interviews with CCG employees and project managers at the CCG, October-November 2008.

⁴³⁷ Certain observers suspect that a first deputy was allowed to stay, as he was a protégé of former Parliament speaker Nino Burdjanadze having previously worked with Burdjanadze's husband, Badri Bichadze, at the prosecutor's office. Another member of the management was apparently the protégé of the first vice-speaker of the Parliament, Mikheil Machavariani. Finally, the chief of the analytical department was rehired after some months, as the new management needed his intimate knowledge of the state budget procedures. Interviews with current and former project managers at the CCG, October-December 2008.

⁴³⁸ Interview with former project manager, December 2008.

⁴³⁹ Interview with project manager at the CCG, December 2008.

⁴⁴⁰ Interview with former project manager, December 2008.

⁴⁴¹ Interview with project manager at the CCG, December 2008.

⁴⁴² A member of the new management at the CCG says that Choladze's team requested donors to provide technical support in the form of new computers or the painting of walls, as the CCG's building was under reconstruction. One donor organisation objected to this request, arguing that the donor funds should be allocated to trainings and not be used for reconstruction work. Interview with member of new management at the CCG, December 2008.

⁴⁴³ Interview with project manager, December 2008.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

further hindered the implementation of certain donor activities. For example, the new organigramme complicated the implementation of a donor activity consisting of hosting Georgian controllers in a foreign partner institution to conduct joint audits.⁴⁴⁵ The new CCG organigramme which is based on numbers instead of sectors of expertise did not match the organigramme of this partner institution.⁴⁴⁶ The new organigramme thus reveals that Choladze and the donor organisations were dealing with a different CCG. Choladze's organigramme is presented as an anti-corruption measure aimed at preventing corrupt ties developing between the CCG controllers and the employees of a state agency in their sectors of expertise. This new organigramme can also be seen as being inscribed in the attempt of Georgian officials to use innovative approaches in the fight against corruption that are not simply based on the reproduction of international mechanisms such as a European audit institution's structure. Donors themselves view this organigramme as inefficient with the argument that it affects the quality of controls.⁴⁴⁷ The controllers cannot follow a clear work plan, one of the elements of the audit methodology that the donors are trying to introduce at the CCG. The permanent rotation between different sectors renders difficult the preparation of these work plans, while CCG controllers lack the necessary expertise to control efficiently some sectors. In the view of donors, the organigramme thus affects the quality of controls and hinders an effective prevention of corruption.⁴⁴⁸ This view is also shared by the CCG employees.⁴⁴⁹ While Choladze wants to prevent corruption *within* the institution, donors want to strengthen the capacity of the CCG to prevent corruption in other state agencies.

Donor projects were further affected by the resignation of staff, as the majority of employees having participated in the training activities organised by the donor organisations left the institution.⁴⁵⁰ The resignation of staff also shows differences in the two actors' approaches. Choladze appears to "clean" the CCG from its corrupt elements by applying the same methods that were implemented in most state agencies after the revolution. Donors are not opposed to a downsizing of the state administration. For example, the World Bank's project had a human resources component and the Bank had advised conducting a restructuring of the CCG as it considered the institution to be overstaffed. However, they criticise the absence of clear and transparent recruitment and firing criteria. One former project manager comments on the CCG's downsizing: "*4-500 people go on what basis? Is it competence, is it nepotism, is it depending on*

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁹ Interview with CCG employee, November 2008.

⁴⁵⁰ Interviews with project managers at CCG, November-December 2008.

which part of Georgia you come? Depending on I don't know, your eye colours, your skin. I don't know what were the criteria used. When you let people go, what you do, you define some criteria, people's skills, and you define what you need. I think that they did the good thing in firing people. But I don't know if they fired the good people or the wrong people."⁴⁵¹ The removal of staff at the CCG has further the effect of raising questions on the efficiency of the donors' projects. One project manager remarks that one development criterion, the sustainability of the project, is negatively affected by the fact that the majority of the trained staff has left the audit institution.⁴⁵² Another project manager further explains that about 60 to 80 trained employees are still working at the CCG in 2009 out of a total of 170 employees.⁴⁵³ About 400 employees were working at the CCG before the removal of staff in 2007 and about 360 employees took part in different trainings organised in the framework of the donor project.⁴⁵⁴ Frequent changes of staff in the public administration in Georgia poses problems for donors, as they affect the continuity of projects. Donors may lose a precious partner in a state agency during these reshuffles.⁴⁵⁵ Hence, project managers at the CCG regard the frequent changes in the management as the main obstacle for the conduct of donor activities.⁴⁵⁶ We observe that donors and the Georgian government tend to follow different logics in the fight against corruption: the firing of civil servants to bring in a new generation of cadres or the training of staff in public institutions to introduce new standards.⁴⁵⁷

Domestic reactions to Choladze's measures further reveal the dilemma that the government faces in its attempt to restructure the institution. Choladze's actions are interpreted as evidences of an interference of the executive by opposition members that see a link between the MoE scandal and the forced resignation of staff at the Chamber. For example, an article reports: "*Of the 28 Audit Chamber staffers who investigated suspected embezzlement within the Education Ministry, 27 have been dismissed, opposition Democratic Front parliament faction member Giga Bukia told parliament on July 2.*"⁴⁵⁸ One opposition representative says that Choladze's mission was to "close the system" in order to prevent the opposition from obtaining information from the

⁴⁵¹ Interview with former project manager, October 2008.

⁴⁵² Interview with project manager, December 2008.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ For example, the head of a development organisation in Georgia explains how donor projects can "*fall like castles of cards*" if reliable partners in state agencies are replaced. Interview with head of development organisation, November 2008.

⁴⁵⁶ Interviews with project managers at the CCG, November-December 2008.

⁴⁵⁷ These two logics also correspond to two different views on the civil servant: a rational agent responding to incentives or a moral agent.

⁴⁵⁸ Eurasianet: "Georgian control chamber personnel dismissed", in Georgia Daily Digest, 5 July 2007.

CCG.⁴⁵⁹ He explains that the opposition could not access a CCG's report on the Tbilisi City municipality after the scandal.⁴⁶⁰ One former CCG employee who was forced to resign explains that people on the streets asked whether the CCG still existed, as the institution was apparently less active after the scandal.⁴⁶¹ One consultant describes the removal of staff as a "witch hunt" in reaction to the MoE scandal.⁴⁶²

5.2.3.3 Levan Bezhashvili's chairmanship

Levan Bezhashvili's chairmanship starting from the summer of 2008 can be seen as a reaction to the negative publicity provoked by the MoE scandal and the criticism directed against Choladze's reform steps. Organisations such as the European Union criticise the slowness of reforms, while domestic actors accuse the government of politically interfering in the Chamber's work. The government wants to show its renewed commitment to transform the CCG into a modern state institution with the help of donor organisations.

The new management presents its reforms as being primarily aimed at restoring public confidence in the CCG and improving its image. As already stated, the CCG strategic development plan for 2009-2011 indicates as a reform objective: "*to boost the trust of Georgian population toward the CCG through increased professionalism and transparent activity*"⁴⁶³, while it identifies as a key problem "*the mistrust towards the CCG among political groups, even state institutions and the population of Georgia: the CCG is perceived as a punitive agency*".⁴⁶⁴ The institution must be trusted by other state agencies to be effective and one major priority is to improve the qualification of the staff and align the procedures they use with international standards. One NGO member comments on the reforms: "*They think that they do not have enough human resources. They think that public trust is too low. People do not trust the decisions and findings of the CCG.*"⁴⁶⁵ The new strategic development plan notes: "*one of the factors determining the impartiality of the CCG activity is the accuracy of audit methodology*"⁴⁶⁶ and "*the auditor must have relevant qualification and knowledge of the matter when conducting*

⁴⁵⁹ Interview with member of opposition party, November 2008.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid. See Media.ge: "Chamber of Control of Georgia Withholds Information from Newspaper Rezonansi and Opposition MPs", 6 June 2007.

⁴⁶¹ Interview with former CCG employee, December 2008.

⁴⁶² Interview with consultant, February 2008.

⁴⁶³ Chamber of Control of Georgia (2009), p. 4.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 6.

⁴⁶⁵ Interview with NGO representative, November 2008.

⁴⁶⁶ Chamber of Control of Georgia (2009), p. 4.

audit”.⁴⁶⁷ As the MoE scandal has shown, the CCG can be accused of non-professionalism and partiality if it does not employ clear and transparent rules in conducting audits and if its staff lacks knowledge. The strategic plan defines as four core values of the CCG: impartiality, independence, publicity, professionalism.⁴⁶⁸ The objective of enhancing the reputation of the CCG by applying principles of impartiality and professionalism are represented as a break with the old CCG of Shevardnadze’s times. As already stated, a member of the new management mentions that “*the CCG was part of and a mechanism in a system that was corrupt*”, referring to the corruption system of the Shevardnadze’s years.⁴⁶⁹ Another member of the new management says: “*The post-revolutionary period showed us that before the Rose Revolution the chamber was considered to be one of the most corrupt organisations.*”⁴⁷⁰ A third member of the new management explains the lack of trust in the CCG: “*The CCG was identified with bribery from society and executive.*”⁴⁷¹ He further explains that the CCG was not trusted due to the lack of qualification and potential corruption of its staff. He says: “*there was no trust in this organ. This is a special organ which needs special staff training and personal characteristics [...] Previous staff was coming from previous stages of our country [...] there are special requirement for auditors, he has to be highly qualified and integer. These [auditors] were highly corrupt and they were bringing this corruption into the system.*”⁴⁷² The new management describes as one important objective the creation of a centre to train new auditors with the objective of developing a new generation of professionals.⁴⁷³ A statement by Bezhashvili also outlines the new management’s aim of improving the institution’s reputation: “*we want to transform Chamber of Control of Georgia to audit institution, which will be conformable to international standards, will have stainless professional reputation and be taken into consideration by our foreign partners and international audit institutions.*”⁴⁷⁴

The statements of the new management are in line with the government’s representation of its anti-corruption reforms as marking a break with the Shevardnadze’s era. This break with the old CCG is visible in the strategic plan that notes as key problems: “*poor transparency of the CCG; the CCG lacks communication strategic plan. The information about the CCG activity reaches population only whenever audit results entail the interference of law enforcement agencies, thus*

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 4.

⁴⁶⁹ Interview with member of new management at CCG, November 2008.

⁴⁷⁰ Interview with member of new management at CCG, November 2008.

⁴⁷¹ Interview with member of new management at CCG, November 2008.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Interview with member of new management at CCG, December 2008.

⁴⁷⁴ Chamber of Control of Georgia: Press release on meeting with the members of EC Microfinancial Assistance Monitoring Group, 24 June 2009. Available at: <http://www.control.ge/eng/news/id/10> (accessed January 2011)

adding to the CCG negative image.”⁴⁷⁵ The new management wants to prevent the use of the CCG as a political tool, a use that negatively affects the perception of the institution in the public view. At the same time, the strategy of delegitimising the old CCG that is similar to the one employed by the MoE camp during the MoE scandal does not lead to suggestions that the institution should be abolished and its auditing functions outsourced. As a result, the statements of the new management also adhere to the representation of donor organisations that aim at enhancing the institution’s capacities. While they are still dealing with different institutions, as donors do not appear to consider the role played by the institution before the revolution, both actors appear to converge in their objectives of modernising the CCG.

As a proof of its commitment to reform the CCG with the help of donors, the government accelerates the discussion on a new draft law on the CCG in the Parliament at the end of 2008. The law is finally passed in December 2008 and approved in January 2009. The European Union (EU) has apparently pushed for the adoption of this new law in the context of negotiations on the new European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan and large amounts of aid money being allocated to Georgia after the Russian-Georgian war in August 2008.⁴⁷⁶ However, the new management explains the decision to accelerate the reform of the CCG after the summer of 2008 as resulting from an increase in the budget. One member of the management says: “*maybe previously the priority was the reform of the judiciary, reforming the police, reforming the system of defense. After all this has been made, now the priority is to reform the CCG. The budget is being spent, that’s why the mechanism of CCG has to be strengthened. It [the budget] has enhanced. It has increased 8 or 9 times since 2003.*”⁴⁷⁷ This statement shows that the government wants to be perceived as defining its own priorities and not simply responding to the pressures of international organisations. The process of drafting the new law further reveals the government’s attempt to secure the approval of other actors. A member of the new management underlines that the new law was drafted in consultation with different stakeholders.⁴⁷⁸ The new management has sought the advice of a donor organisation on the draft law, while consultations are organised with international organisations, the Parliament, the Ministry of Finance, opposition parties and NGOs.⁴⁷⁹ This approach contrasts with the government’s non-bureaucratic style that does not favour deliberations and consultations with other actors. A comment by the chairman Bezhashvili on a working meeting between the CCG management and international

⁴⁷⁵ Chamber of Control of Georgia (2009), p. 6.

⁴⁷⁶ Interviews with donor representatives, October/November 2008.

⁴⁷⁷ Interview with member of new management at CCG, Tbilisi, December 2008. (bezhashvili)

⁴⁷⁸ Interview with member of new management at CCG, Tbilisi, November 2008. (meskhi)

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

organisations reveals these efforts of the new management to engage with donors.⁴⁸⁰ He says: *“there are issues in the Strategic Development Plan which require bilateral involvement and, thus, the Chamber of Control would not be able to cope with that on their own. In this situation the support of our colleagues and donor organisations is required and much appreciated.”*⁴⁸¹ This declaration supports the representation of donors that their activities respond to a *demand* from the counterpart, as the CCG management admits to its inability to address certain issues on its own and asks explicitly for the support of donors. Information and expertise is also requested from local participants in donor projects at the CCG.⁴⁸² For example, they provide information on the rotation systems existing in the auditing institutions of other European countries.⁴⁸³

Despite its attempt to present its reform steps as following from the *disinterested and rational purpose of transforming the CCG into a modern institution* by securing the approval of international organisations and NGOs, the new management remains vulnerable to strategies of delegitimisation. A press release from the Georgian parliament relates a meeting between the new CCG chairman and an opposition party in 2008: *“Parliament Faction “Christian-Democrats” has a critical sentiment on the bill “On Chamber of Control of Georgia”, which to their mind is surface and it will not have a grave influence upon Chamber of Control reform.”*⁴⁸⁴ One NGO member says that the draft law will not lead to substantial changes in the work of the CCG: *“The name changed. It’s called performing audit in the law but the definition of this term is identical with the definition of control that we had in the previous law, it changed the name but it remained the same.”*⁴⁸⁵ Opposition parties also point to a paragraph in the new law concerning the setting up of a dispute council. This council is composed of members of the party in power and of opposition members that can reject a report if a ministry objects to it. Opposition parties argue that the council may interfere with the work of the CCG and is aimed in reality at preventing the production of “scandalous reports” such as the MoE report.⁴⁸⁶ It is interpreted as a sign of political pressure on the CCG. One Georgian analyst is also sceptical of the value of this new council, as he argues that the council members could try to engage in certain deals.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁰ Chamber of Control of Georgia: Press release on working meeting with donors, 13 January 2010. Available at: <http://www.control.ge/eng/news/id/17> (accessed January 2011)

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.

⁴⁸² Interview with project manager, November 2008. (Iela)

⁴⁸³ Ibid. As already observed, Choladze did not show the same interest and preferred devising its own organigramme.

⁴⁸⁴ Georgian Parliament press release: “Meeting of Faction “Christian-Democrats” with Levan Bezhashvili, Chairman of Chamber of Control of Georgia”, 1 December 2008. Available at: http://intranet.parliament.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=100&info_id=21619 (accessed January 2010)

⁴⁸⁵ Interview with NGO representative, November 2008.

⁴⁸⁶ Interview with member of opposition party, November 2008.

⁴⁸⁷ Interview with Georgian analyst, Tbilisi, November 2008.

However, the council is presented as a democratic measure aimed at enhancing the transparency of the CCG's activities by the new management.⁴⁸⁸

5.2.4 Difficulties of a common production of success

The analysis of conflicts and reform steps at the CCG has shown that the different positions towards the institution's reform translate in incoherence in the measures implemented. Further, the "two faces" of the CCG create confusion in the interpretation of the different actors' actions and this confusion is being strategically used in strategies of delegitimisation. In particular, we observe a dilemma in the representation of the government's actions. Strategies of delegitimisation that question the actors' motives pose a problem for the representation of anti-corruption activity. Finally, interactions between international organisations and the Georgian government reveal the limits of a common production of coherence in the field.

5.2.4.1 The problem of the representation of actions in the anti-corruption field

Strategies of delegitimisation used during the MoE scandal reveal the problematic of the representation of actions in the anti-corruption field.

First, the "two faces" of the CCG create confusion in the question of the place of the institution in the fight against corruption. For example, the opposition and international organisations appear to have a different understanding of the Chamber's role, but seemingly converge in their objective of strengthening its capacities. The two actors attribute an anti-corruption role to the institution, but one that follows from a different logic. Opposition parties see the exposure of corruption through the CCG as a potential deterrent for corrupt behaviours. Its use should be made available to all political groupings. As a result, the CCG's function of producing evidences of corruption derives from the logic of competition that characterises the field of politics. On the contrary, donor organisations place the CCG's function of preventing corruption in the development field with its technocratic logic. The role of expert knowledge is emphasised as a means of enhancing the institution's performance and its capacity to effectively contribute to the prevention of corruption. Opposition parties tend to acknowledge the role of the CCG as a political tool, while donors view the institution as an apolitical tool to improve the management of public funds.

⁴⁸⁸ Interview with member of new management, December 2008.

Further, the MoE scandal illustrates the inherent dilemma in the representation of anti-corruption activity in Georgia on a domestic level. We observe in the strategies of delegitimisation deployed by the two camps formed during the scandal the difficulty of representing anti-corruption activity as a *rational and disinterested attempt to prevent and combat corruption*. Indeed, political motives are inevitably attributed to the different protagonists of the scandal. On a domestic level, the anti-corruption field thus appears to be located in the field of politics. The strategies of delegitimisation used during the scandal revolve around the question of the actors' motives. Indeed, they reject the *representation of disinterestedness* that is an attribute of the state bureaucracy. The MoE camp accuses the CCG staff of following political motives instead of producing a report up to the standards of an impartial and modern audit institution. The opposition views instead the CCG report as impartial and accuses on this basis the MoE of the same deviation from principles of honesty and transparency exemplified in its alleged mismanagement of public funds. Further, opposition members question the motives behind the government's anti-corruption reforms by saying "*it was not great reform, but great corruption.*" By pointing to the dubious motives of the old Chamber and placing it in the field of politics, the MoE's actions can also be viewed through this prism. The opposition appears to place the CCG in the bureaucratic field by viewing its report as impartial, but places the government's actions in the field of politics. It strategically blurs the distinction between the old and the new CCG that the MoE camp uses as a basis in its strategy of delegitimisation against the institution. Confusion is thus created around the logic pursued by the different actors during the scandal.

