

AFTER THE REVOLUTION: LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF ELECTORAL REVOLUTIONS

An NCEEER Working Paper by

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Executive Summary

Both the colored revolutions in the former USSR and the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa demonstrate once again that dictators can be overthrown by pressure from the streets. However, the capacity of such revolutions to contribute to longer-term democratic development is far less certain. While politicians and journalists tend to be impressed with the transformative power of revolutions in the street, political scientists and sociologists tend to be more skeptical, stressing the importance of deep structural factors in shaping longer term developments.

In this paper, we focus on what can be learned about these questions by careful analysis of the colored revolutions in the former Communist world. Even a brief look at developments in the countries that experienced so-called ‘colored revolutions’ in recent years suggests that the greater durability of political liberalization in Serbia, compared to the mixed and uneven track record of Georgia and Ukraine and the significant democratic backsliding of Kyrgyzstan under Bakiev are roughly in line with what one would have predicted based on the countries’ historical legacies and international environment.

Introduction

However, the high correlation between these different domestic and international legacies make it very difficult to disentangle their causal impact, which is why statistical studies emphasizing structural factors are often less convincing in providing clear mechanisms through which such long-term legacies affect regime outcomes. Therefore, it is important to complement statistical analyses with more careful case studies. The four colored revolution cases represent a very useful opportunity to uncover such causal mechanisms, since they allow us to observe how fairly similar political “shocks” reverberate in very different socio-economic and political environments. By focusing on the reconfiguration of political interests and alliances during and after the colored revolutions, we help to explain why lasting progress in democratic governance seems to be so much harder to achieve in certain environments even when liberalization opportunities do present themselves. In particular we show how variations in post-revolutionary governance trajectories, such as Georgia’s impressive corruption progress or Ukraine’s more competitive electoral process, can be explained by the nature and homogeneity of governing coalitions, which in turn are rooted in structural and contextual differences such as the importance of ethnic and regional cleavages or the distribution of economic resources. We also show how structural factors can work in ways that are hard to predict from existing theory. In particular, we show that state autonomy, a factor often associated with democratization, can sometimes represent an obstacle to progress, while ethnic and regional cleavages, usually thought to make democratization more difficult, can be a barrier to authoritarian consolidation.

Popular Protest and Democratization

When Communism collapsed across Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, hopes were extremely high that the “other Europe” would soon take its rightful place in the community of democratic nations. Moreover, with the ending of the 70-year communist detour in the former Russian Empire, many believed that the Third Wave of democratization would quickly spread far beyond Europe and well into Eurasia. The high hopes of the early 1990s, however, quickly ran into a complex reality in which the more western, richer, higher capacity and more homogeneous states did indeed make a rather rapid transition to democracy, while most of those countries without such structural advantages either had great difficulty consolidating democracy or did not even embark upon a process of democratization.

Nevertheless, just as disappointment with the results of the first post-Soviet decade was setting in in the academic community, events on ground seemed to give the process of democratization a major push forward -- street protests finally brought to an end the horrors of the Milosevic regime in Serbia in 2000, and self-described democratic forces rapidly overthrew authoritarian leaders in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. These so-called “colored revolutions” were greeted with great excitement (Aslund and McFaul 2006) and were seen as kick-starting stalled democratization projects in the region. Moreover, analysis of the protests suggested that they shared several common elements that suggested a model for democratic advancement in the post-Soviet space. They all centered around protest against electoral fraud and involved aggressive popular mobilization on the part of the opposition in alliance with international forces. Their shared success meant the “electoral model” of transition became the default approach to opposition organizing in the post-Soviet space (Bunce and Wolchik 2011, Karatnycky and Ackerman 2005).