The MoE scandal thus reveals an important dilemma in the representation of the government's actions. The statements of observers close to the government on the MoE scandal show the *government's distrust of state bureaucracy*. As I have already observed, the government's representation of its anti-corruption activities is built in opposition to the state bureaucracy of Soviet times and of the Shevardnadze's era that is viewed as corrupt and inefficient. This scepticism towards the state bureaucracy as embodying an abstract notion of public interest is visible in statements on the CCG and in the idea of outsourcing auditing functions to private companies. For example, a Georgian analyst reflects on the government's view of "independent agencies":

"In Shevardnadze's times there were too many different state commissions and regulatory institutions which were designed to check many things including corruption and they were independent because of the Western knowledge that these commissions should be independent. Bendukidze [former member of the Saakashvili's government] says that formal independence

does not mean that they [the agencies] are really independent. They could be dependent on some clans and mafia people.”⁴⁸⁹

He further refers to donor organisations:

“Some of these agencies say that in order to fight corruption in a systemic and congruent way you need strong institutions, a public service, an independent judiciary, different regulations, regulation stemming from an EU directive or anti-corruption conventions of the UN. Our government is afraid of too many regulations, not having trust in public service. They are afraid that if the public service is allowed to regulate too many things, it can just do the opposite, create ground for corruption. Unless you have good professional servants.”⁴⁹⁰

Another Georgian analyst explains how the market constitutes the best solution to the problem of establishing checks-and-balances mechanisms:

“The best way to control is through competition and through market. Because many people can speak in the name of the public interest and mean something absolutely different from public interest... There is not tradition here to have that kind of impartial institutions. Most of them at least play some bureaucratic politics, some games and at the worst case they would be either unprofessional or politicised or both.”⁴⁹¹

A former high official in an international organisation in Georgia also expresses scepticism on the introduction of formal checks-and-balances mechanisms as a solution to the management of public funds in Georgia:

“This is because all these donors are coming with models of democracy based on checks-and-balances. This model doesn’t work right now. It just doesn’t. If you took that money and used it to finance independent audits. You would be just much better off.”⁴⁹²

The government’s position is thus characterised by a certain scepticism towards the notion of public interest. However, this position creates obvious dilemmas. Indeed, the notion of bureaucratic rationality, honesty and impartiality constitutes the fundament of the modern democratic state. Its rejection is thus problematic for the Georgian government, as it derives its legitimacy from the representation that its actions follow from bureaucratic principles of service to the public good. By discrediting the CCG and implicitly considering outsourcing auditing functions to the private sector, the government is seen as interfering in the work of an independent institution and violating the separation between the state administration and the

⁴⁸⁹ Interview with Georgian analyst, November 2008.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Interview with Georgian analyst, December 2008.

⁴⁹² Interview with former high official in international organisation, December 2008.

sphere of politics. Its suspicion towards the notion of public interest renders the government vulnerable to accusations that its actions might also be arbitrary.

For example, the wave of resignation in the Chamber during Choladze's chairmanship is interpreted by the opposition as an attempt to weaken the institution and interfere with the work of the controllers. The representation that Choladze's measures follow from the *rational purpose of combating corruption within the institution and modernising it* is thus questioned. Another logic is attributed to his actions and Choladze is seen as targeting the state auditing function *per se*.⁴⁹³ Every action of the government that concerns the CCG can be read as interference. A "silent" and inactive CCG will be seen as being subject to pressures from the executive and hindered to perform its functions. As a consultant remarks: "*nobody would get surprised if you are an auditor that you would find some corruption, especially in a country like Georgia. The other thing would be surprising. For an auditor to find corruption, that's your job!*"⁴⁹⁴ At the same time, the MoE scandal reveals that an active CCG is also not seen as simply performing a routine work, but political motives are attributed to its actions and the actions of actors affected by its reports.

The MoE scandal and reactions to Choladze's reform steps thus reveal the difficulty of representing anti-corruption activity as following from the rational and disinterested purpose of combating corruption on a domestic level and the problematic of the representation of the government's actions. Anti-corruption activity is inevitably perceived as being politicised in the domestic context of Georgia.

5.2.4.2 Limits of a common production of coherence

Similarly to the case of the anti-corruption strategy, the analysis of interactions between international organisations and the Georgian government during the CCG reform reveals the limits of a common production of coherence in the anti-corruption field.

⁴⁹³ A Georgian analyst refers to the difficulties faced by the Georgian government in the reform of the judiciary: "*It was especially difficult when the anti-corruption fight approached the judiciary. The judiciary was corrupt... Saakashvili tried to change it. But how do you change the judiciary if you do not overstep the rule of law? The judiciary is untouchable, you cannot touch it, as soon as you touch it, you are guilty of interfering. It is a dilemma. I once told this leadership, 'Why don't you issue a decree for a year, you abolish certain courts and create something very ad-hoc'. They said... can you imagine that Europeans would have understood this? A decree which would have allowed to fire judges, because they are corrupt...*" The government has difficulties justifying its actions as being aimed at addressing corruption in the judiciary instead of representing an interference. Interview with Georgian analyst, November 2008.

⁴⁹⁴ Interview with consultant, October 2008.

The analysis of interactions reveals that both actors are dependent on a mutual validation on their representations. In the case of donor organisations, the local demand represents this “magical power” that I have already identified and that can transform the knowledge and expertise provided by these organisations into instruments with an impact. External knowledge becomes instrumental and acquires a value only when accepted on a local level. During the chairmanship of Choladze, donor activities failed to be validated and their impact appeared limited. The general slow path of reforms until the chairmanship of Bezhashvili confronted donors with a problem in the maintenance of their representation of success. Indeed, the contribution of trainings and consultancy to a better functioning of the CCG could be questioned. The example of Choladze’s chairmanship shows how the donor projects can only acquire a reality through the representation of a local demand, as they cannot easily claim any concrete and measurable outcomes on their own. For example, a project manager remarks on a donor’s project: *“In general, it was successful of course, because we were always needed. Always needed. They [the CCG] always came to us and have asked [for expertise]. Whether they have taken our advice into account is another question, but they have always asked. Material, etc. We were never ‘unemployed’, we always did something, but the decision was taken by the CCG. Whether they have accepted it [our advice] or not.”*⁴⁹⁵ The project manager insists on the fact that the expertise was “asked for”, whereas the concrete impact of this knowledge transfer is less clear (*“whether they have taken our advice into account is another question, but they have always asked”*). Thus, the project becomes real and acquires a legitimacy through this demand for expertise and not through any concrete and observable outcomes in terms of an increase in the CCG’s effectiveness.

At the same time, we observe that this representation of a local demand is difficult to sustain. For example, delays in passing the new law on the CCG reveal the lack of government commitment to reform the institution. As a result, one donor activity consisting on advising the new management on the reorganisation of the institution is ended due to the absence of a clear legal basis.⁴⁹⁶ A strategic development plan for the CCG that was written directly after the revolution has taken “dust on the shelves”.⁴⁹⁷ A person having worked at the CCG also says about a draft law written by a consultant after the revolution that it was: *“a kind of standard law. He [the consultant] has changed the word ‘Vietnam’ with ‘Georgia’. He has already proposed such a*

⁴⁹⁵ Interview with project manager, November 2008.

⁴⁹⁶ Interview with consultant, October 2008.

⁴⁹⁷ Interview with former employee at the CCG, September 2008.

paper to other countries.”⁴⁹⁸ Similarly, an audit manual from a European country that was translated in Russian before the revolution and ceremonially given to the CCG was apparently never used.⁴⁹⁹ The fragility of the representation of a local demand threatens the representation of donor organisations of an *instrumental knowledge*, a knowledge with an impact on the Chamber’s reform. Without the local demand, this knowledge can appear as being a ritualised transfer of universal standards without any particular relevance for the Georgian context. Statements by local participants in donor projects that question the impact of these projects show how the donor representations can also be undermined from the inside and donors do not succeed in imposing a certain discourse. Official and authorised narratives on projects are undermined in informal statements, while local project managers understand the inherent contradictions of development rhetorics. Thus, certain project managers express doubts on whether the trainings and consultancy provided by donors can have any real impact if the political will to reform the CCG is lacking. One local consultant remarks: *“Everything depends on politics. During these two years, the head was changed four times, the employees were fired.”*⁵⁰⁰ When asked whether donor projects at the CCG have an impact, other local project managers respond: *“If the attitude is not changed, standards are what? Standards are given, written for [what]?”*⁵⁰¹ The introduction of formal standards cannot contribute in itself to reforming the institution. Another international consultant having worked in Georgia also insists on the centrality of the political will: *“the basic culture [of the CCG] was still almost military. To change the organisation, the CCG from a very hard core military-style organisation, issued from the Ministry of Interior, into a modern audit organisation as we understand it in the West was going to be a big step. That could not happen without a strong support from the President of the organisation and of course the political authorities.”*⁵⁰² One project manager also indirectly admits to the difficulty of quantifying success in donor projects and the problem posed by the dismissal of staff at the Chamber. He says: *“If you come for example here and you know that you have to do a training next year for 100 people and you train this 100 people, but 80 of them will go. Then your initial goal was to train 100 people and only 20 are still there, the rest is wasted.”*⁵⁰³ He then insists on the quality of trainings over the quantity by noting that these 20 employees still working at the institution have still acquired new skills.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁸ Interview with former project manager at the CCG, October 2007.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰ Interview with project manager at CCG, November 2008.

⁵⁰¹ Interview with project managers at CCG, November 2008.

⁵⁰² Interview with consultant, October 2008.

⁵⁰³ Interview with project manager at CCG, October 2008.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid. Another project manager notes that the knowledge acquired by the trained and dismissed auditors can still be used in other state agencies, indirectly admitting to the fact that this knowledge has no evident purpose. Interview with former project manager, November 2008.

While the representation of donors fails to be effectively validated during Cholidze's chairmanship, its successor Levan Bezhashvili ensures this validation. In effect, the government also depends on the approval of international donors. Bezhashvili's reform initiatives starting from the summer of 2008 and his attempt to secure an external approval can be seen as a reaction to the negative publicity provoked by the MoE scandal and the criticism of international organisations regarding the slow path of reforms. Hence, they are an attempt to respond to the dilemma in the representation of the government's actions. The distrust towards the CCG and the negative publicity during the MoE scandal create suspicion concerning the government's actions. The perception that the CCG is a political tool used by different factions, a perception reinforced during the scandal, is problematic for the government. Indeed, if the CCG is perceived as a political tool, the expectation also exists that it will be used as such. The government's actions that concern the CCG reform are perceived as following from certain interests. As already analysed, the approval of external actors on its reforms represents a means for the government of protecting itself from such accusations. By seeking the approval of donors and NGOs, Bezhashvili wants to move the CCG and the question of its reform away from the field of politics into the bureaucratic and development fields. It wants its actions to be perceived as following from the *disinterested purpose of modernising the institution with the help of donors*. The new management thus ensures a better fit between its reform measures and the donors' objectives by presenting the CCG's reform as a problem of strengthening the institution's capacities. Further, the CCG's image must be changed by raising its professional standards. The Chamber must be perceived as a trustworthy actor by other state agencies and its actions as following from the rational purpose of ensuring an efficient management of public funds. In this way, political motives cannot be attributed so easily to the institution itself and the actors involved in its reform. On an international level, the government also seeks the validation of international organisations in order to be recognised as a modern democratic state. A modern audit institution is an essential attribute in this representation. Similarly to the anti-corruption strategy, the government needs the approval of other actors to sustain the image of a modern democratic state and prevent accusations of political arbitrariness in its actions.

At the same time, Bezhashvili's chairmanship reveals that the process of securing a local and external validation does not suffice to ensure a common production of coherence and success. The representation of anti-corruption activity as a rational and technical activity remains difficult to sustain in the domestic context of Georgia, where the fight against corruption is viewed as politicised. For example, the new measures introduced by Levan Bezhashvili can be perceived as

cosmetic changes aimed at satisfying the international community. International organisations are also vulnerable to accusations that their engagement in the reform of the CCG is self-serving instead of representing a genuine attempt to improve the functioning of Georgia's audit institution. A consultant remarks on the engagement of donors: "*donor organisations which give a lot of money to these countries rely on structures such as the Chamber of Control to make sure that the money is well spent for the purpose for which they are given. If those institutions are weak, what guarantees are there for control that the European taxpayers and you know I mean World Bank client countries, that this money is appropriately spent in the country? So that's the reason why usually the control institutions in the countries which are receiving aid internationally must be strengthened and [become] strong.*"⁵⁰⁵ Donor organisations are motivated by their accountability to a domestic constituency rather than wanting to modernise a Georgian public institution and improve the democratic environment. Thus, international organisations and the Georgian government are not easily protected from counter-claims that question their motives. These counter-claims show the limits of a common production of coherence.

5.2.5 Conclusion

The CCG reform illustrates the difficulty of stabilising a representation of anti-corruption activity as following from the *disinterested and rational purpose of combating corruption*. This failure has different origins.

First, the Georgian government has difficulties adhering to the representation of international organisations that emphasises the CCG's role in preventing corruption and views corruption as a problem of a lack of control on the state. Its representation of success is based on a demarcation with the corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy of the Soviet and Shevardnadze's eras of which the Chamber appears to be a remnant. The government's fight against corruption precisely targets such institutions as the old Chamber of Shevardnadze's times. This distrust of the government and of the CCG management can be seen during Levan Choladze's chairmanship, where the representation of a transfer of knowledge by donor organisations as a solution to the Chamber's reform fails to be validated. Thus, the local validation of the representation of international organisations appears difficult to obtain.

⁵⁰⁵ Interview with consultant, October 2008.

But the *problem of the validation of the global anti-corruption field also occurs within the domestic context of Georgia*. Debates on the CCG's reform and the conflicts between anti-corruption actors revealed during the MoE scandal show the difficulty of anchoring the representation of anti-corruption activity as being a technical and non-political activity. Indeed, strategies of delegitimisation used during the scandal show that anti-corruption activity is inevitably seen as being politicised in the Georgian domestic context. This problem in the perception of anti-corruption activity is already visible in the "two faces" of the CCG. The institution continues to be perceived as an informal tool used in power games between politicians. Thus, the actions of the government and of the CCG are inevitably seen through a prism where they follow political or private motives. Bezhashvili's attempt to secure the approval of external actors does not suffice to protect the government from accusations that it is not genuinely interested in modernising the CCG. The CCG's reform reveals the different anchorages of the anti-corruption field in Georgia that create confusion as to the logic pursued by actors. They are suspected of following another logic than the one they claim to pursue. The example of the CCG reform thus shows the problematic of the representation of actions in the anti-corruption field and the difficulty arising from the different levels, domestic and global, in which anti-corruption takes place.

5.3 Civil society anti-corruption projects

My previous analysis of the Chamber of Control's reform in Georgia has revealed the *difficulty of stabilising the representation of anti-corruption activity as following from the disinterested and rational purpose of combating corruption*. I have attributed this failure both to the difficulty of anti-corruption actors to engage in a common production of coherence and to the domestic view of anti-corruption activity as being inevitably politicised in Georgia. I will use civil society anti-corruption projects to further shed light on the problematic of the representation of anti-corruption activity in a domestic context by studying dilemmas in the strategies employed by NGOs to build success in anti-corruption. First, I will analyse the pillars of the self-representation of NGOs as anti-corruption actors. Second, I will study an anti-corruption project in Georgia to analyse how NGOs alternate between different strategies to produce claims to success. Third, I will study a second anti-corruption project to examine how the production of success is based on the construction of a coherent representation of activities.

5.3.1 NGOs' representations

The analysis of NGOs' strategies to build success in anti-corruption has revealed how they emphasise their role as experts and as mediators between the public and the state. They construct this representation in opposition to the government's measures which are seen as not being grounded in a careful and sound analysis of the corruption problem and as not reflecting enough public demands.

Similarly to international organisations, NGOs legitimise their activities by putting an emphasis on the possession of a particular anti-corruption knowledge. This knowledge has different forms: a knowledge on the causes and effects of corruption, the production of reports on particular areas and sectors affected by corruption or "anti-corruption toolkits" and "budget monitoring toolkits" aimed at disseminating particular anti-corruption skills in the NGO community. Knowledge production serves to mobilise the public to fight corruption, train NGOs in anti-corruption work and draft expert recommendations on anti-corruption measures for the government. The mobilisation of the public to fight corruption occurs through its sensitisation to the corruption problem. The assumption is that a lack of knowledge on corruption and its negative effects explain the apparent passivity of the public, while access to this knowledge will motivate citizens

to demand anti-corruption reforms.⁵⁰⁶ Expert knowledge on corruption and measures to fight it will also help the government adopt more effective policies reflecting public demands. Finally, this knowledge help train NGOs to engage in anti-corruption work.

5.3.2 A programme for “anti-corruption NGOs”: from watchdogs to experts

In the following, I analyse an anti-corruption programme funded by a foreign foundation in Georgia before and after the revolution to illustrate the dilemmas faced by NGOs in their strategy of producing success in anti-corruption activity. The programme’s main objective was to support grass-roots anti-corruption activities by providing grants to regional NGOs in Georgia. Its stated objective was to reduce corruption and increase government transparency by strengthening the public’s involvement in government decision-making.⁵⁰⁷ The programme was divided into two phases taking place before and after the revolution.

5.3.2.1 First phase of the programme

The first phase of the programme starting from 2002 is focused on sensitising the public to the problem of corruption. The programme’s objective in this first phase was: “*the six regional NGO watchdogs will monitor government performance within their communities and bring the specific mechanisms of public funds misuse and abuse of power to the attention of the public and media.*”⁵⁰⁸ An overview of NGOs’ anti-corruption activities further notes that the programme’s aim was the “*popularization of an anti-corruption idea in the regions of Georgia*” through the dissemination of leaflets, bulletins and brochures.⁵⁰⁹ In this first phase of the programme, the projects were rather confrontational as they were targeted at detecting and publicly exposing cases of misuse and abuse of public power. The assumption was that the public exposure of corruption in local government structures would help mobilise the public, while it would contribute to reducing corruption by putting pressure on local officials. In this first phase, NGOs represent themselves as acting on behalf of society and responding to a public demand for increased anti-corruption efforts. For example, an article reports on a regional NGO engaged in

⁵⁰⁶ The building of constituencies through public campaigns can be seen as a legitimisation strategy for NGOs that help give them credibility. Tisne and Smilov remark on public campaigns: “*the campaigns aimed to build constituencies that would directly pressure the government to implement anti-corruption reform, hold the government to account and give civil society the necessary credibility and legitimacy for the groups to be taken seriously.*” In Tisne and Smilov (2004), p. 25.

⁵⁰⁷ Press release: Foundation A and Foundation B award \$260.000 in NGO watchdog competition, Tbilisi, 30 September 2002. I do not name the foundations for reasons of confidentiality.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ Eurasia Foundation (2004), p. 5.

the monitoring of the local budget and later funded through the programme: *“in the absence of an effective government internal auditing body, the Union assumed the role of independent auditor with dramatic effect. Originally a human rights organization, the Democrat Meskhs Union began monitoring the execution of local budgets because they regularly heard complaints from the citizens of Akhaltsikhe.”*⁵¹⁰ The article quotes the NGO head: *“we decided to tackle corruption in the local budget after so many people came to our offices with grievances involving local government corruption.”*⁵¹¹ The article presents the NGO initiative as responding to a public demand. Indeed, the NGO has changed its profile from a human rights organisation to an anti-corruption watchdog following complaints from citizens in this regional town. The NGO initiative is also a reaction to the absence of any serious government’s effort to tackle corruption. The article notes: *“despite a July 2000 presidential decree proclaiming the battle with corruption a national priority in Georgia, anti-corruption efforts have been largely ineffective. While a number of laws have been passed, they are poorly enforced and the national program is viewed by many as a political window dressing rather than an attempt to curb corruption.”*⁵¹² A project manager in a NGO funded by the programme underlines the cooperation between NGOs and the public in the first phase of the programme: *“the aim was to create mechanisms of public participation, where civil society organisations and public are together fighting and collaborating with each other to fight corruption. They [the projects] were directed to activate people, so people would become more active, more involved, less skeptical.”*⁵¹³ During the first phase of the programme, NGOs thus directly challenged local authorities through their exposure of corruption cases. This resulted in confrontation with the local government structures. For example, a representative of a regional NGO engaged in monitoring the finances of high schools was accused of misuse of grant funds by the school principals.⁵¹⁴ A court decided that the financial police was entitled to examine the NGO’s financial activities. Another regional NGO was robbed in 2003 and forced to suspend its anti-corruption project funded under the programme.⁵¹⁵ An article quotes the NGO head: *“our organization is well known for the local governmental agencies as we frequently publish the critical articles and implement important anticorruption projects, which of course is disliked by the authorities.”*⁵¹⁶ The article further

⁵¹⁰ Eurasia Foundation: “Georgia disrupting corruption: local anti-corruption efforts offer glimmer of hope”, Eurasia case studies, March 2003.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ Interview with NGO project manager, March 2008.

⁵¹⁴ See Liberty Institute: court decides against civil society sector, Tbilisi, 28 May 2004.

⁵¹⁵ Advocacy Georgia: CSOs protect the freedom of speech, 21 October 2003.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

notes: “the CSO representatives believe the facts of corruption in the governmental bodies they revealed was the main reason of this robbery.”⁵¹⁷

5.3.2.2 Second phase of the programme

The second phase of the programme starting in 2005 after the revolution appears to put more emphasis on the *expert role of NGOs*. This second phase opens with a call for proposals defining corruption as an important challenge for Georgian society.⁵¹⁸ The document says: “*corrupt practices have undermined the economic development of the country, have limited foreign and domestic investment and diverted funds, reduced citizens’ trust in government and fostered a sense of resentment in the country.*”⁵¹⁹ In this call for proposals, the programme is presented as responding to a demand in society for enhanced anti-corruption efforts, but also to a demand of the Georgian government for assistance in the implementation of these measures. The document says: “*The government has elaborated its anti-corruption vision, and has appealed to the international community for support and assistance. This initiative is a response to both the expectations of Georgian society and to the request from the government for assistance with the reform processes.*”⁵²⁰ The document further emphasises the role of civil society in post-revolutionary Georgia:

“Without a significant public demand for improved performance in the anti-corruption struggle, government efforts are unlikely to have a lasting impact. International donors can assist with the demand side of the equation, particularly at the local level. Anti-corruption efforts at this level can be built upon one of Georgia’s greatest assets, namely its dynamic and growing civil society. A vigorous civil society can play a significant role in reducing corruption by serving as critic, catalyst and advocate of the interests of the underrepresented. As critics, civil society actors can counter-balance government inertia as it pursues anti-corruption reforms. Civil society organizations can be catalysts for building political will by mobilizing the public and spurring the political leadership into action.”⁵²¹

The document notes the importance of civil society as a catalyst for anti-corruption measures, as it serves to mobilise the public and exert pressure on the government. The call for proposals further outlines the competition’s objectives: “*creating an accurate picture of corruption in the targeted regions and targeted fields; ensuring stronger accountability of public officials; ensuring proper reform process by facilitating public interest and discussion; supporting the*

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Request for proposals: Anti-corruption watchdog initiative, February 2005, p. 1.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid, p. 1.

⁵²⁰ Ibid, pp. 1-2.

⁵²¹ Ibid, p. 2.

*most active part of society and facilitating the consolidation of civil society; and facilitating an enabling environment for democratic development.*⁵²²

In the second phase of the programme, a stronger emphasis is put on the possession of knowledge by NGOs. The call for proposals outlines target areas for stronger public oversight and involvement: *“education, including schools, universities, and other institutions, and the Ministry of Education and Science; civil registry, the Ministry of Justice and the Justice system; drafting and executing the local government budget, general management of state finances; and healthcare and social assistance, on both the national and local levels including, but not limited to, municipal healthcare programs, infant-care programs, etc.”*⁵²³ These areas were identified in an evaluation of the first phase of the programme conducted in 2004.⁵²⁴ An “anti-corruption toolkit” is developed to guide the NGOs’ activities. An evaluation document presents the toolkit: *“a set of recommendations for civil society organizations on fighting corruption in the following areas: education, healthcare and social policy, budget, civil registry and justice reform. The Tool Kits were distributed among NGOs and other civic groups nationwide.”*⁵²⁵ The toolkit serves to provide directions to NGOs in the areas of activities identified in the call for proposals. A section of the toolkit emphasises the need for a rational approach to the corruption problem. It notes: *“right planning is one of the most essential pre-conditions for successful execution of any kind of programs, including anti-corruption programming. Corruption is a complex problem which requires complex approach, and designing such an approach is a painstaking job.”*⁵²⁶ In this section, the design of an anti-corruption programme is presented as a rational process involving different steps: 1) breaking up a problem, 2) clear and specific goals, 3) adaptation to circumstances, and 4) alliances.⁵²⁷ The report says on the necessity of breaking up a problem: *“taken as a whole corruption might appear inevitable to conquer, however, when broken into smaller composing pieces, its eradication turns into a gradual process with tangible results.”*⁵²⁸ The design of the anti-corruption programme in a rational sequence will help plan the NGOs’ activities and allow them achieve results. The report further notes the importance of building alliances to ensure the programme’s success: *“oftentimes alliances with other non-governmental organizations, the media and networks of public officials, legislators and advisers committed to*

⁵²² Ibid, p. 3.

⁵²³ Ibid. p. 2.

⁵²⁴ Telia, Rusudan: “Program evaluation: support for NGO watchdogs in Georgia’s regions: an anti-corruption initiative”, final report, Tbilisi, October 2004.

⁵²⁵ Scope of work: summative evaluation of the anti-corruption NGO Watchdogs Initiative Program, August 2007, p. 1.

⁵²⁶ Eurasia Foundation (2004), p. 11.

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

⁵²⁸ Ibid.

the program's objectives, are essential to its overall success.”⁵²⁹ The building of alliances and the construction of a coherent representation of NGOs’ activities as following from a rational sequence correspond to the different pillars of the production of success in anti-corruption activities.

The toolkit further provides direction for NGOs’ engagement in anti-corruption work after the revolution. First, NGOs should engage in awareness raising activities and mobilise the public by providing information on the costs of corruption: *“In general, the public attitude toward corruption in Georgia is negative; however, there seems to be little understanding of the actual price of corruption – of how it adversely affects an individual citizen. The fight against corruption will be well-served by enhancing awareness about the evils of corruption.”*⁵³⁰ The report further notes that the government is more open to cooperation after the revolution and lists areas of engagement for NGOs.⁵³¹ The expertise of NGOs is emphasised: *“Pulling together local and international expertise to assist the government in detailing its anti-corruption planning documents and elaborating concrete mechanisms for implementing effective systemic changes.”*⁵³² The report adds that the complexity of the problem makes it difficult for the government to address it in all spheres and *“the civil society organizations that specialize in different fields embrace the knowledge and experience that can serve as a solid base for the enhancement of the government’s efforts.”*⁵³³ The role of NGOs as mediators between the state and society is also emphasised in another area of engagement: *“strengthening communication channels between the government and citizens”*. The report remarks: *“Georgian civil society organizations have a better experience of working face-to-face with public and soliciting citizens’ input.”*⁵³⁴ The toolkit further identifies as an area of engagement the monitoring of reforms: *“overseeing implementation of government’s activities and providing an objective assessment of the successes and failures of the reform process.”*⁵³⁵ The NGOs are presented as “neutral observers” that can assess in an objective manner the success of the government’s reforms.

⁵²⁹ Ibid, p. 11.

⁵³⁰ Ibid, p. 9.

⁵³¹ Ibid.

⁵³² Ibid.

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ Ibid, p. 10.

5.3.2.3 Change of strategies in the two phases of the programme

The analysis of the two phases of the programme before and after the revolution reveals a change of strategies in the way NGOs build success in their activities. In the first phase of the programme, NGOs seek a public approval and profile themselves as watchdog organisations. They present their activities as responding to a public demand for enhanced anti-corruption efforts. One NGO reacts to public complaints about corruption in local government structures. Their efforts are based on an active cooperation with citizens and the government structures are seen as an *object* of the fight against corruption. However, we observe that their open criticism of local authorities render them vulnerable to strategies of delegitimisation that question their motives. Indeed, they are accused of following political motives or being themselves engaged in corruption through the misuse of grants. By acting as watchdogs, NGOs can legitimise their activities as responding to a public demand, but they can also be represented as political actors instead of anti-corruption actors. These strategies of delegitimisation against NGOs have the effect of locating the anti-corruption field in the field of politics and complicating the representation of the NGOs' activities as following from the disinterested purpose of tackling corruption.

The second phase of the programme after the revolution can be seen as responding to a strategy of removing the anti-corruption field from the field of politics. Similarly to international organisations, NGOs present the fight against corruption as a matter of possessing an adequate knowledge and corruption itself as a problem of knowledge. The representation of a technical knowledge as a means to combat corruption allows NGOs to present themselves as neutral and objective actors. The toolkit that is developed in the second phase of the programme contributes to the representation of a specific anti-corruption knowledge that can be used to advise the government and effectively guide the NGOs' activities. With their knowledge of the corruption causes and its negative effects, NGOs can also mobilise the public. Corruption is a problem of knowledge: citizens would more actively demand anti-corruption solutions if they would be aware of the problem, while the government would be more effective if it would know how to combat corruption. Corruption is also presented as a policy issue that can be tackled by selecting appropriate areas and methods of intervention. In the second phase of the programme, NGOs adopt a different strategy of building success as they present their activities as being inscribed in a rational and scientific approach to tackling corruption. In the toolkit, the NGOs' activities are legitimised *a priori* by organising them in a linear and logical sequence that involves formulating a problem, identifying its causes, dividing it into different policy sectors requiring different

solutions and identifying appropriate tools to implement these solutions.⁵³⁶ The NGOs' anti-corruption activities are also represented as being based on a lessons-learning process through the evaluation in the toolkit of NGOs' activities before the revolution and the identification of target areas for engagement as a result of the evaluation of the first phase of the programme.⁵³⁷ By representing their activities as being inscribed in a rational process, NGOs are less vulnerable to strategies of delegitimisation that question their motives.

The first and second phases of the programme thus reveal a change in the strategies of NGOs of building success in their activities. With the coming to power of a more reform-oriented and committed government after the revolution, NGOs chose a less confrontational course and emphasise their expertise. This emphasis allows them to move away from the field of politics and protect themselves from strategies of delegitimisation that question their motives. As the government appears more committed after the revolution and profiles itself as an anti-corruption actor in its own right, NGOs cannot easily portray it as an "object" of the fight against corruption. Thus, they appear to oscillate between different types of approval: a public approval and a government's approval to validate them as experts. By profiling themselves as experts, they avert accusations that they are politically motivated or not professional enough considering that a high number of highly qualified NGO members have joined the government ranks. A report on civil society anti-corruption activities notes changes in the relations to the government after the revolution: "*In recent years it has become a tendency that the NGOs not only publish monitoring results to point to problems but also to analyze the results and make relevant recommendations to the state to help eliminate the problems that have been revealed as a result of monitoring.*"⁵³⁸ NGOs acquire legitimacy not only by publicising monitoring results revealing shortcomings in the government's actions, but also by formulating recommendations.

5.3.2.4 Production of success

We observe different modes of the production of success in the anti-corruption programme. First, NGOs construct a coherent representation of their activities as following from certain theoretical assumptions on anti-corruption work. A representative of the organisation funding the

⁵³⁶ The contribution of the NGO Transparency International Georgia to the design of the toolkit further reinforces the representation that NGOs possess a particular anti-corruption expertise.

⁵³⁷ Michael notes how the representation of anti-corruption activity as an endless "lessons-learning process" allows it to develop without the question of the results being asked. See Michael (2004a), pp. 330-31.

⁵³⁸ Chkheidze (2007), p. 6.

programme gives the following assessment of the results achieved in the second phase of the programme:

“In general, they were effective [the anti-corruption projects]. At least, the NGOs received a certain experience in monitoring and in their interactions with the government; they received anti-corruption toolkits, material on how to conduct anti-corruption monitoring. I think this helped these NGOs to strengthen their capacities. But I cannot say that these anti-corruption watchdog initiatives contributed to more transparency and more accountability in the government. This would be an exaggeration. This helped these NGOs to master the tools of anti-corruption monitoring, this is the main result and the second result is that a part of these NGOs managed to mobilise communities in their regions to involve them in the anti-corruption monitoring.”⁵³⁹

The programme is regarded as successful despite the fact that its official objectives of enhancing the government’s transparency and involving the public in decision-making have not been clearly achieved as admitted by the NGO representative. The assumption on which the project is based, namely that well-trained NGOs can contribute to the fight against corruption, serves as a measure of the programme’s success, not its effective outcomes in terms of reducing corruption. The strengthening of the NGOs’ monitoring capacities is viewed in itself as an important result. A report on a corruption case that was investigated by one regional NGO funded under the programme shows that the exposure of corruption in local government structures does not necessarily lead to changes in public policies and a reduction of corruption. This report provides the following account: “*they [NGO members] were able to identify the executive official and information service officer, who accepted the bribe. They published the details of the case in their monthly bulletin, trying to draw public interest to the case. Some local authority trying to avoid much attention decided to dismiss information service officer, who was replaced by a mayor’s relative. The corrupt executive (friend) was transferred to other city and appointed to the higher post.*”⁵⁴⁰ Furthermore, evaluations of the programme show that NGOs have not been particularly successful in mobilising the public to fight corruption in the first phase of the programme. For example, an evaluation based on surveys that were conducted after the first phase of the programme notes: “*the respondents strictly neglect the anti-corruption activities in most of the chosen towns*”⁵⁴¹, and “*respondents mostly are pessimistic or they are not sure if the conducted services help in fighting against corruption.*”⁵⁴² Other sources attribute this lack of

⁵³⁹ Interview with NGO representative, May 2008.

⁵⁴⁰ Romelashvili, Elene: “The role of information in preventing corruption in local privatization process. Precautionary measures vs. post factum punishment”, Paper presented at the 10th international anti-corruption conference, Prague, 7-11 October 2001, p. 2. Available at: <http://www.10iacc.org/download/t1-02.pdf> (accessed January 2010)

⁵⁴¹ Centre for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia: Sociological research of target regional NGOs anti-corruption initiatives, February 2003, p. 1.

⁵⁴² Ibid, p. 3.

mobilisation to the lack of professionalism of NGOs. A project manager in a NGO funded in the first phase of the programme remarks: *“all of them [projects] were more or less successful. I cannot say that some of these projects have failed. But of course some were more effective and others a little bit less. [The] different results were also determined by the different experience of these NGOs. Some NGOs have already several years of activities, already experience of work, and some of them were just very young NGOs and they had institutional problems, they lacked experience and this was also one of the reasons why some of the projects maybe have more important results than others.”* A second evaluation of the first phase of the programme attributes setbacks in the implementation of the projects to a *“lack of awareness and professionalism of some of the organizations in regards to fighting corruption; weakness of the mechanisms identified to achieve set results (ineffective activities, failure to mobilize the public); different levels of public mobilization across the regions.”*⁵⁴³ In the account of the NGO representative, the NGOs’ failure to achieve certain results is attributed to their “institutional problems” and explained by their lack of capacities. The evaluation also notes the lack of professionalism of certain NGOs.⁵⁴⁴ These assessments on the programme’s results thus have the effect of reiterating the assumptions on which the projects are based, namely that anti-corruption activities should be supported by the dissemination of an anti-corruption knowledge. Further, the projects’ activities are organised in a rational sequence that link them with certain formal objectives and theoretical assumptions. One project manager in a NGO which was charged with coordinating the different grantees in the regions explains how its organisation has helped these NGOs create a ‘logframe’. The project manager says: *“we had trainings on creation of logframe for the project [...] [We] helped them to identify indicators of achieved results, to identify the expected results, what they are expecting to have, and segment the project chronologically. Develop a timetable and so on [...]”*⁵⁴⁵

A final element supporting claims to success by NGOs is the production of proofs of results. Similarly to donor organisations, NGOs face the problem of reporting success and tend to favour activities that are visible and involve a large number of participants. For example, one project manager explains that the organisation funding the programme was interested in the following type of activities: *“there were tools and techniques that we knew we wanted to see in the proposal, town hall meeting, open discussions, using promotional literature, publishing reports and media campaigns.”*⁵⁴⁶ These events and documentation serve to construct a representation of

⁵⁴³ Telia (2004), p. 13.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁵ Interview with NGO representative, March 2008.