It is now more than a decade since the colored revolutions began and after last year's elections in Georgia and Serbia none of the leaders of the revolts remains unchallenged in office. In Serbia the 2012 elections marked the return to power of two parties associated with the Milosevic regime – the Serbian Progressive Party (a splinter of the extreme nationalist Serbian Radical Party) and the former main party of power, the Serbian Socialist Party. In Ukraine, the leaders of the Orange Revolution are now far from power – Viktor Yushchenko was unable to mount a serious defense of the presidency taking only 5 percent of the vote in the first round of the 2010 election, while Yulia Tymoshenko has been in prison since late 2011. In Kyrgyzstan, President Bakiev, who had emerged as the preeminent leader from the 2005 Tulip Revolution, was himself overthrown in street protests in 2010. Only in Georgia is the revolutionary leadership still partly in place, with Mikheil Saakashvili still in office but having lost control of the parliament and prohibited by term limits from running in the October 2013 presidential elections. Given these recent political turnovers in the four countries, the timing is perfect for an assessment of the medium-term political consequences of the four successful colored revolutions in the post-communist world.

With the passage of time since the colored revolutions, analysts have become much more skeptical of their power to bring meaningful democratic progress to the countries in question. Kalandazde and Orenstein (2009) argued that while both Serbia and Ukraine had seen some improvement in the extent of democracy, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan have been stagnant at best. Others have been even more skeptical. Most prominently, Henry Hale has proposed that to interpret the colored revolutions in terms of democratization at all is to misunderstand the nature of the events (Hale 2005). Rather than being conflicts between democratic and autocratic forces, as both journalists and participants perceived these revolutions, the events actually consisted of

collapsing and subsequently reforming patronage networks. The task facing the post-revolutionary leaders, then, was less one of building democracy and more one of reasserting control over clientelistic politics. In this context, expectations of democratic improvements were misplaced.

Nevertheless, as we show in the next section, the results of the colored revolutions are less uniformly baleful than the existing literature might suggest. While early expectations were most certainly overblown, it is nonetheless clear that there is significant variation in post-revolutionary performance across the four countries. Moreover, once we move beyond simple democracy scores to more disaggregated measures of progress in the direction of a more democratic, law-bound state, then the variation across the cases becomes more, not less, marked. At the extremes, Kyrgyzstan and Serbia have moved in different directions, moving closer, we argue, to levels of electoral competition, media freedom and other aspects of democracy that are typical in their geographic sub-region. Nevertheless, as the analysis below shows, there are positive aspects of Kyrgyz experience and negative aspects of Serbian experience that complicate the simple picture. In the middle, both Georgia and Ukraine have had mixed results on indicators of democracy since the colored revolutions, but, we argue the mixtures are very different for reasons that are closely related to the contexts in which the respective revolutions took place.

In the rest of this paper, we illustrate the variation across countries and suggest some explanations. While much of that variation - particularly Serbia's progress compared to Kyrgyzstan stagnation - is in line with structural legacy-based theories of democratization (Pop-Eleches 2007), we identify some key dimensions on which performance is not well explained by the existing literature, such as the significant reduction of corruption in Georgia or the better-

than-expected electoral competition and media independence in Ukraine. In these cases, we argue, the revolutions did have a significant effect on politics, but that the specific effects vary from place to place and depend upon the interaction of politics and structural conditions, most notably the nature of political cleavages, the structure of ownership and the degree of state autonomy.

Democratic governance after the Colored Revolutions

As a first step, in this section we present the temporal evolution of the four colored revolution countries in terms of four important dimensions of democratic governance, as measured by the *Nations in Transit* indicator series: (1) *electoral process*, which covers the quality of elections and electoral processes, including party development and popular participation; (2) *media independence*, which gauges press freedom in terms of both legislation and actual outcomes (3) *judicial framework and independence*, which captures human rights and minority protections, as well as judicial independence, and (4) *corruption*, including both legislation to combat corruption, the efficacy of anticorruption initiatives and public perceptions of corruption (Freedom House 2012).¹ The first set of graphs shows the trajectory of our four cases from 2000-2011 compared to each other and to the average annual score of the other former communist countries covered by Nations in Transit.

Figures 1a-1d here

Two broad patterns are worth highlighting at the outset. First, the four countries experienced very different trajectories following their respective colored revolutions: on the one extreme, Serbia improved considerably along all dimensions in the years following the Bulldozer Revolution and experience no or fairly limited backsliding subsequently, while at the other

¹ For a full set of the components/considerations covered by each indicator, see Appendix Table A1.

extreme, Kyrgyzstan experienced no real governance boost after the Tulip Revolution and then embarked on a uniformly downward trajectory until Bakiev's ouster from office in April 2010. Meanwhile, Ukraine and Georgia occupied intermediate positions, and on average (as well as in a number of issue areas, such as electoral process) the net change in governance scores under their "colored revolutionary" regimes was minimal.

However, the graphs also highlight a second, more nuanced, point, which illustrates the benefits of our more disaggregated governance measurement approach. Particularly in the two intermediate cases (Georgia and Ukraine) the middling averages conceal large variations across both issue areas and time periods. Thus, both countries had areas of genuine and lasting improvements – corruption control in Georgia and media independence in Ukraine – but also areas where governance became less democratic, such as media independence in Georgia and judicial independence in Georgia and particularly Ukraine. Furthermore, the graphs reveal several instances, such as electoral process in Georgia and media independence in Serbia, where noticeable progress in the early post-revolutionary period was followed by subsequent backsliding.

Ukraine experienced significant early improvements in media independence in the first few years after the Orange Revolution followed by moderate backsliding after 2007, electoral process and corruption were unchanged, and judicial framework and independence declined consistently and rather sharply until the end of the Orange regime in 2010. Meanwhile, Georgia experienced spectacular and sustained progress in fighting corruption but this bright spot was balanced by modest declines in media and judicial independence, and by post-2006 backsliding in the quality of the electoral process (following an initial improvement in the early post-Rose Revolution years.)

As a next step, the following four sets of graphs focus in turn on the trajectories of individual countries and provide sub-regional averages as reference points against which to judge the relative performance of the colored revolution regimes. This approach allows us to gauge how these regimes performed vis-à-vis their immediate peer group, and can help us disentangle the impact of the colored revolutions from broader regional trends in governance.

Figures 2a-2d illustrate Serbia's consistent progress following the fall of Milosevic. While the progress was most impressive and uniform with respect to corruption, and somewhat more equivocal for media independence and judicial independence, Serbia nevertheless managed to close or even eliminate the large initial gap vis-à-vis its immediate peer group - other Balkan countries – across the four indicators. However, given that much of this progress was arguably fueled by the long-term goal of European integration, the considerable and persistent remaining gap compared to the new ex-communist EU members, puts this progress in a more sobering perspective. Finally, the larger remaining gaps with respect to corruption and particularly judicial independence suggest a more enduring legacy of the Milosevic era, and particularly of the fallout from the Yugoslav wars on the country's rule-of-law.

At the other end of the spectrum, Figures 5a-5d illustrate the difficulties that Kyrgyzstan has experienced in maintaining its early superior performance to the rest of its neighbors. For most of its first decade of independence, Kyrgyzstan was much more politically open than any of its neighbors and was one of the few democratic “overachievers” in the former Soviet space. Unfortunately, rather than the Tulip Revolution representing a return to that period of over-performance, the data illustrate a steady decline on most indicators which the Tulip Revolution not only did nothing to reverse, but rather accelerated. On each dimension, the Bakiev-led administration that followed the Revolution rapidly set about attempting as much as possible to

consolidate its control over the Kyrgyz political system, trying to build a more centralized patronal presidency on the model of the other Central Asian states. Only after Bakiev himself was ousted in 2010 has Kyrgyzstan returned to the more pluralistic if fractionalized politics of the 1990s.

The picture in Ukraine and Georgia, by contrast to Serbia and Kyrgyzstan, is much more nuanced. In Ukraine, as Figure 4 illustrates, the Orange Revolution does seem to have been associated with some real gains, even though these are far from across the board. Perhaps most notably, the media landscape in Ukraine has improved considerably since the Kuchma era and continues to be one of the best in the post-Soviet space. While, as we discuss below, there are still some disappointments in this sphere, the relative vigor of the media in Ukraine is an important bulwark against attempts at authoritarian consolidation on the part of the Yanukovich administration in Kyiv. On the other hand, judicial independence which was very weak under President Kuchma has continued to deteriorate in the post-Orange era. In the early years after the revolution, there were no consistent efforts to reform the courts and to improve the judicial system. Since the election of President Yanukovich, the picture has worsened considerably with high profile political prosecutions being added to the list of existing weaknesses in the judicial system.