⁵⁴⁶ Interview with NGO project manager, October 2007.

the project as having succeeded in mobilising the public by diffusing information and knowledge to a large number of participants.

5.3.3 A civil society anti-corruption project

An anti-corruption project implemented by two Georgian NGOs with the support of a donor organisation in 2005-2006 further illustrates the way NGOs construct a particular representation of their activities to build success. The analysis of the project reveals the fragility of these claims to success that can be undermined in the statements of local participants and need the support of an “interpretive community”.

5.3.3.1 The representation of the project and self-representation of NGOs

The project’s stated objective was: “*to promote a dynamic process for effectively preventing and combating corruption in Georgia by reinforcing the civil society pressure and encouraging broad public participation in this process.*”⁵⁴⁷ More specific objectives of the project included: “*developing the anti-corruption capacity of NGOs*” and “*promoting the citizens’ political process*”.⁵⁴⁸ The project was divided into two parts: the training of regional NGOs to increase their capacities to conduct anti-corruption work and the organisation of public discussions in different regional towns in Georgia on the topic of the fight against corruption. The trained NGOs were tasked with the moderation of these public discussions. One project objective was also to develop a culture of dialogue in Georgian society based on a particular methodology to organise public forums used in the United States. Project managers wanted to apply this methodology to a Georgian context.⁵⁴⁹

The project is based on certain assumptions on the role of civil society in the fight against corruption. For example, a document summarising the results of the public discussions and published at the end of the project says: “*corruption cannot be tackled successfully without political will and support from society.*”⁵⁵⁰ The document further reads: “*the authors of the project were confident and hopeful that by learning about public opinion on the problem of corruption and anti-corruption activities, this could help both NGOs and the appropriate*

⁵⁴⁷ Final narrative report, p. 2. I do not give details on the project documents for reasons of confidentiality.

⁵⁴⁸ Interim narrative report, p. 2

⁵⁴⁹ Interviews with project managers, February-March 2008.

⁵⁵⁰ Deliberation results, p. 5.

*governmental agencies to take public opinion into account when developing anti-corruption programmes. As a result, these programmes would get greater support.*⁵⁵¹ One assumption of the project is thus that the government's anti-corruption efforts must benefit from a public support to be effective, while NGOs can convey these public demands to state officials. Another assumption is that there is a lack of information on the fight against corruption in society. The document says: *"over the last 15 years, corruption has been the theme of numerous debates and discussions, but so far no real steps have been taken and few people have any concrete knowledge about anti-corruption measures."*⁵⁵² One NGO representative having participated in the project emphasises the role of NGOs in educating citizens:

"Civil society can do a lot of good things like this awareness raising things, like trying to influence the regular people in their communities, educating them about like what is corruption, what are the bad consequences of corruption, what a long-term negative impact it can bring to the society, in order that people know really when they are entering this corruption, what they are doing when for example paying this money to a certain agent or whoever it is."⁵⁵³

NGOs further construct a self-representation by contrasting their approaches with the government's anti-corruption methods. They point to deficiencies in the government's approach. For example, one NGO representative responsible for the project comments on the government's anti-corruption measures:

"It [the government's fight against corruption] started with various measures, part of anti-corruption initiatives were very, how to say it, sharp or hard, because they started with putting people in prison, arresting them. With taking away their property and that kind of thing, it was very aggressive steps they took. Part of population liked it, part a bit disappointed, because watching everyday how police is arresting former government members and how they are putting them in prison, all of them... Each day two or three big arrests. It was like, in the first couple of months, 'oh-oh they are doing something, it is good'. But then it continued, and people began to be worried about it."⁵⁵⁴

This project manager further explains the initial idea behind the project: *"we wanted to tell our government that not all the ways they use in their fight against corruption are liked by the population or at least to see what really people want."*⁵⁵⁵ The public discussions were aimed at presenting different approaches to fight corruption and allow citizens to learn about and discuss these alternatives. The project manager comments on the public discussions: *"very interesting thing is that none of them liked this prison thing. None of them were for arrest... at least a very*

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵⁵² Ibid, p. 13.

⁵⁵³ Interview with NGO representative, April 2008.

⁵⁵⁴ Interview with project manager, February 2008.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

small percentage of people liked these aggressive measures taken by the government.”⁵⁵⁶

Another project manager also remarks that the majority of people were not in favour of the government’s approach: “*because even if they support different ways [...] they agreed that the government has no clear vision and strategy, [it is] changing very fast.*”⁵⁵⁷ These accounts tend to marginalise the government’s approach consisting of arresting public officials after the revolution. By showing that corruption is still a topic of discussion in Georgian society, the project has also the effect of challenging the government’s representation that it has been eliminated. One project participant notes on the reaction of public officials to the project:

“It was a period when the government was saying everyday that they were fighting against corruption, that there was no corruption. They also had sometimes slogans, Georgia without corruption. It was really interesting to start speaking about corruption in that period exactly. I also remember that for example when they [the project managers] invited representatives from the Kutaisi local municipality to this forum, and when they told what the topic of the forum was. They [the Kutaisi local municipality] were really like very much surprised, ‘oh, we are going to talk about corruption? But we have no more corruption’. They were sure that ok, the discussion of corruption is closed in Georgia. [...] It was really interesting because we raised this topic again.”⁵⁵⁸

One project manager further describes the government’s fight against corruption:

“Talking about corruption, my personal opinion, I think that it just became transformed a bit, I do not think that it is kind of eliminated. Maybe on a lower level, it is really eliminated. You don’t need to pay money anymore to receive your passport. You need to pay 2 laris in order to be free from penalties, if you violated the rules of traffic. But I guess that corruption still exists on an upper level and probably, grew in size. I cannot see it with my eyes, I do not have any facts that prove this, but you know you are watching TV, you are observing some facts and making then your own decisions. I am assuming, this is my assumption based on my own observations. Corruption is still there, and even higher corruption than it was before.”⁵⁵⁹

The statement questions the government’s representation that corruption has been eradicated, while suggesting that high-level corruption may even have increased. The general conclusions that are drawn from the discussions held during the forums also show how the project’s representation is built in opposition to the government’s approach. The publication summarising the results of the public discussions outlines three principles that could serve as a basis to design future anti-corruption campaigns: “*government policies are spontaneous*”, “*there is no independent judiciary in the country*”, and “*the Georgian government, like any other government,*

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁷ Interview with project manager, March 2008.

⁵⁵⁸ Interview with project participant, April 2008.

⁵⁵⁹ Interview with project manager, February 2008.

will never be able to achieve positive results by means of centralized management system”.⁵⁶⁰

These conclusions thus reflect the NGOs’ views of the government’s shortcomings in the fight against corruption.

5.3.3.2 Interpreting the project’s results

We observe different modes of the production of success through the interpretation of the project’s results. First, the NGOs build success by producing proofs of results in the form of visible and quantifiable activities. Success is reported by being made quantifiable.⁵⁶¹ The NGOs indicate as project results in the final report on the project: the number of participants in capacity-building trainings, the number of moderators in public forums, the number of citizens in public forums, the number of participants having filled questionnaires and the number of copies of the brochure used during the public forums and of the final project publication.⁵⁶² The inclusion of positive comments by participants in the trainings in the final report shows the importance of building an “interpretive community” that can validate the project’s representation.⁵⁶³ The final report on the project further lists the skills acquired by NGOs and the way they can help these organisations continue their anti-corruption work:

“- By improving their non-confrontational, problem-solving advocacy skills NGOs will be more effective in their fight against corruption;
- by improving their coalition building skills, NGOs will be able to purposefully build the partnerships and coalitions with other NGOs both in their locality and with other regions of Georgia, thus amplifying their common voice and increasing the pressure against the corruption;
- with cooperative approach to advocacy and coalition building skills, NGOs will get far more sophisticated tool for their anti-corruption initiatives; they will be able to establish partnerships with governmental agencies and together with them engage in joint actions against corruption;
- by developing their campaigning skills, NGOs will be able organize various anti-corruption campaigns on their local (regional) level, campaigns for protection of interests of their constituencies, and other types of public campaigns;
- by engaging in citizens’ political process NGOs will gain the sympathy, but most importantly – enlist the support from their constituencies; broad public support will legitimize their efforts in fighting corruption.”⁵⁶⁴

A project manager comments on the trainings: *“We made different trainings, built skills that in our opinion were important for NGOs that are working with corruption issues. For instance,*

⁵⁶⁰ Deliberation results, p. 58.

⁵⁶¹ The donor organisation asks explicitly for this quantification of results in the standard form that NGOs need to use to report on their projects. Final narrative report, p. 14.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Ibid, pp. 15-17.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 14.

*conflict management, negotiation, advocacy, working with the media.*⁵⁶⁵ A project manager in the donor organisation having funded the project also views the strengthening of the NGOs' capacities as the most important result of the project.⁵⁶⁶ The training of NGOs as a result of the project responds easily to the criteria of sustainability and quantification demanded by donor organisations to measure project success. The list of skills transferred to regional NGOs reiterates certain assumptions on the role of civil society in the fight against corruption: NGOs can build coalitions including different stakeholders, they can cooperate with the local authorities and convey public demands and they can stimulate the public's involvement in anti-corruption initiatives. The list reveals the work of interpretation that sustains claims to success in anti-corruption activity, as it constructs *a posteriori* the skills acquired by NGOs as specific "anti-corruption skills". The transfer of skills is described as serving to develop "*the anti-corruption capacity of NGOs*" in the project's final report.⁵⁶⁷ The final report thus reflects a work of interpretation that links the project's practices with the project's official objectives of combating and preventing corruption. A further element that reveals this work of constructing a particular representation of the project is the inclusion of NGOs in a region populated by a national minority at the request of the donor organisation. Since no NGOs in the region had responded to the call for proposals, applications from local NGOs were directly solicited.⁵⁶⁸ The inclusion of this particular region in the project does not respond to local needs, but reflects the priorities of the donor organisation.⁵⁶⁹

5.3.3.3 Threats to the representation and the importance of an "interpretive community"

The claims to success of NGOs remain fragile and require the enrolment of supporters or an "interpretive community" that can validate the project's representation. Statements by project participants in informal conversations reveal that the project's representation can be undermined. For example, one project participant questions whether the trainings conducted during the project can be considered as "anti-corruption trainings": "*I'm not sure that it was a specific training for anti-corruption NGOs. Because in fact they consider that participants are already working in NGOs, they are doing this job already and I think the goal was to give them some specific skills, not concretely how to deal with anti-corruption, for example conflict management which is not*

⁵⁶⁵ Interview with project manager, February 2008.

⁵⁶⁶ Interview with project manager in donor organisation, October 2007.

⁵⁶⁷ Final narrative report, p. 2.

⁵⁶⁸ Final narrative report, p. 4.

⁵⁶⁹ One project manager also notes that the participants to the public discussion in this region were the least active. Interview with project manager, February 2008.

*needed only in anti-corruption projects.*⁵⁷⁰ This statement questions the existence of a particular anti-corruption knowledge that can be disseminated in the NGO community. Further, the trained NGOs do not appear to have used their skills to conduct other anti-corruption projects: some NGOs have reportedly organised public discussions but on other topics than corruption.⁵⁷¹

Further statements on the project question its relevance. One project manager explains that the project was perhaps not adapted to the real needs and interests of the public.⁵⁷² Georgian citizens participating in the public discussions expected that the NGOs would help sensitise government officials to their basic needs. The project manager relates:

“After the forums, people were coming to us, I don’t know how, they thought probably that we are from some upper body, I don’t know what they thought, but they were asking us to advocate for them and to bring their voice to Tbilisi and say that they do not have electricity, that they are surviving these hard times without electricity and their children are reading books at candle lights, you know it is so difficult to listen to these problems, and it was very hard for us. [...] sometimes we thought that talking with this people about corruption is much to much, because they do not have even the basic needs satisfied and you are talking to them and talking about corruption and policies. [...] so it was kind of very weird to go there and to talk about corruption. ‘Let’s talk about corruption, but here I am living in the darkness you know, can you do something for us? Can you go and maybe write in your newspaper that people are living in Guria without electricity.’⁵⁷³

This statement implies that NGOs based in the capital Tbilisi are rather disconnected from the real needs of the population in the rest of the country, especially in remote mountain areas. It has the effect of undermining the NGOs’ claims that they act as mediators between the state and society and represent the public’s interests. The same project manager also discusses the limits of the idea of mobilising the public to fight corruption.⁵⁷⁴ The public discussions revealed that corruption is understood in the population as being part of a survival strategy to access some basic needs such as gas and electricity.⁵⁷⁵

Another project manager admits to the difficulty of measuring success in development projects. On the question of whether the project was successful, he says: “*yes, because it was the first time. Of course successful doesn’t mean success. If we speak about general success, general outputs, of course it is not very important. But now I believe this is one of the important ways of involving society. They [citizens] try to speak their own ideas. This is a slogan of the Georgian government*

⁵⁷⁰ Interview with project participant, March 2008.

⁵⁷¹ Interview with project manager, February 2008.

⁵⁷² Ibid.

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.

that society is not ready. It was one clear result of this project. Of course nobody takes into account these ideas of course."⁵⁷⁶ The project manager reflects on the nature of success ("*successful doesn't mean success*"), implying that success is not always quantifiable. He sees the value of the project in having shown that Georgian citizens have opinions to express, opinions that are not taken into account by the government. Measurements of the project's success are thus based on the assumptions that underlie it, namely the lack of communication between citizens and the government.

A further element that reveals a disjuncture between the project's practices and their representation in official documents is the apparent lack of interest of government officials for the project's results. This lack of interest thus questions the project's objective of having an impact on the government's anti-corruption policies. One project manager explains that the government officials were not invited to the public discussions: "*We avoided inviting people from the government, people would not talk in the presence of government. People would be not so free in their opinions. We asked all NGOs to avoid this, inviting officials.*"⁵⁷⁷ She further explains that it was a dilemma for the project managers: "*It was our dilemma, we were thinking about what to do. Usually, it is not a bad thing to invite the government and they listen to the people. This is in their direct interest what people think. Usually, in normal situation they do so. In America, I think they are doing so. In our case, we finally decided to avoid this. All of our NGOs told us that they know for sure that people would not talk with [in the presence of] officials.*"⁵⁷⁸ One actor is thus missing that would validate the representation of NGOs as conveyors of public demands and as anti-corruption experts. The project manager also explains that government officials did not attend the final presentation of the project's results. The project manager says: "*Yes, we made a presentation of the results, but nobody came, nobody from the government. NGOs came, international NGOs, journalists, and it was covered in several newspapers and also on TV channels. But despite the fact that we sent the invitations to virtually all government structures that could be relevant in this case... [...] but as strange as it sounds nobody came [...] We had many international donors, USAID came, the EU came. All these international organisations, the majority of the Georgian NGOs came.*"⁵⁷⁹ International organisations and other Georgian NGOs thus act as an "interpretive community" that serve to sustain the project's claims to success. The decision to publish the project's results in English in the form of a report can also be seen as an attempt to ensure the approval of these actors. The

⁵⁷⁶ Interview with project manager, March 2008.

⁵⁷⁷ Interview with project manager, February 2008.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid.

report itself is presented as a source of knowledge and expertise on anti-corruption measures. One project manager explains how the distribution of the project's results to government officials resembled a sort of ritual: *"yes, it was dissemination, typical. 'Oh thanks, it is very interesting, oh thank you very much we are glad of collaboration and nothing more'."*⁵⁸⁰ This statement reveals that the cooperation with government officials is more an element in the representation of the project, where each actor plays a specific role, than a concrete project objective.

Statements of project participants further reveal how the project's initial objectives are adapted and reinterpreted during its implementation. For example, one project participant explains: *"I think that the programme was mostly focused on awareness raising and community participation, community mobilization as well, as well as making a linkage between the different groups in society. It was the period when there was no really direct communication between the government and society."*⁵⁸¹ Less emphasis is put on the anti-corruption dimension of the project, while other project's goals appear more important such as the aim of testing a particular methodology for organising public discussions in Georgia. For example, one project manager comments on the project's results: *"We were satisfied because we were able to find different things. First of all, that people are able to talk peacefully and normally and listen to each other, that deliberation methodology can work in Georgia, that if someone needs to know what people think, then it is really possible."*⁵⁸² Another project manager explains: *"the main goal, objective of this activity was that when people will return home, among their neighbours, they will speak about this. [...] for the first time, they will try to think about concrete problems. [It is] very difficult to measure how society's attitude change [...] but step-by-step people's mentality will be changed."*⁵⁸³ This project manager explains that the project made an important contribution in changing people's attitudes and views. The final report says: *"one of the primary objectives of the project was to achieve the change in public's attitude towards corruption and raise awareness on it. We think that this objective was accomplished very well."*⁵⁸⁴

Other statements of project participants reveal conflicts within the project community that are concealed in the official representation of the project. One project participant mentions conflicts on the labelling of the government's actions after the revolution as "anti-corruption measures" in a brochure used during the public discussions. He says: *"we tried to change some kind of*

⁵⁸⁰ Interview with project manager, March 2008.

⁵⁸¹ Interview with project participant, April 2008.

⁵⁸² Interview with project manager, February 2008.

⁵⁸³ Interview with project manager, March 2008.

⁵⁸⁴ Final narrative report, p. 15.

assessments which were made on the concrete activities of the new government. For example, there was one part which was saying that the new government began a very aggressive fight against corruption and some kind of anti-corruptional activities. [...] Not every participant in that project believed that these activities were assessed the right way and things like that. Anti-corruptional movement, first anti-corruptional steps of this government that we have in Georgia after the revolution were very problematic and discussed. [...] So, in Georgia people have always different political views, so not everyone agreed to have mentioned in that book that the first year was very successful for the new government.”⁵⁸⁵ He further explains why the label “anti-corruption” was contested:

“For example, the sentence was that the Georgian government began to fight against corruption for example in the November of 2005 or something like that. And most part of the participants thought that the thing that they begun cannot be called fight against corruption. You must admit that they just took money from people who stole for example two years ago. But not the classical definition of fighting against corruption [...] There were people who were made to give big money back and they were people who were not made. So it cannot be considered as fighting against corruption. Some kind of dual standards and things like that were very popular during that year. And it was the reason, because sentences like that, if someone like you would read, will give no information about the real situation. And then you think, ‘Oh ok, during 2005 they made anti-corruption activities. In fact, only partly these activities can be considered as anti-corruption.’”⁵⁸⁶

He further describes what type of activities he considers to be “anti-corruption activities”: “*When you are making an anti-corruption activity, you must for example use the court, not call someone and say if you do not want to go to jail, bring me money which you have stolen and after that if I am not sure where this money went. It went to some kind of special funds, like Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior. This is just the process when you are taking money from people who stole it, this is not an anti-corruptional activity. After the anti-corruption activity, someone must go to jail for example.*”⁵⁸⁷ The statements thus reveal disagreements within the NGO community on the qualification of the government’s measures.