Finally, Figure 3 illustrates the complex path that Georgia has walked following the Rose Revolution. Following the Rose Revolution, the quality of the electoral process in Georgia initially improved as the 2004 parliamentary and presidential elections featured fewer irregularities than the 2003 elections that had triggered the electoral revolution. However, as illustrated in Fig. 3a this progress was largely reversed from 2006-08 as President Sakaashvili and the ruling party UNM responded to the mounting political challenges of the opposition by

using electoral rules and its control over administrative resources to tilt the electoral playing field in its favor. While Fig. 3b shows that media independence also did not progress during this time period, Georgia's relative performance was well above its ex-Soviet peers even under Shevarnadze, and this difference increased marginally by 2011 as the rest of the region experienced a gradual erosion of press freedom in the last decade.

If the Rose Revolution was not genuinely democratizing in electoral or press freedom terms, its real achievement is reflected in Figure 3d, which shows a large turnaround in the country's control over corruption: whereas in 2003, Georgia had performed worse than neighboring Armenia and on par with the rest of the European CIS countries, by 2011 it was significantly outperforming its regional peers and had closed about half the gap to the post-communist reform frontrunners. This is a major achievement that is not well explained by existing theories of the colored revolutions. On the other hand, it is clear from the NIT indicators in Figure 3c, and from field interviews and media reports from the region, that the gains in corruption have, at least in part, come at the cost of further empowering an already dominant set of security and force ministries and institutions that have worsened not just judicial independence but also the protection of human rights in the country.

The story of developments in each of the colored revolution states raises a number of important explanatory challenges. In the rest of the paper, we focus on two. First, is the importance of a kind of "reversal to the mean" in terms of structural factors. Looking at the tables, we see that the only country to record significant and lasting improvements across multiple indicators of democratic governance – Serbia – was also the country that prior to its colored revolution lagged the furthest behind its sub-regional peers. By contrast, the other three countries were actually ahead of their sub-regional peers prior to their electoral revolutions but

then had more modest governance gains or even deteriorations in the post-revolutionary period. The only exception in this sense was the dismal corruption situation in pre-2004 Georgia, which remarkably represents the area of greatest governance progress of any of the three countries. Thus, it appears that the political openings created by the colored revolutions were effective in helping countries catch up to the governance levels of their regional peers, but they were much less useful in helping them pull away from their peers. In fact, at least in the Kyrgyz case, it seems that the Tulip Revolution ended up reducing its democratic governance “surplus” compared to its Central Asian neighbors, and a similar trend can be observed for Ukraine’s judicial framework and independence ratings in Fig. 4c.

The second key question that emerges is how to understand departures from the “reversal to the mean” phenomenon. Convergence to the sub-regional mean is obviously far from complete and understanding the dynamics of exceptional cases is crucial. Consequently, a central issue is to understand, the mixed nature of the Georgian and Ukrainian experience. Why did Ukraine so well on media independence and so badly on judicial independence? And why has Georgia disappointed on both of these counts, but performed so strongly on corruption control? The challenge is to develop an answer to these questions that is not entirely ad hoc and that fits within the general intellectual framework established by structural theories.

Understanding Reversal To The Mean

The question is how we should interpret this powerful “reversal to the mean” trend. The easiest answer would be to look for diffusion effects, which have been shown to affect regime trajectories in ex-communist countries (Kopstein and Reilly 2000). While such neighborhood effects are undoubtedly important, there are reasons to be cautious in assigning them too much

explanatory weight in this particular case. First, we need to be careful about defining peer groups in purely geographic ways, especially for countries like Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, which have explicitly tried to emphasize their democratic/Western distinctiveness compared to their immediate neighbors. Moreover, the very contagion process that fueled the colored revolutions beyond their Serbian prototype (Beissinger 2007) occurred in ways that transcended immediate borders and sub-regional locations. Second, a country's geographic location may be correlated with a broad range of domestic and international differences, which may be the real drivers of different post-communist democratic governance trajectories (Pop-Eleches 2007). From this perspective, what we see is primarily a reversal to a legacy-based "normality" rather than to a sub-regionally defined peer group.