Differences of views on the project’s results and practices are thus concealed in the official representation of the project. Informal statements of project participants show how the validation of the project’s representation depends on an “interpretive community”, as it can be easily undermined.

⁵⁸⁵ Interview with project participant, March 2008.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.

5.3.4 Conclusion

The analysis of civil society anti-corruption projects reveals both the fragility of claims to success in anti-corruption that depend on the validation of supporters and the difficulty of maintaining a representation of anti-corruption activity as following from the disinterested purpose of tackling corruption. The NGOs' strategies of building success are based on constructing a coherent representation of their activities. However, NGOs' claims to success are fragile and can be undermined as revealed in informal statements on civil society projects. Further, the production of success is rendered difficult by the fact that NGOs depend on different types of approval to maintain their representations of success. In particular, their attempt to represent themselves as conveying public demands and mobilising citizens against corruption in government structures can make them vulnerable to accusations that they follow political motives. By viewing the government agencies as an "object" of the fight against corruption, they become vulnerable to strategies of delegitimisation questioning their motives. Watchdog activities can contribute to locating the anti-corruption field in the field of politics. At the same time, the representation of NGOs as mediators of the public interests is an important element in their representations, as they can also be accused of lacking a social base. The two phases of the anti-corruption programme before and after the revolution show how NGOs change their tactics and profile themselves as experts in order to avoid accusations of politicisation. The representation of a technical knowledge that sustains their activities serves to protect them from these accusations. However, their representation as anti-corruption experts depends on a validation of government officials that will accept their recommendations. This validation appears difficult to secure as noted in a report on civil society anti-corruption activities in Georgia: "*Do relevant public institutions take into account the recommendations prepared on the basis of the results of anti-corruption monitoring? – The results are not very clear.*"⁵⁸⁸ The fact that the representations of NGOs are targeted at different audiences complicates their strategies to produce success.

⁵⁸⁸ Chkheidze (2007), p. 6. A report on NGOs' anti-corruption activities in Georgia further notes how NGOs need to seek different types of approval and must ensure that their projects are supported by the public: "*Many organizations in Georgia have achieved considerable successes in lobbying activities, however, public, without being the part of the process, is not always informed about these achievements. The progress is clear to the organizations directly involved in their achievement, it is delineated in the reports to the donors, it is known to a circle of active NGOs in Tbilisi, but it is not always felt by ordinary citizens throughout the country.*" in Eurasia Foundation (2004), p. 11.

VI Conclusion: reuniting the tales of the fight against corruption and the nature of the anti-corruption field

6.1 Tales of the fight against corruption

The story of the “elusive question of success in the fight against corruption” is multifaceted, as it seems to tell us very different tales. One tale is of the easiness and effortlessness with which anti-corruption appears to flourish and develop as if there were no obstacles on its way. It easily finds its way into every development project as a “cross-cutting issue” that needs to be “mainstreamed”. It is integrated as a self-evident necessity into a variety of programmes ranging from education to the defence and environment sectors. Anti-corruption thus offers a brilliant and polished surface, one of endless optimism and confidence: confidence in the never-ending process of learning, of overcoming, of progressing, of testing and gaining new knowledge. Anti-corruption appears to be guided by this unending belief in the capacity of knowledge to improve conditions in developing countries, to solve problems, to open new horizons. New solutions can always be found, there is a solution to every problem. Anti-corruption thus appears to bloom and offers the image of well attended and busy conferences, of growing networks of busy practitioners holding workshops and seminars around the world and providing advice on reforms and of countries learning from each other in an ever-going search for new methods.⁵⁸⁹

However, behind the shiny surface of global anti-corruption activity, one can find another tale with darker undertones. This tale is one of fatigue, of disillusionment, a darker sub-tale of “déjà-vu”, disenchantment and cynicism. We can see how bemused looks and a chorus of cynical voices greet every new anti-corruption initiative as yet another agency, another commission, another lie and another scheme. Amid this cynicism, we also hear more vociferous voices calling the whole enterprise of fighting corruption a farce, accusing of double standards and calling for retaliation and revenge against the power holders. One veil is being lifted on corruption, one public official arrested and this arrest put in the spotlight to better hide the elite corruption, the corruption we cannot see and touch. It is as if the fight against corruption was as dirty as corruption itself, a cynical farce that definitely belongs to the shady world of politics. We can see how these bemused looks and the lifting of shoulders accompanying every new initiative say that “we know the tricks and won’t be fooled by those in power”, “we understand these power games hiding behind every anti-corruption action”. Another vision that is looming behind the polished

⁵⁸⁹ It is this easiness with which anti-corruption activity develops that inspires Sampson to remark: “*it is as if anti-corruptionism persists independently of its goal.*” In Sampson (2009), p. 5.

surface of anti-corruption activity is one of a sea of projects with no clear ends and no clear results, a multitude of initiatives that also offer different facets. Further, we hear the recurring lament amid this proliferation of initiatives that where there is no political will nothing can be done, as a narrative that seeks to give meaning to the reality of elusive development outcomes.

Anti-corruption activity thus offers different facets: the shiny surface, busyness, haste and easiness of global anti-corruption activity and the darker undertones and “shadiness” of the domestic fight against corruption.

How can the same activity be at the same time “shiny” and “dirty”, unfolding a coherent sequence of steps and producing a rather incoherent sea of small projects with no clear ends? Producing both optimism and cynicism and contempt? Anti-corruption is at the same time a successful activity without question, an undisputable progress in the “management of the state”, and a farce, already doomed from the start: it cannot even “fail” as its only purpose is to fool us. It is at the same time a coherent and rational activity and a rather chaotic world of small projects with no clear ends. It appears as if different logics inhabit the same activity.

Amid these narratives, we find little tales of anti-corruption such as the story of post-revolutionary Georgia. Georgia unites all of the elements of the different tales and sub-tales of anti-corruption and reveals the elusiveness of success. It is hailed as a poster child for successful anti-corruption reforms, relentlessly progressing in international rankings, but one can also hear more cautious voices: are the methods right? Are they “proper” and “clean”? In this chorus of voices, we also hear more vociferous attacks that accuse the Georgian leaders of sham, of presenting a shiny façade of reforms to better deceive, to hide their hidden wealth or other shady deals as if nothing had really changed from the time of Shevardnadze. “This new elite only appears more sophisticated and even more skilled at deceiving us and foreigners”.

Georgia as a success story, but also one with undertones of unease, as if nothing is ever quite as it seems. Georgia is also the difficult pupil, the one that wants to be seen as the best pupil in the class, but also the one that enrages the teachers by questioning the “rules of the game”. This pupil tries to jump in international rankings, eager to “pass its exams” quicker than others. It seems to fit well with the demands of the teachers, but perhaps too much and then it goes in unexpected directions.

The different scripts in the story of the fight against corruption are thus unfolding in Georgia and we also observe the ease with which young officials in government ministries or NGO officials navigate between these narratives. These young officials appear to “polish the shiny surface” of anti-corruption by attending meetings and acquiescing to donor advice. But we can also hear them whispering about the uselessness of these instruments: Again another strategy? Another initiative? Do we have the capacities to welcome all these donor projects? They adhere to the official scripts of development, but they can also undermine them in informal statements. They show two faces and move easily from one world to the other, from one language to the other. In the world of NGOs, we also hear different tales being told: the official narrative of optimism and coherence of development and more sceptical undertones, the jokes and cynical remarks that colour the world of donor projects.

My work of analysis of the fight against corruption in Georgia has aimed at reuniting these two tales of anti-corruption: easiness and fragility, “shininess” and “shadiness”. *How to reconcile the story of the very existence of claims to success in anti-corruption, the “miracle” that produces anti-corruption and let it prosper and bloom, and the fragility of these same claims, the same easiness with which anti-corruption threatens to be dragged into a darker world of relentless accusations and cynicism.*

The first story is thus of the easiness with which anti-corruption develops. This easiness is all the more singular since anti-corruption cannot prove to have had any concrete impact in terms of reducing corruption. By which “miracle” does it flourish without concrete proofs of its impact? Rather than trying to identify these results, an elusive task, and measure them against the assumptions that support anti-corruption activity, I have directed my attention to the mechanisms supporting these very claims to success. *The question is not whether anti-corruption programmes are successful or not, but how success is produced.*⁵⁹⁰ How anti-corruption activity succeeds in representing itself as successful or in being perceived in categories of success and failure? A central foundation of the production of success is the *building of coherent representations of activities*. It is this coherence and the claims of order that lends anti-corruption its “polished surface”. Anti-corruption represents itself as a coherent sequence of logical steps, a rational sequence that is motivated by the search for methods to combat corruption. If anti-corruption activity cannot legitimise itself through the recourse to a decline in corrupt behaviours, it will be justified in reverse: through the coherence and soundness of the models that support it. It is this soundness of policies and theoretical designs that provide a measure of success, instead

⁵⁹⁰ See Mosse (2003).

of any concrete outcomes of anti-corruption programmes in terms of a decline in corruption. Anti-corruption thus succeeds in presenting a shiny surface to our eyes, as a rational enterprise whose sole purpose is the provision of technical solutions to the corruption problem. It succeeds in presenting itself as being guided by instrumental rationality and providing in a mechanical and disinterested fashion the necessary knowledge and skills to eradicate corruption. *The first momentum of anti-corruption activity is thus one of the building of coherence, the building of a representation of rational knowledge.*

The phenomenon of anti-corruption activity can thus be comprehended as signifying the emergence of a field in the Bourdieu's sense of the term. The concept of field draws the attention to the way anti-corruption succeeds in presenting the actions of its agents as being *disinterested* and solely motivated by the purpose of tackling corruption. All efforts are supposed to converge towards this goal, a goal that is admittedly elusive, but a goal worthy enough of all the activity and thinking devoted to anti-corruption. As one anti-corruption practitioner remarks on the never-ending process of combating corruption: "*A field you can never stop working in [...] there will always be corruption [...] [We] keep on thinking. [...] [We] keep on thinking on the best way to do things.*"⁵⁹¹

However, behind this shiny surface, we hear more doubtful and critical voices. *The second momentum of anti-corruption activity is one of fragility, when the representation threatens to crumble, when it does not appear to be so well protected from dissonant voices and criticisms that seek to unveil it as a sham.* It threatens to be dragged into another world, not the shiny world of technical rationality, of order and coherence, but a darker world, where lies are suspected behind official truths, where shiny facades are already lies. Anti-corruption is seen through the prism of the "shady world of politics", where accusations and counter-accusations of corruption nurture the endless political game. Nothing is as it seems in a world where any so-called truth already conceals a deception. Cynicism also looms in the chaotic world of anti-corruption projects with statements questioning the use of these initiatives. The second momentum of anti-corruption is thus *a momentum when the veil is lifted, when one seeks to unveil the "true face" of anti-corruption as a dirty game or as a useless endeavour.* Anti-corruption cannot protect itself from these counter-claims that attribute other motives to the project of fighting corruption.

It is as if two stories are permanently cohabiting in anti-corruption. If we try to reunite these two tales of the story of the fight against corruption, we see that they converge into a story of *failure*.

⁵⁹¹ Interview with representative of international organisation, November 2008.

But this failure is not the failure of the proclaimed goal of anti-corruption to tackle the corruption problem, but the failure to assert one logic, to assert one script to read anti-corruption. It is the failure of securing an unquestioned adherence to the representation of technocratic rationality or the representation of anti-corruption activity as a disinterested attempt to solve the corruption problem through the recourse to an apolitical and technical knowledge. We observe that anti-corruption is not so well immunised from counter-claims that seek to question the genuineness and efficiency of anti-corruption measures. It fails to become so self-convincing and evident an activity that it is simply *taken-for-granted*. Anti-corruption is not endowed with the *naturalness* of the Bourdieu's field that precludes any questions on the field's logic.

Why this failure?

To explain the failure of anti-corruption, we first need to go back to the story of development and of the beginnings of anti-corruption activity and shed light on its contradictions. Is the failure not already here in the inherent contradictions of development? Is the "virus" that threatens to grind the machine not from the start in the development project itself, in its dilemmas?

Then, we find at the intersections of the two tales of anti-corruption the "power of validation". It is this "magical power" that "breathes life" into inert documents and transforms them into instruments with an impact. The shiny coherence of anti-corruption activity needs to be protected from counter-claims. It needs an "interpretive community" that will read out of the unpredictability of development practices and their "messiness" and out of inert documents the script of authorised and official representations. But we observe the unease with which representations of technical rationality are being validated on a local level and the dilemmas at the core of this process of validation. Coherence claims are not easily sustained by actors. When the anti-corruption field is transported in a domestic context, conflicts erupt between actors in the field and strategies of delegitimation are unleashed that seek to undermine these actors' representations. These strategies compromise the coherence of the field.

Finally, we arrive in the domestic context of anti-corruption activity. It is here that we find the "shady world of politics" in which anti-corruption is relentlessly dragged. It is a world where words are divorced from deeds, where words are understood as serving only to distract the attention from the other ends pursued by actors.

6.2 The story of development and of anti-corruption

In the story of development, we observe the same relentless optimism and shiny coherence as in global anti-corruption activity. Development is a dream of instrumental rationality, of the power of knowledge to improve lives and bring an end to world poverty. As already noted, the representation of technical knowledge, of the unending capacity of knowledge to find solutions to development problems forms the central foundation of the development project. Easterly quotes US President Harry Truman's inaugural address on 20 January 1949: "*We must embark on a bold new program for ... the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery... For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people.*"⁵⁹² Similarly, anti-corruption is defined as a matter of technical expertise, of possessing an adequate knowledge.⁵⁹³

This centrality of knowledge in development and anti-corruption coincides with a project of *depoliticisation*. The mechanical provision of an apolitical knowledge has the effect of removing the political dimension of development interventions and distracting from the question of their legitimacy. After all, development organisations directly engage in the domestic affairs of third countries. In particular, raising the issue of corruption has a political dimension, as it questions the normative foundations of a state by implying that public officials are not serving the public good but pursuing private interests. Development is thus also the dream of a rational enterprise standing above the world of politics and offering non-political and neutral solutions. Development operates as a machine engaged in a relentless work of depoliticising concepts, of emptying terms of their political connotations, recycling them in the development discourse as policy and managerial issues, transforming social and political relations into managerial concerns. Concepts such as "participation", "good governance", and "empowerment" are rendered neutral and presented as non-political, universal objectives. They stand above political discussions; they become "development targets" that can be achieved through a well-designed plan, by employing the knowledge and skills of development organisations. Development problems such as corruption are defined as a problem of capacities, of the absence of knowledge

⁵⁹² Easterly (2002), p. 7.

⁵⁹³ For example, Klitgaard observes in 1998: "*In the decade ahead the paradigmatic problem will not be inducing governments to do something about corruption but deciding what in fact should be done and how.*" and adds referring to committed governments: "*Their problem is less political will than know-how.*" In Klitgaard, Robert: International Cooperation against Corruption, Finance and Development, March 1998, p. 5. Available at: <http://www.imf.org/external/Pubs/FT/fandd/1998/03/pdf/klitgaar.pdf> (accessed January 2011)

that can be solved through capacity-building programmes and other technocratic interventions. This representation concurs with notions of dysfunctional statehood, of weak and failed states lacking capacities and demanding external interventions to “fix” their deficient structures.

Development is thus the “anti-politics machine” as captured by Ferguson.⁵⁹⁴ This automatism of the machine is also part of the representation that development projects of itself as a rational enterprise, a mechanical endeavour of offering solutions. It concurs with a representation of *disinterestedness*, of development bureaucracies preoccupied only with the achievement of goals. The practices of international development are thus represented as neutral and following apolitical goals of achieving common and universal goods. In the representation of knowledge, development organisations and Western countries are portrayed as the “givers of knowledge” as the sites where knowledge is accumulated.

In contrast, developing countries are portrayed as mere recipients of this knowledge. However, we observe that the machine of development becomes tired, as results are scarce. Slowly, critical voices are raised that questions the representation of development as a goal-oriented machine. Where is the money going? Why are developing countries still poor, if not poorer? Is the money not disappearing in the pockets of a corrupt elite? What is actually development doing? What does it produce? What happens in the “black box of development”? This concert of voices is growing amid cynical accounts relating the discrepancy between the relative affluence of development workers and the enduring poverty of the local population.⁵⁹⁵ The development community is increasingly confronted with questions of accountability, the need to account for results.⁵⁹⁶ The suspicion exists that inefficient programmes are being imposed on developing countries which do not have the effects they proclaim. The development bureaucracy is being criticised and calls for more accountability become pressing. New concepts are thus introduced to breathe new life into the development machine, in particular the paradigm of “local ownership”. It serves to counter criticism that development programmes have little effects considering the lack of commitment of governments in developing countries or they are being imposed on reluctant partners. It further responds to the criteria of sustainability in development programmes. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005 promotes ownership and stipulates that developing countries must take the lead in setting their strategies, while donors

⁵⁹⁴ Ferguson (1994).

⁵⁹⁵ See for example Mayr, Walter: Exotic birds in a cage: Criticism grows of Afghanistan’s bloated NGO industry, Spiegel Online International, 22 September 2010. Available at: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,718656,00.html> (accessed January 2011)

⁵⁹⁶ For an example of these critical voices and calls for more accountability in development, see the blog “Aidwatch” from the Development Research Institute at the New York University: <http://aidwatchers.com/>.

will align themselves behind these objectives.⁵⁹⁷ However, the introduction of these concepts that are supposed to give new “steam” to the machine of development is not without consequences. In effect, they risk grinding and “contaminating” the machine with another logic than the technocratic logic of development. Suddenly, ownership directs the attention to questions that were previously hidden behind development’s shiny coherence. It opens the box of paradoxes of development as it draws the attention to the question of *interests* and the inherent limitations of technical knowledge. A conflict appears to emerge between “political will/ownership” and “technical knowledge”.

6.3 The elusive search for political will/ownership

The representation of development and of anti-corruption as a rational enterprise of applying technical solutions needs a *local validation* to be perceived as effective. We observe how the process of obtaining this local validation presents certain dilemmas, as it inevitably draws the attention to the question of *interests* in development.

In the absence of political will, anti-corruption activity risks being exposed as a useless endeavour or a sham. An extract of a report on anti-corruption initiatives in Georgia before the revolution shows how a proliferation of initiatives without clear effects tends to produce disillusionment:

“Despite of the multiple efforts of the international actors, Georgian watchdogs and independent media, the country’s system of governance could not be opened up to public and the problem of corruption continued to hold sway. The government’s actions against corruption were of a formal nature with the only goal to be able to put something on paper about Georgia’s ongoing struggle against corruption. The program developed by the ACWG [Anti-Corruption Working Group], which received positive assessment from Georgian, as well as foreign specialists, was never executed. Based on this program in 2001 the president issued Decree 95 on Immediate Anti-Corruption Activities, which listed specific measures different state institutions had to carry out in order to combat corruption within their fields. [...] During 2001 and 2002 several Georgian NGOs formed a coalition to monitor the implementation of the anti-corruption Decree. The results of the monitoring were extremely negative. [...] In January of 2002 at one of the government sessions Shevardnadze once again stressed the importance of the fight against corruption and threatened the government officials to start “mass repression” unless they became more critical of corruption and virtuous in their activities. The thread did not translate into action.”⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁷ See Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf> (accessed January 2010).

⁵⁹⁸ Eurasia Foundation (2004), p. 6.

However, the introduction of a notion of political will into the anti-corruption discourse is not without dilemmas. An extract of a report on ownership in anti-corruption projects reveals the central paradox that emerges from the juxtaposition of the two categories of “political will/ownership” and “technical knowledge”:

“A key question is whether anti-corruption projects can ever be truly ‘owned’ in the limited sense of government ownership. This has to do with the nature of corruption and the interests at stake. Political will has long been acknowledged as one of the key preconditions for successfully fighting corruption. Without political will, reforms (which are a technocratic answer) are bound to fail. Yet, reforms will, if successful, remove the gains made from corruption by the ruling elites. Thus, such measures presuppose a political will to forego gains, privileges, and influence. It is difficult to imagine how and why political elites would voluntarily relinquish such advantages. It would thus seem that political ownership of anti-corruption projects is an elusive objective to pursue as it might mean the reduction of opportunities for political elites to secure wealth or influence through corrupt practices. The elites would have no incentive to own projects that, if successfully implemented, would run contrary to their material and political interests.”⁵⁹⁹

The notion of political will and ownership in the context of the fight against corruption is rather elusive as the same actors which are assumed to benefit from the corruption system are supposed to combat it. In the absence of political will, technocratic reforms cannot be successful, but the representation that corrupt elites would want to reform a system that benefits them is difficult to sustain.

A further extract from the report on ownership reveals how the representation of a technocratic knowledge has the effect of fixing boundaries between “insiders” and “outsiders”. The extract discusses the dilemmas arising from the adherence to the paradigm of broad-based ownership as outlined in declarations such as the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda:

“By adhering literally to the documents, we might inadvertently encounter perverse situations where weak civil society organisations and an indifferent executive and legislature are engaged as ‘key stakeholders’. Consulting counterparts of such deficient calibre would not be a good basis for producing ownership of the detailed implementation of aid-financed projects. The needs and interests of all must obviously be taken into account. But it would hardly be in the interest of legitimate ownership to add parties who are simply out to control the reform process, and/or to skim off resources, and/or who lack the capacity to work on technical documents, or are at the mercy of particular interests. Such ‘inclusiveness’ would rather be a perversion of ownership and counterproductive in terms of aid effectiveness. In such circumstances, it would probably be better to leave the playing field to a group of key professional insiders who have a stake in positive outcomes.”⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁹ Devine, Vera/Trivunovic, Marijana/Mathisen, Harald: From Paris to the anti-corruption project: examining the feasibility of ownership, U4 Practice Insight, 2010:1, p. 5.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.

The boundaries of the field are constructed on the basis of the possession of a particular anti-corruption expertise. The group of “key professional insiders” is represented as having a stake in the project’s success and being motivated only by the achievement of the project’s goal. Further, they possess certain skills that other actors lack. They are devoid of any particular interests, while other actors are being marginalised through the reference to their lack of competencies or their potential political and private interests.⁶⁰¹ These actors are referred to as counterparts of a “deficient calibre”.⁶⁰² The anti-corruption field is thus built on the representation of technical and rational interventions that presuppose the absence of particular interests. An inherent suspicion towards domestic actors and their interests or their potential to deviate reform projects from their initial objectives characterises anti-corruption interventions.

As I have observed, the dream of development and of anti-corruption activity is one of technical rationality, of a transfer of knowledge and skills that occurs in a mechanical and disinterested fashion. This representation succeeds in distracting the attention from the network of political and social relationships that can be found beneath all development interventions. The dream is of apolitical tools and mechanisms standing above the world of politics, models and designs that can be easily exported to different countries. Once they are introduced in these countries, these mechanisms such as anti-corruption agencies are imagined taking a life of their own and setting in motion the fight against corruption. However, these mechanisms need a representation of political will and ownership to *acquire a reality* and to be perceived as effective.

Thus, we observe a certain uneasiness in the way development organisations approach the concept of political will. For development organisations, the notion of political will and ownership is understood in terms of a mode of validation, a seal of approval on their representations. As I have observed, the anti-corruption field is characterised by an inherent

⁶⁰¹ Another passage in the report emphasises the need for knowledge as a guarantee for an “objective” approach to fighting corruption. It says: “*it is difficult to see how democratic ownership can be taken forward in a meaningful way at the grassroots level where almost everybody is likely to have strong feelings and views that are not always supported by evidence and a sufficient understanding of the problem*” and “*it is well documented in anti-corruption research that public awareness of the nature of corruption and means to combat it is typically very low. There are numerous examples of public opinion surveys demonstrating that even large majorities of citizens confuse corruption with fundamental free market principles (such as the increased price of flowers during holidays, when demand is higher), and widespread ignorance of the importance of preventive anti-corruption measures.*” Ibid, p. 5 and p. 6.

⁶⁰² The report further questions the ownership paradigm by suggesting that it does not enhance the efficiency of projects. It says: “*the four projects exhibit different degrees of ownership, but the link seems tenuous between the degree of ownership, on the one hand, and the success of the project in terms of achieving the immediate outcomes and objectives, on the other, at least in the short to medium term (Mozambique). Projects were successful in their own right, while observing only some of the Paris principles, and to varying extent. The project in Serbia is a good example of how success seems to result from good project design and management, not ownership as understood by the Paris Declaration.*”, Ibid, p. 4.

suspicion towards the interests of local actors, in particular the role of the political leadership. The question looms over any anti-corruption initiative taken by the political leadership of the *genuineness* of these actions, precisely because the very existence of global anti-corruption activity is constructed on the premise that national governments in developing countries cannot effectively combat corruption. For example, a report on political will and the fight against corruption discusses the question of identifying a “genuine political will” and lists a number of indicators such as the degree of analytical rigor used to understand the context and causes of corruption and whether the regime has adopted a strategy that is participative.⁶⁰³ Political will is thus defined in reference to the preferred approach of international organisations based on analysing the corruption problem and planning and strategising measures against corruption. This has the effect of marginalising other manifestations of “political will” that would not apply these prescriptions for effective anti-corruption reforms. For example, another report on political will in fighting corruption notes: “*the fight against corruption cannot be a “one man show” or relegated uniquely to the political leadership. Anti corruption strategies are most effective if they are inclusive, systematic and structured, integrating all institutions and policies--investigation, prosecution, research and prevention.*”⁶⁰⁴ The report refers to independent entities such as anti-corruption bureaus, auditing agencies, the Parliament and other watchdog agencies as representing an “institutionalised political will”.⁶⁰⁵ It further advocates checks and balances mechanisms and the involvement of the private sector as guarantees against an arbitrary use of power.⁶⁰⁶ The anti-corruption discourse of international organisations is thus characterised by a certain suspicion towards the role of the political leadership that is associated with risks of arbitrariness and politicisation. The project of fighting corruption cannot be let only in the hands of the political leadership; it should rather be located in apolitical and independent institutions such as an audit chamber or in the hands of civil society organisations and business associations having a “genuine interest” in seeing progress in anti-corruption reforms. These institutions and actors can also act as “empty vessels” that are open to a transfer of knowledge and skills to tackle corruption. Further, actors such as civil society organisations act as “an interpretive community” that will sustain the representation of international organisations. A USAID report further discusses the problems associated with the concept of “political will”:

⁶⁰³ Brinkerhoff, Derick W. (with Nicolas P. Kulibaba): Identifying and assessing political will for anti-corruption efforts, USAID Working Paper No. 13, January 1999, p. 4.

⁶⁰⁴ Kpundeh, Sahr J.: Political will in fighting corruption, in UNDP: *Corruption and integrity improvement initiatives in developing countries*, New York, 1998, pp. 91-110, p. 105.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 106.

“This is the slipperiest concept in the policy lexicon. It is the *sina qua non* of policy success which is never defined except by its absence. It thus becomes the explanation for every policy failure despite the fact that so many programs are undertaken where it certainly does not seem present. Assuming that it is true, and not just a truism, that policies will not succeed without political will, there remain the questions of 1) what is it? (so we may recognize it) 2) whose political will? (assuming that these are complex countries where political elites may differ as to desires) and 3) how much is enough? It is only easy to identify situations where there is no political will to act -- i.e. where all strategically located political groups are actively opposed to reform. Identifying and quantifying its presence is far more difficult. Does this mean that someone in a position of power endorses a proposed reform or perhaps works for it actively? Generally, even in the most retrograde country there are individuals who will endorse just about anything, and whose chances of making it succeed are enhanced by outside support. Alternatively, does political will mean formal statements and acts by the government of the day - - for example signing of international conventions, the formation of reform commissions, etc? Or does it mean efforts, however ineffectual, to do something? Perhaps the best sign of political will is devotion of funds to reform, regardless of their efficacy. Or perhaps will is indicated by discussion and criticism of an existing situation.”⁶⁰⁷

The report discusses different manifestations of political will. The report mentions the possibility of “creating” it as a result of on-going reform efforts or “re-educating” it mentioning programmes generating interest among lower level officials but lacking a commitment from political elites.⁶⁰⁸ “External will” can also substitute an absent political will: programmes can be successfully implemented with less “will” when the donors’ involvement and the resources provided are high.⁶⁰⁹ The will of donors is used as a means of leveraging change.⁶¹⁰ Hence, the report remarks: “*In Panama and El Salvador, foreign donors have been more influential, in some sense substituting their own will for that of political elites.*”⁶¹¹ The report also mentions the possibility of adopting the “bad idea” of local reformers and attempting to redirect it when the programme is executed.⁶¹² Further, it suggests the possibility of “fabricating” political will through an allocation of resources. It says on Latin American countries: “*If this is “political will,” it is that of only a portion of the governmental elite, has usually come after a project was initiated, and has an overtly opportunistic side. The possibility of alliances with resource-laden external donors is often an attraction.*”⁶¹³ The provision of resources by donors can act as a stimulus for a demonstration of “political will”. The report says: “*in Latin America, it is difficult to identify one government which demonstrated a major interest in justice reform predating a*

⁶⁰⁷ Hammergren, Linn: Political will, constituency-building and public support in rule of law programs, Center for Democracy and Governance; Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support, and Research; U.S. Agency for International Development August 2008, p. 12.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 26.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 13 and p. 16.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

⁶¹² Ibid.

⁶¹³ Ibid.

donor's decision to sponsor one".⁶¹⁴ One major problem for donor efforts is that the priorities of the local government and donors can differ. The report observes on Colombia and Peru where political will exists: "*what the elites will may not be what the foreign donors want to support*".⁶¹⁵ The *adequacy* of political will is thus assessed by judging its content.⁶¹⁶ The report says: "*Just as an unreformed system does not imply a lack of will to change, a desire to change is hardly sufficient to produce real improvements.*"⁶¹⁷ This discussion of the different manifestations of political will reveals the same concerns as in the report on political will and anti-corruption regarding the "adequacy" of political will. We observe how the notion of political will is discussed in terms of the efficiency of programmes. It is seen as problematic when it appears to be antagonistic to the programmes' objectives. It functions as a seal of approval and the criteria for identifying an "adequate" political will is whether it will enhance the programme's success by ensuring the sustainability of reforms. The central concern of development organisations appears to secure an "interpretive community" of domestic actors with their interests tied to a project. Political will is seen as problematic if it supports ideas that differ from those of the donor organisations. These ideas are marginalised in the discourse of these organisations as "bad ideas" rather than being embraced.

We observe how the introduction of the notion of political will and ownership in the development discourse inevitably draws the attention to the question of interests. Indeed, it directs the attention to the question of the motives of the actors involved in projects and the genuineness of these efforts. The reference to "opportunistic alliances" between donors and local actors opens the box of Pandora of development, as it implies that programme support can be "bought" and "interpretive communities" ultimately constitute artificial assemblages. Development organisations appear to be concerned with identifying "local coalition of interests" that would effectively support their programmes. Political will is problematic if it does not adhere to the donor priorities. Hence, the political will that conforms to donor priorities and functions as a seal of approval on their representations appears to be "fabricated": it is "created", "re-educated", "redirected" or simply "bought" through the allocation of donor resources. Political will as a new development paradigm functions as a seal of approval and also as a "label" that is simply integrated in project design and reporting. The report mentions the "re-labelling of activities" and how documents are being simply rewritten in the language of ownership. It says: "*Prior to the appearance of the CDIE policy paper, project rarely were*

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 20-21.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid, p. 23.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid, p. 27

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

described in terms of political will, constituencies, and support. After its appearance there has been a conscious effort to use this language, but the activities it covers don't often differ from what went before. [...] Not unexpectedly, the language is sometimes no more than a justificatory relabeling. Sufficient political will and constituencies are simply declared in existence, thus allowing the next activities in the sequence."⁶¹⁸ It also mentions that the potential difficulties associated with the political environment and the absence of political will do not appear in project reporting: "*project staff deal with political will; they just don't report their dealings.*"⁶¹⁹ The network of political and social relationships characterising development is being concealed behind the authorised representations of project documents. Political will defined in this way can further act as a justification for programme failure.⁶²⁰ Cautious of these distortions, the Georgian government appears to emphasise its genuine commitment to reforms precisely by not accepting indiscriminately all donor advices, offering some resistance and not allowing public officials converting their magical power of validation into resources. Ironically, if a "genuine political will" can be identified, it might well contradict the donors' priorities. It even tends to annul their involvement.

The implication of the way the notion of political will is constructed as a seal of approval is that national governments appear to be "trapped" in the representation of international organisations. They can only express their commitment to fighting corruption in the terms set by these organisations. *Political will to fight corruption equals adherence to external anti-corruption programmes.* The failure to effectively adhere to the "legitimate language" of international organisations will raise questions as to the real motives of governments, the "genuineness" of their will. They will be suspected of not being serious about fighting corruption or benefiting from it. Only the adherence to anti-corruption programmes can absolve them of this suspicion. By voicing doubts on them, they risk being marked as *outsiders to the field*, as objects of the fight against corruption. "Genuineness" means adequacy with the measures recommended by international organisations. The example of the adoption of an anti-corruption strategy in Georgia has shown how the government's recognition of its anti-corruption record can only succeed through an integration in the global anti-corruption field and an adherence to it. At the same time, doubts persist as to the real commitment of governments and it is necessary to institutionalise political will in agencies independent from the executive or secure the support of domestic actors with a "genuine" interest in reforms. We observe that the place of national

⁶¹⁸ Ibid, p. 19.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid, p. 20.

⁶²⁰ As Polzer notes: "*the (unrealistic) responsibility placed on client governments absolves the Bank of their (likely) failure.*" In Polzer (2001), p. 23.

governments in the representation of international organisations is ambiguous. It is not clear whether governments are considered as anti-corruption actors in their own right or simply as “objects” of external anti-corruption measures. Polzer notes this ambiguity: *“The idea of developing increasingly effective programmes to reduce corruption is incompatible with the idea of increased government ownership since the same actors are simultaneously constructed as being the main problem and the solution.”*⁶²¹

This construction for all the implacability in the way it “traps” governments remains problematic. Indeed, the problem remains of an effective local validation of the representation of international organisations.

6.4 The dilemmas of a local validation of global anti-corruption activity

Arriving in post-revolutionary Georgia after our examination of the notion of political will in development, we witness a country where a young elite has placed political will at the centre of everything. It is the “motor” behind every reform, an inherent force hailed as the solution to every ill. An energetic governing style and effective political leadership that does not embarrass itself with bureaucratic procedures is hailed as the solution to years of post-Soviet stagnation. With political will, everything is possible: tomorrow, Georgia can become the new Singapore, it can rid itself of corruption and join a community of developed and modern states. The belief in the power of political will to effect rapid changes concurs with a deep scepticism towards the power of paralysis of bureaucracy and its tendency towards stagnation. Political will thus appears to take a “life of its own” in Georgia and becomes the foundation of the government’s representation of success. And by bringing this power to a logical end, the Georgian government asks the question: if political will can do all this, why do we need the knowledge of donors? What can they contribute? The essence of the conflict between “political will” and “technical knowledge” is contained in a remark that I have already mentioned: *“donors are talking about anti-corruption, but unless the government is serious it is a waste of time. If the government is serious, they don’t need the donors!”*⁶²²

We thus observe how the Georgian government questions the need for a specific field with its army of anti-corruption practitioners and experts. It does not conceive of anti-corruption as an isolated issue that necessitates specific measures and can be separated from the overall reform of

⁶²¹ Ibid, pp. 22-23.

⁶²² Interview with former high official in international organisation, December 2008.

institutions. It questions the belief that anti-corruption action needs to be grounded in knowledge, in particular in an external and universal knowledge that is assumed to be valid for a variety of contexts. As a result of the ambiguity of its place in the field as a recipient of knowledge or even an “object” of anti-corruption measures, the Georgian government cannot have a *vested interest* in the reproduction of the global anti-corruption field. It has not clear stakes in the game. Its adherence to the representation of international organisations means the adherence to the idea that corruption still exists in Georgia and it has not the capacities to fight it. This adherence thus undermines its own representation of success and its project of emancipating itself from donor advice and finding its own recipes of modernisation. One could even suggest that a less committed government would have higher stakes in the game, as the question of the implementation of anti-corruption measures remains open.

International and development organisations thus appear to be at pain to find this form of political will and ownership that will act as a mode of validation on the representation of a transfer of technical knowledge and not undermine it. References to independent institutions and local coalitions of interests involving NGOs and the private sector do not suffice to ensure that anti-corruption measures are perceived as effective. The commitment of the political leadership remains decisive. The government thus retains the power of validation, the power of rendering the knowledge of international organisations instrumental or revealing its “hollowness”.

The efforts of development organisations to secure a form of political will that will ensure support for their programmes can further be understood against the background of the inherent tension between the ideal of technical of knowledge and the “world of politics”. Technical knowledge as a means of increasing predictability seeks to direct political action. Drawing on Arendt, Summa discusses how political action is inevitably characterised by the unpredictability of its outcomes.⁶²³ The history of political thought can be understood as being driven by the search for various ways to *substitute making for acting*.⁶²⁴ The wish for more predictability in political action can already be found in Plato’s separation between *knowing* and *doing*, where action obeys a theoretical knowledge.⁶²⁵ In this light, acting is understood as a means towards a predetermined end and a way of *making* a predetermined product. It is not anymore action as characterised by its open and unpredictable ends. As Summa notes on the attempt to replace acting by making in political thought: “*the resulting substitution of making for action degrades*

⁶²³ Summa, Hikka: “The rhetoric of efficiency: applied social science as depoliticization”, in Brown, Richard Harwey: *Writing the Social Text: Poetics and Politics in Social Science Discourse*, New York, 1992, pp. 135-54, p. 136.

⁶²⁴ Ibid.

⁶²⁵ Ibid.

politics into a technique and makes it natural to speak about human affairs in terms of instrumentality".⁶²⁶ She refers to the "dream of an automatic society" consisting of the development of mechanisms and institutions that would guarantee rationality and predictability in decision-making in public affairs and also the choice for best alternatives for policy.⁶²⁷ The idea is to define the "good" for society through a process of rational thinking. Summa says: "*it means that the "good" of the society should be defined by scientific methods and certified with calculations instead of leaving room for unpredictable processes of argumentation on alternative ways of action*".⁶²⁸ It is a view of politics as *policymaking*. Summa further discusses the intrusion of techniques of social sciences into the administration of the state: "*the problem of policymaking was understood as a technical problem of coordination and adequate data, not a political problem of creating a common will*".⁶²⁹ The aim is the disappearance of conflicts through a rational demonstration of the best alternatives for action. Development thinks of action in these terms as a means to fulfil already defined higher ends. It thinks of action in terms of a rational planning. The ends, the "common good" are defined on the basis of a rational process rather than as the result of political debates. To put it simply, politics is seen as "getting in the way" of the effective fulfilment of predetermined plans and the achievement of these best alternatives. As Summa remarks, in the realm of making, there is no need for argumentation.⁶³⁰ Thus, there is an effort to *depoliticise* the content of interventions, to present issues as technical, where a rational consensus is achieved on the basis of a technical and objective assessment of optimal courses of action. Domestic politics is seen as an unpredictable process that risks distracting from the fulfilment of plans. The approach of development organisations is thus characterised by a certain uneasiness towards the notion of unpredictability in action which appears as an important feature of the Georgian government after the revolution. As one high official remarks on the first anti-corruption measures of the government: "*we were learning by doing*".⁶³¹ The government emphasises the "motive", the political will to reform over the process of attaining an end defined through a rational approach. Development organisations define the problem in anti-corruption as one of a choice between best alternatives on how to reduce corruption. Alternatives are determined beforehand through a rational process instead of their choice being left to the unpredictability of politics where interests are seen as having the potential to divert from the desired end.⁶³² However, we observe that the "dream of an automatic

⁶²⁶ Ibid, p. 137.

⁶²⁷ Ibid.

⁶²⁸ Ibid.

⁶²⁹ Ibid, p. 141.

⁶³⁰ Ibid, p. 136.

⁶³¹ Interview with high official in Georgian government, November 2008.

⁶³² To use the analogy of natural sciences, the solutions to the problem of corruption are found in a "laboratory" away from the theatre of intervention and then applied in different contexts. The laboratory represents the realm of

society” remains rather illusory. Programmes cannot just achieve results on their own irrespective of the interests of the actors involved. The best laws can be drafted, but remain simple “pieces of paper” if not implemented. The capacities of institutions can be strengthened, but they remain powerless if there is no will to reinforce these powers.

6.5 The problematic of the representation of disinterestedness in the domestic context of Georgia

In my attempt to reunite the two tales of anti-corruption, I have looked at the dilemmas of the process of a local validation. The dream of technical rationality lends global anti-corruption activity its “shiny coherence”, but this representation remains fragile and its local validation problematic. There is a conflict between the representation of a rational and “objective” approach to achieve the end of reducing corruption and the belief in the power of the political will as a solution to the corruption problem. I now turn my attention to the domestic context and this “shady world of politics” in which anti-corruption threatens to be dragged and unveiled as a sham.

I have observed how development organisations approach the notion of “domestic politics” with a certain uneasiness as they base their interventions on the belief in instrumental rationality and a technical knowledge and regard the political process as unpredictable. They understand politics in terms of policymaking as a process that needs a certain rationality to guide it in order to produce “desired ends”.

The perception of domestic politics in Georgia also reveals the negative connotations attached to the sphere of politics. Here, political action is also perceived as instrumental, as a means to an end, with the notable difference that *informal* ends are suspected behind officially proclaimed goals. “Deeds” are perceived as being inevitably divorced from “words”. An inherent suspicion towards the official rhetoric appears to be ingrained in the minds of observers in Georgia. Words and deeds can simply not go together. We observe a devaluation of the sphere of politics that is visible in the Ministry of Education scandal that I have described in my chapter on the Chamber of Control reform. During the scandal, another narrative involving power plays between actors is systematically substituted to the official version of events.

theoretical knowledge away from the world of politics, as an area supposed to be devoid of interests. Analogies to the world of natural sciences can be found in the anti-corruption language, where corruption is defined as a “disease” and solutions are “remedies” or “cures”.

This inherent suspicion towards the official rhetoric can be explained in terms of the Soviet heritage. In Soviet times, the rhetorical promises of the Soviet apparatus were inevitably divorced from the everyday life of ordinary citizens. Citizens experienced a disillusionment, while scepticism towards official discourses grew. If we go back to Arendt's reflections on political action and the distinction between "acting" and "making", we observe that the revolutionary project in socialism emphasises the notion of "making", the "making" of a new society. Action is oriented towards the fulfilment of a goal, of a "good" society, and the process of making resembles the process of fabricating a predetermined product.⁶³³ Drawing on Arendt, Thaa notes how political action as a process of making is separated into two domains: theory and practice.⁶³⁴ Goals guiding rational action are determined on the basis of theory outside of the political realm. Thaa observes how the socialist system is characterised by a goal-oriented rational legitimacy.⁶³⁵

In her study of post-Soviet Georgia, Christophe remarks that the transition to a market economy from socialism should not be understood as a conflict between two different normative discourses, one emphasising individual performance and the other collective and egalitarian norms.⁶³⁶ The difficulties of transition should rather be understood against the background of the failure of socialism to achieve an internationalisation of official norms.⁶³⁷ Socialism is characterised by the failure to translate an official ideology into effective institutionalised structures. This failure resulted in the acceptance and tolerance of a *permanent disjuncture between theory and practice*.⁶³⁸ Thus, different modes of behavioural rules co-existed that undermined each other and contributed to a crisis in the reproduction of the socialist system.⁶³⁹

With the prevalence of a goal-oriented rationality over autonomous processes of self-regulation such as the market and law, the socialist state gradually saw its coordination and controlling capacities exhausted.⁶⁴⁰ Other control mechanisms were necessary to compensate for a gradual loss of control over state agents and the limited binding capacity of official socialist ideals. Neo-patrimonial rule became the modus of incorporating individuals into the structures of the

⁶³³ See Thaa (1996) on "goal-orientedness" in revolutionary socialism. Thaa, Winfried: *Die Wiedergeburt des Politischen. Zivilgesellschaft und Legitimitätskonflikt in den Revolutionen von 1989*, Opladen, 1996

⁶³⁴ Ibid, p. 59.

⁶³⁵ Ibid.

⁶³⁶ See Christophe, p. 49.

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ Ibid.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 50.

socialist state.⁶⁴¹ As a consequence, the socialist state and its agents experienced a certain schizophrenia: social practices were characterised by a logic of clientelism, while the official discourse continued to emphasise principles of equality between citizens.⁶⁴² The gap between the official representation of practices and everyday experiences of citizens widened. Christophe notes that the privatisation of the state led to the gradual destruction of notions of public interest.⁶⁴³ Public action was effectively characterised by a logic of clientelism and the pursuit of private interests, but it was represented on a discursive level as following from principles of the public good and the realisation of socialist ideals. This disjuncture between discourse and practice inevitably led to a divorce between words and deeds in the perception of citizens. As Christophe remarks, it created a semantic vacuum in which every word would generate distrust.⁶⁴⁴

I have observed how socialism is characterised by a permanent disjuncture between discourse and practice. In the context of Georgia, this leads to a devaluation of the official rhetoric, but also of the sphere of politics and of the claim of the state to incorporate the public good. The notion of public interest and the claim of state agents to act in the name of this public interest become problematic against the background of a systematic divorce between discourse and practice in socialism. The neopatrimonial state of the Shevardnadze's era pursued the same logic of co-opting individuals into its structures through the use of clientelism, while building the façade of a reformist state on a discursive level. As a matter of fact, the actions of development organisations during this time were perceived by Georgian citizens through the same prism of a permanent disjuncture between discourse and practice and even as actively reinforcing this gap. As remarked by King and Christophe, donor organisations could be seen as complicit in creating the myth of Georgia as a reformist state, thus widening the gap experienced by citizens between rhetorical promises and their everyday life.⁶⁴⁵ The gap between large amounts of foreign aid being allocated to Georgia accompanied by rhetorical promises of reforms and the shortages experienced by citizens under the Shevardnadze's government created widespread cynicism in the population.⁶⁴⁶

⁶⁴¹ Ibid, p. 51.

⁶⁴² Ibid, p. 54.

⁶⁴³ Ibid, p. 55.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁵ King (2001) and Christophe (2004).

⁶⁴⁶ The labelling of certain NGOs as "grant-eaters" in Georgia can also be understood as a sign that NGO representatives are believed to serve their private interests rather than adhere to the official goals of their organisation.

While socialism was characterised by a disjuncture between discourse and practice, the same can be said of development as observed by Mosse and Lewis.⁶⁴⁷ We find a similar mode of legitimacy based on a goal-oriented rationality and the elusive promise of reaching an end goal in a distant future, a legitimacy that is gradually eroded by the experience of the permanent disjuncture between rhetorical promises and the elusive results of development interventions. Rational planning as the definition of development targets and the design of plans and strategies to achieve them is a major feature of development. Inevitably, the effective control of development organisations over the practice of projects is limited resulting in the disjuncture between official representations and the everyday practice of development projects. Development suffers from the same difficulty experienced in socialism of implementing official programmatic goals in concrete programmes. These representations of technical rationality rather serve to conceal the actual “messiness” of development projects or the network of political and social relations underlying them. Development even appears to *co-opt* local actors in the government agencies of developing countries into its structures. In the same way as socialism, we observe a tacit acceptance of the permanent disjuncture between discourse and practice and of the necessity of binding local agents to the structures of development in more informal ways.

Scepticism towards the Soviet bureaucracy and its planning ideals characterises the Georgian government after the revolution. The government faces a certain dilemma in its attempt to confront the widespread devaluation of the idea of public interest, the public sphere and the sphere of politics. The nationalistic rhetoric after the revolution and the state-building project can be understood as an attempt to forge a sense of community and instigate a belief in reform that would transcend the passivity and alienation from the state inherited from socialism. Further, the government appears to insist on rapid action as a way of building legitimacy, while rejecting the planning culture of bureaucracy. However, the vision of political action of the government is no less instrumental than the one of international organisations. The Georgian government appears to share the same uneasiness towards the unpredictability of the political process. Decision-making is restricted to a small team in power, while democratic dialogue tends to be seen as a possible hindrance for the implementation of wide-ranging reforms. Revolutionary action is favoured that can bring immediate results. Hence, action is spontaneous rather than being grounded in knowledge, as the imperative is of quickness. Appeals to the “national interest” appear to be a mode of legitimising decisions.

⁶⁴⁷ Mosse and Lewis (2006).

What implications have these reflections on the heritage of socialism and the difficulties of the transition period for my study of anti-corruption activity in contemporary Georgia?

The implications of the perceived disjuncture between discourse and practice in terms of the representation of anti-corruption activity are that a notion of *disinterestedness* appears difficult to ingrain in the domestic context of Georgia. Inevitably, informal ends and private interests are suspected behind official representations. As already observed, the legacy of socialism is that every word tends to generate distrust. Anti-corruption activity is seen through the prism of politics against the background of an instrumental and negative notion of politics. The domestic view of politics in Georgia is tainted with an instrumental and utilitarian view, but not in the sense of policymaking as favoured by international organisations, but in the sense of a means to informal ends that are concealed behind an official rhetoric. This vision is at odds with Arendt's ideal of "authentic politics", where the purpose of politics can be understood as politics itself, where politics exist for its own sake.⁶⁴⁸

The Chamber of Control of Georgia with its "two faces" exemplifies the various manifestations of the problematic of the disjuncture between discourse and practice. It can be seen as the site where the different tales of anti-corruption meet. The Chamber thus offers two faces: the "bright" image of a modernising agency and an effective tool to prevent corruption and the darker picture of an instrument for informal ends. It is rooted both in the "bright" world of technical rationality with its confidence in the power of ever new techniques to improve the work of the public administration and in the "shady" world of domestic politics. First, the Chamber reveals how the practices of state institutions in Georgia are seen as deviating from their formal objectives: the disjuncture between discourse and practice as an inheritance of the socialist past and of Shevardnadze's times. The Ministry of Education scandal reveals this difficulty of ingrain a notion of the Chamber following in its actions a disinterested logic of preventing corruption. Behind the formal use of public institutions in Georgia, an informal end is suspected. Second, the disjuncture between discourse and practice also concerns the activities of donor organisations involved in the Chamber's reform which are seen as having no clear ends in the absence of a government's commitment. Both actors are seen as merely polishing a "façade" of reforms.

⁶⁴⁸ Kateb, George: Political action, in Villa, Dana (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge Collections Online, 2000, p. 134.

If we go back to examine the strategy of building success of international organisations, we observe how anti-corruption activity is presented as a rational sequence and legitimises itself based on the soundness of the theoretical foundations on which actions are grounded. In this representation, ends and means are defined in the realm of theory. The choice for best alternatives to arrive to the end of reducing corruption is supposed to respond to a rational process ensuring that political and private interests are obliterated. Action obeys the logic of theory and is represented as achieving the desired end in an automatic way irrespective of any interests. This representation of anti-corruption activity thus seeks to obliterate the question of motives. The actors' interests appear irrelevant as a consensus is supposed to exist on the "good" of combating corruption through scientific and "objective" methods.

However, the question of motives is not so easily annulled in the domestic context of Georgia where words are perceived as being divorced from deeds. Here, the confidence in the work of technical rationality fails to become ingrained. Public action is inevitably seen through a prism where informal ends are substituted for official ones. Formal institutions are perceived as facades which are deviated from their official goals. In this context, notions of disinterestedness and of the automatism of the machine that sustain global anti-corruption activity are problematic. As a result, the disinterestedness of the rational machine of development fails to be acknowledged.

This failure has implications for anti-corruption activity in terms of the *construction of a field*. If anti-corruption activity would succeed in being perceived as automatically following the purpose of reducing corruption, conflicts in the field would only occur over the question of the *means* to achieve this end. These means would be defined as *rational methods*. In the representation of international organisations, ends and means are defined in the context of theoretical knowledge. When transposed in the practice, this logical sequence is assumed to inevitably work towards the reduction corruption. However, we observe that the question of motives is introduced in the representation of anti-corruption activity in the context of Georgia. The notion of political will in the development discourse draws the attention to the question of the motives of the actors engaged in anti-corruption. In the domestic context of Georgia, this question is inevitably asked. Thus, we observe the deployment of strategies of delegitimation in the field centring on the question of the actors' interests. They appear damaging for the field as a whole. Indeed, the anti-corruption field can only become autonomous if anti-corruption activity is perceived as an activity for its own sake, fulfilling the purpose of reducing corruption through the actions of disinterested agents. It loses its legitimacy if it is perceived as *a means to other ends*, for example as a means to damage the reputation of political actors or as a way to answer calls for

accountability in development. In this case, the fight against corruption is seen through the prism of politics and a vision of politics charged with negative connotations. The question of motives threatens to *dislocate* actors outside of the field, as objects of anti-corruption interventions or political actors using the fight against corruption to advance their agendas. If I go back to the question underlying my study of *whether conflicts between anti-corruption actors are of a nature that sustains the development of an autonomous anti-corruption field*, I observe that they rather tend to damage the field. If conflicts in the field would only occur over the question of the methods to achieve the end of reducing corruption, the field would be reinforced by them, as the purpose of the actors' involvement would not be questioned. Asking the question of these actors' motives has the effect of voiding representations of success of their substance: these representations appear as *covers* hiding other motives and ends. There is no fit between the discursive representations of practices and the perceived logic followed by the actors engaging in them.

6.6 Multiplicity of audiences

In my attempt to understand the failure to stabilise claims to success in anti-corruption, I have examined how the local validation of the representation of anti-corruption as a disinterested enterprise of applying technical solutions to the corruption problem appears difficult. This dilemma of a local validation originates in the ambiguity of the place attributed to governments in developing countries in this representation as well as the negative vision of politics in the domestic context of Georgia. The question of motives in anti-corruption is not easily obliterated.

The fact that the question of motives is asked in anti-corruption activity is also linked to a third aspect of anti-corruption: the *multiplicity of audiences* and the diversity of sources of legitimacy for anti-corruption actors.

As already observed, the different actors in the field respond to the problem of the fragility of success in anti-corruption by building a particular representation of their activities. They employ diverse strategies to this end. Further, we observe that these representations are also targeted at *different audiences*. Each actor appears to depend on different constellations of audiences at a domestic and global level. Approval is gained from diverse sources. For example, I have observed how the Georgian government constructs at the same time a representation of success on a domestic level and seeks to gain the approval of a domestic audience, but also seeks an international recognition of its anti-corruption record. In turn, a Western seal of approval on its

reforms will reinforce its reputation on a domestic level. NGOs are primarily dependent on the donor organisations that fund their activities, but they also need to acquire a domestic legitimacy. The social embedding of NGOs is in turn a criterion required by donors, as it will ensure the sustainability of projects. Furthermore, they need a government's approval to be considered as experts that produce valuable recommendations. International organisations need to report success to national headquarters and are accountable to domestic constituencies, but they also need the support of governments in developing countries as a seal of approval on their programmes. All actors need to gain approval on a domestic and global level. They are all accountable to a domestic constituency, but they also need the approval of other anti-corruption actors in the field.

Strategies of delegitimisation that ask the question of interests in the field appear to be aimed at revealing the possibility that anti-corruption actors will target other sources of legitimacy than the one they claim to target. They reveal the dependency of actors on other sources of approval. This multiplicity of audiences and the fact that the anti-corruption field is embedded in different fields with their own logic *create confusion as to the logic that prevails at a certain time in the field*. Actors in the field can be accused of pursuing other motives than the rational and disinterested purpose of fighting corruption. For example, NGOs exposing corruption in the government agencies can be accused of promoting a political agenda rather than following the rational goal of increasing the government's transparency. They may also be suspected of being more accountable to donors than to the domestic public in Georgia. The Georgian government's adoption of an anti-corruption strategy will be interpreted as a gesture aimed at satisfying international organisations and gaining their support in other fields rather than the genuine and disinterested attempt to improve the coordination of anti-corruption efforts with a view of tackling the corruption problem. Finally, Western development organisations will be suspected of promoting the agendas set by domestic constituencies in Western countries instead of attempting to enhance the performance and efficiency of domestic public institutions to fight corruption. They might be suspected of trying to improve the functioning of audit institutions such as the Chamber of Control to control the spending of their money and satisfy the demands for transparency of a domestic constituency rather than being genuinely motivated by the goal of building local democratic institutions. By revealing the dependency of actors in the field on external sources of approval and the process of validation of their representation, other motives are being attributed to their anti-corruption efforts than the one of reducing corruption.

The production of coherence in the anti-corruption field thus appears difficult to the extent that it is not only embedded in different broader fields such as the one of development and politics and its actions seen through different prisms, but it is also located on a domestic and global level. The Chamber of Control reform and the adoption of an anti-corruption strategy in Georgia also reveals that even if the different actors “government” and “international organisations” try to engage in a common production of coherence by aligning their reform measures, this convergence can be suspected of responding to other interests than the one of effectively combating corruption. Alliances between actors in the field are seen through the prism of their mutual dependence rather than as an effective step to combat corruption. The *genuineness* of anti-corruption efforts is thus questioned. As already observed, other ends are substituted for its claimed goals in the perception of the government’s actions. The adoption of a strategy or the sudden commitment to reforming the Chamber do not appear coherent with the government’s strategy of building success in anti-corruption.

Uncertainties in the logic that actors follow in the field have the effect of blurring its image. The anti-corruption field does not reflect a clear image of itself and its purpose. It fails to develop as an autonomous field in the Bourdieu’s sense of the term to the extent that *it fails to shape the way we see and think about anti-corruption*. The project of *depoliticising* anti-corruption, of depoliticising the actions of actors engaging in it by marginalising those actors suspected of pursuing particular interests and by presenting it as a rational and technical activity appears to fail as shown in the study of post-revolutionary Georgia. It is the failure to assert a script to read anti-corruption, the failure to read anti-corruption as a neutral and mechanical activity fulfilling only the purpose of providing solutions to the corruption problem.

The failure of the anti-corruption project to develop as a field and protect itself from counter-claims seeking to unveil it as a sham or a useless enterprise can be seen as a broader failure of the project of *depoliticisation* at the heart of development. Domestic actors in developing countries can see through the image that development seeks to project of itself as a rational enterprise offering solutions to development problems in a mechanical and disinterested way. They experience the disjuncture between discourse and practice and the way development seeks to co-opt local actors, directing the domestic “political will” in ways that will ensure support and the outside validation of development programmes. The process of validation of projects and the fact that this adherence is sometimes obtained through an allocation of resources to key figures in government agencies is well known to local agents. Local actors understand the nature of development with its hidden network of relations.

Development appears to fail in its enterprise of depoliticising issues and presenting them as technical issues. The perception of anti-corruption in Georgia remains one of a politicised action that raises suspicion as to the motives of the actors involved in it, not of a technical endeavour. Development is also seen through a *prism of interests*, of the interests of the agents co-opted in its structures and their interests in concealing networks of political relations behind a technical discourse. The adherence to the language of development responds to certain concerns of actors with their interests tied to a particular project, *it does not succeed as a natural and un-reflected process*. Local agents use different languages in different situations and endorse various roles in the same way as officials under socialism would switch from an official role to an informal one. Domestic actors are aware of the different loyalties of local agents of development. Development thus appears to fail to impose a discourse, as this discourse is only used in certain situations and is being undermined in informal and private statements.

My study thus concurs with the reflections of anthropologists of development that reject an instrumental view of development as too simplistic. It concurs with the observation drawn from ethnographic studies of development projects that development actually does not succeed in *depoliticising*. As Li remarks: “*Rather than depoliticizing the countryside, as Ferguson argues, “development” programs may become a politically charged arena in which relations of rule are reworked and reassessed.*”⁶⁴⁹ What development succeeds in doing is in securing loyalties by providing a room for manoeuvre and opportunities for compromise.⁶⁵⁰ As Li notes, local agents of development concur in producing the reality of development through these compromises.⁶⁵¹ She quotes Sayer and says that they “*participate in the established order as if its representations were reality*”.⁶⁵² But as the study of post-revolutionary Georgia has shown, these constructions remain fraught by fragility.

6.7 Escaping the “traps” of development: building success in the non OECD world

Against the background of those reflections on development, the Georgian government’s effort to reclaim legitimacy after the revolution can be understood as an attempt to distance itself from

⁶⁴⁹ Li (1999), p. 297.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 298.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

⁶⁵² Ibid, pp.298-299 and Sayer, Derek: Everyday forms of state formation: Some dissident remarks on “hegemony”, in Joseph, Gilbert M. and Nugent, Daniel (eds.): *Everyday forms of state formation: revolution and the negotiation of rule in modern Mexico*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, p. 374, 1994

the vacuous promises both of socialism and of international development itself. Hence, its scepticism towards rational planning and the supposed achievement of desired ends through elaborated strategies. At the same time, it is faced with certain dilemmas and the path chosen after the revolution reveals a certain incoherence.

Firstly, I have identified the problematic of the public interest in the domestic context of Georgia. While implicitly rejecting the notion of “independent” and neutral agencies automatically working to achieve the public good, the Georgian government is left with a vacuum of legitimacy if it does not claim that there is such a thing as a public interest. The libertarian agenda with its belief in the corrective power of the market or the state-building agenda can be seen as attempts to fill this vacuum. In the meantime, public authority appears to continue to rest more on individuals than on institutions. For example, a commentary on an article on the Chamber of Control’s recent activity notes that the new authority acquired by the institution under the chairmanship of Levan Bezhashvili largely depends on the credibility of its team.⁶⁵³ The commentary says: *“the high political profile of Chairman Levan Bejashvili and his team make the audit reports they produce recognizable and respected by the executive branch of the Government and law enforcement agencies. But the unfortunate reality is that, if not for the Chairman’s and his team’s political weight, reports of any real significance would stay on the shelves in the CCG or Prosecutor’s office.”*⁶⁵⁴

On a global level, we observe the various dilemmas that countries such as Georgia face when attempting to build a representation of success. As already noted, Georgia cannot emancipate itself fully from the approval of international organisations, as a recognition of its success in reforms can only occur through its integration into global policy fields whose boundaries are determined by these organisations. For Georgia’s success to acquire a reality, it ultimately depends on outside judgments. Georgia cannot claim success on its own. We thus observe the dilemmas of local and external processes of validation. Anti-corruption instruments become real when locally “owned” and a country’s performance acquires a reality only when recognised on an international arena. The local reality of development or of anti-corruption depends on the readiness of local actors to enter compromises, while the reality of a country’s performance depends on the stamp of approval of external actors. Similarly to sovereignty, Georgia cannot

⁶⁵³ Bezhashvili’s team includes former high-levels officials in law enforcement agencies, thus ensuring that the CCG’s audits are respected by the executive and the law enforcement bodies.

⁶⁵⁴ The quote is issued from a commentary on a Transparency International’s blogpost on the CCG. See Urushadze, Erekle: A more independent and effective Chamber of Control?, Transparency International Georgia blog, 1 October 2010. Available at: <http://transparency.ge/en/blog/pa-more-independent-and-effective-chamber-controlp> (accessed January 2011)

claim the attributes of a performing economy and of a functioning democracy without international approval. This external validation increasingly succeeds through the practice of using governance indicators to measure, evaluate and compare the performances of states. Löwenheim analyses this phenomenon in a Foucauldian perspective as a practice of “examining” states.⁶⁵⁵ He notes on the effect of the rating and ranking of states: “*The governance indicators establish a discursive field of state legitimacy and normalcy and ‘responsibilises’ states: construct them as ethical actors that are capable of correct and responsible choices and policies.*”⁶⁵⁶ The responsibility of powerful states and international actors is thus obscured. Practices of ranking and rating involve transforming qualitative judgments into quantitative data and classifying this information. The recourse to an expert knowledge and the generation of an authoritative body of knowledge through the evaluation of the performance of states let these judgments appear as “objective”. As Löwenheim remarks, “*quantification and formal classification generate an appearance of scientific objectivity and methodological rigour*”.⁶⁵⁷ Practices of examination have the effect of reinforcing existing structures of hierarchy and authority in the international system. As they are constituted as responsible subjects through this discourse, developing countries cannot simply ignore it. As Löwenheim remarks, a negative outcome of the examination will be seen as related to the weak capacities of the examinee.⁶⁵⁸ While the examinee is responsible for future improvements, the guidance is offered by powerful states. Developing countries cannot easily reject the examination and the recommendations offered by the examiner. Indeed, examinations increasingly influence actual decision-making about the allocation of foreign aid, while shaping broader international perceptions of countries. Decisions on the allocation of foreign aid are presented as resulting from a technical rather than a political assessment of a country’s progress; examination is presented as an impartial technique committed to standards of objectivity and rigour. In a similar vein to anti-corruption, the knowledge that is produced through examination practices is thus presented as apolitical, technical and universal. A state like Georgia cannot reject the ranking’s game; it must play by the rules set by international organisations. A remark by former Georgian Prime Minister Lado Gurgendidze during a presentation at the Milken Institute reveals the importance of rankings’ results for Georgia: “*We are cleaner than clean – never gray listed, blacklisted, watch listed, whatever.*”⁶⁵⁹ President Saakashvili also regularly mentions Georgia’s scores in rankings such as

⁶⁵⁵ Löwenheim, Oded: Examining the state: a Foucauldian perspective on international ‘governance indicators’, in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 2008, pp 255 – 274

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 255.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 258.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 259.

⁶⁵⁹ Milken Institute (2009).

the World Bank's Doing Business Index or the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index.

As much as the rankings' game constrain the way a country can "claim success", Georgia does not appear entirely helpless in entering this game. It selectively chooses appropriate "channels of international validation" that will ensure the stabilisation of its claims to success. Thus, we observe how the Georgian government has prioritised progress on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business in recent years, while devoting less attention to other paths of development. For example, one could suggest that the Georgian government appears to have put less emphasis on progress in the Freedom House Index that demands more costly and deep institutional reforms.⁶⁶⁰ Governance rankings are prioritised that promise quick progress and most importantly, a quick recognition of results, rather than those leading to a path of incremental progress that can also represent a "trap" by opening the door to development interventions with elusive outcomes. The strategy of building success of countries like Georgia thus inevitably differs from the production of success in development which appears to have no time limit, where the goal of eradicating world poverty remains elusive. Georgia seems to attempt to challenge its assigned position in the linear paths of development and transition. It wants to "catch up" with developed economies instead of "lagging behind". As former Georgian Prime Minister Lado Gurgenzidze remarks: *"It's not enough to be like other countries. We have to be better. Unabashedly, unequivocally better"*.⁶⁶¹

Finally, the example of Georgia shows how practices of examination and the effort to transform qualitative judgements about the state of democracy into quantitative data have the effect of voiding terms of their substance. Terms such as "good governance", "democracy", "economic performance" become simple labels that developing and transition countries try to attach to themselves by adapting their reforms to the demands of governance rankings. Needless to say, these labels may have little relation to the everyday life of citizens in these countries despite their claims to objectivity, thus ultimately contributing to widening the gap between discourse and practice.

⁶⁶⁰ Georgian officials also gradually abandoned a European path of reforms after the revolution, as Europeanisation was not seen as promising quick successes. See Di Puccio, Lili: *Between hesitation and commitment: the EU and Georgia after the 2008 war*, Silk Road Paper, November 2010.

⁶⁶¹ Milken Institute (2009).

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Annex I: List of interviews by date

	Date	Organisation⁶⁶²	Position
1	3 April 2007	NGO	Senior Analyst
2	15 May 2007	NGO	Researcher
3	23 May 2007	NGO	Director
4	24 May 2007	NGO	Researcher
5	11 June 2007	Political Party	Chairman
6	12 June 2007	IO	Project Manager Food Security Project
7	12 June 2007	Political Party	Leader
8	28 June 2007	IO	Project manager Rule of Law and Good Governance
9	6 July 2007	NGO	Researcher
10	18 July 2007	IO	Project Manager
11	26 July 2007	NGO	Senior Legal Adviser
12	24 August 2007	IO	Project Manager
13	8 October 2007	IO	Project Manager
14	9 October 2007	IO	Adviser
15	11 October 2007	NGO	Chairman
16	15 October 2007	NGO	Project Coordinator
17	16 October 2007	IO	Deputy Head of Mission
18	19 October 2007	NGO	Project Manager
19	24 October 2007	NGO	Programme Officer
20	29 October 2007	IO	Adviser
21	31 October 2007	IO	Team Leader
22	27 November 2007	Government agency	General Director
23	1 February 2008	NGO	Deputy Director
24	13 February 2008	NGO	Project Director
25	14 February 2008	IO	Programme Officer
26	21 February 2008	IO	Head of Programme
27	26 February 2008	NGO	Executive Director
28	27 February 2008	NGO	Adviser

⁶⁶² The names of the organisations (listed by type) are provided in Annex II.

29	5 March 2008	NGO	Programme Coordinator
30	10 March 2008	NGO	Executive Director
31	12 March 2008	NGO	Project Manager
32	13 March 2008	NGO	Project Manager
33	1 April 2008	NGO	Executive Director
34	1 April 2008	NGO	Project Manager
35	15 April 2008	Government agency	Consultant
36	15 May 2008	NGO	Programme Manager
37	2 June 2008	NGO	Former Head
38	10 June 2008	Government agency	Spokesman
39	17 June 2008	Government agency	Head
40	23 June 2008	IO	Project Manager
41	15 July 2008	IO	Programme Officer
42	16 July 2008	NGO	Researcher
43	21 July 2008	NGO	Program Director
44	22 July 2008	IO	Project Manager
45	22 July 2008	NGO	Development Manager
46	23 September 2008	IO	Head of Department
47	24 September 2008	Government agency	Head of International Relations Service
48	24 September 2008	Government agency	Consultant
49	26 September 2008	NGO	Director
50	14 October 2008	IO	Project Manager
51	23 October 2008	NGO	President
52	27 October 2008	IO	Head
53	28 October 2008	Government agency	Consultant
54	4 November 2008	IO	Director
55	5 November 2008	IO	Administrative Officer
56	11 November 2008	IO	Team Leader
57	12 November 2008	Government Agency	Head
58	12 November 2008	IO	Project Manager
59	13 November 2008	Government agency	Deputy Director
60	14 November 2008	Government agency	Head of Department
61	14 November 2008	Government agency	Deputy

62	16 November 2008	Political party	Leader
63	17 November 2008	IO	Senior Expert
64	18 November 2008	IO	Project Manager
65	19 November 2008	Political Party	Former Member of Parliament
66	20 November 2008	IO	Project Officer
67	21 November 2008	Government agency	Head of Department
68	21 November 2008	NGO	Executive Director
69	21 November 2008	Political Party	Chairman
70	24 November 2008	IO	Programme Manager
71	24 November 2008	IO	Economist
72	25 November 2008	NGO	Project Manager
73	27 November 2008	Government agency	First Deputy Director
74	27 November 2008	Government agency	Former Employee
75	29 November 2008	NGO	Researcher
76	1 December 2008	NGO	Program Director
77	2 December 2008	Political party	Leader
78	2 December 2008	IO	Adviser
79	2 December 2008	IO	Former Employee
80	3 December 2008	NGO	Director
81	5 December 2008	NGO	Project Coordinator
82	5 December 2008	Political party	Leader
83	8 December 2008	NGO	Chairman
84	9 December 2008	IO	Expert
85	9 December 2008	Government agency	High Official
86	10 December 2008	Government agency	Director
87	11 December 2008	IO	Project Manager
88	17 December 2008	Government agency	Former Employee
89	19 December 2008	NGO	Programme Manager
90	19 December 2008	NGO	Project Manager
91	23 December 2008	Government agency	Low-level Official
92	23 December 2008	IO	Project Manager
93	24 December 2008	NGO	Deputy Head of Administration
94	25 December 2008	Government agency	Former Deputy

Annex II: List of organisations by type

Georgian government agencies

- Budget Committee, Georgian Parliament
- Chamber of Control of Georgia
- Civil Registry Agency, Ministry of Justice
- Georgian State Electrosystem
- Ministry of Economic Development
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Interior
- National Examination Center
- State Ministry for Reforms Coordination

International and developmental organisations

- Council of Europe
- DFID Georgia Programme
- European Union Delegation to the European Commission in Georgia
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Georgia
- German Technical Cooperation (GTZ)
- GRECO Secretariat
- International Monetary Fund Georgia Office
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) Georgia
- World Bank Georgia Office
- UNDP Georgia Office

Non-governmental organisations and educational institutions

- Adam Smith International
- American Bar Association, Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative, Georgia Office
- Caucasus Centre for Peace, Development and Democracy (CIPDD)
- Center for Change and Conflict Management “Partners-Georgia”
- Centre for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia

- Charity Humanitarian Centre “Abkhazeti” (CHCA)
- Eurasia Foundation Georgia Office
- Georgian Federation of Professional Auditors and Consultants
- Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS)
- Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association (GYLA)
- Ilia Chavchavadze State University
- Liberty Institute
- Open Society Foundation Georgia
- Partnership for Social Initiatives
- Tinatin Tsereteli Institute of State and Law
- Transnational Crime and Corruption Center Tbilisi (TRACCC)
- Transparency International Georgia
- United Nations Association Georgia (UNAG)

Political parties

- Conservative Party of Georgia
- Georgia’s Way
- Republican Party of Georgia