Table 1 here

To highlight the important structural differences between our four cases, in Table 1 we compare them along a number of key dimensions that based on our interviews emerged as potential explanations for differences in governance outcomes. Table 1 confirms that the four countries differed not only in terms of how democratic their neighborhoods were and in their European integration prospects (which were most promising in Serbia and least promising in Kyrgyzstan) but it also highlights broader domestic legacy differences that were roughly in line with the governance patterns discussed above. Thus, whereas Serbia's socio-economic development was broadly comparable to the region's new EU members (despite a noticeable gap in GDP/capita), Kyrgyzstan looked much more similar to Central American or North African countries in terms of output levels, poverty rates and overall human development. Meanwhile Ukraine and Georgia occupied intermediate positions, though the latter had noticeably worse inequality rates and poverty headcounts.

Another important dimension along which the four countries differed both between each other and compared to the region's more advanced democratic reformers was in the nature of their statehood challenges. Broadly speaking, we can distinguish two main patterns: in Georgia and Serbia the main challenges to their states were related to ethnically-based separatist movements – especially Kosovo in the case of Serbia and South Ossetia and Abkhazia for Georgia.² In both cases these conflicts played a central role in both domestic politics and international relations since the 1990s but by the time the colored revolutions took place the central governments of both countries had effectively lost control over these territories. Given that these losses had occurred in conjunction with external support for the separatists (NATO in the case of Kosovar Albanians and Russia in the case of Abkhazians and South Ossetians) the nationalism fueled by these conflicts essentially served a unifying “rallying-around-the-flag” function as the vast majority of elites and ordinary citizens regarded these losses as illegitimate and supported efforts to try to reverse them.³

A related unifying result of these successful separatist movements was that they resulted in more ethnically homogeneous societies: thus, both Serbia and Georgia had considerably lower ethnic minority shares than either Ukraine or Kyrgyzstan and were more comparable to the more homogeneous East-Central European countries. As a result, neither Serbia nor Georgia experienced significant ethnic and regional political cleavages in the aftermath of their colored revolutions. On the other hand, the combination of nationalist rhetoric and lawlessness that

² Both countries faced additional territorial challenges, such as Montenegro's ultimately successful independence drive from rump-Yugoslavia and Adjara's longstanding autonomy in Georgia but these played a less central political role.

³ However, the fact that Georgian nationalism was anti-Russian and therefore pro-Western, while Serbian nationalists were more likely to blame the West (and particularly NATO) for their woes, arguably mattered for their relative likelihood to embrace Western political models.

resulted from the violent conflict surrounding the separatist wars should be expected to have longer-term negative repercussions for democratic governance in the two countries.

By contrast, while neither Ukraine nor Kyrgyzstan experienced significant ethnically based separatist challenges to their territorial integrity during the post-communist era, they faced a different set of political challenges related to ethnic and regional differences. Thus, in both countries historically-based regional cleavages – between East/South and West in Ukraine and between North and South in Kyrgyzstan – played a major role in post-communist politics. Given that the different regions in the two countries were fairly evenly split in terms of population, this regional cleavage set the stage for alternating episodes of unilateral domination attempts by one side (often at the expense of democracy) and efforts to build broader cross-regional coalitions (which tended to be buttressed by broad patronage-sharing deals.) Moreover, both countries had large ethnic minorities - Russians in eastern Ukraine and Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan - and even though neither minority posed significant ethno-separatist challenges⁴, they nevertheless contributed to a pronounced ethnic cleavage in the politics of both countries. While ethnic conflict has so far been considerably more violent in Kyrgyzstan, which experienced large-scale deadly interethnic riots in both 1990 and 2010, Ukraine has also experienced its share of heated political disputes along ethno-linguistic lines. To make matters worse, both minorities were largely concentrated in areas bordering co-ethnics in larger and more powerful neighboring countries, thus adding an international dimension of any conflict.

From another perspective on state-building, however, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan as having suffered more from disintegration of the state apparatus in the post-Soviet period. In Kyrgyzstan, under both Akaev and Bakiev the state was turned into a tool for personal and a family

⁴ There were some brief calls for an incorporation of Uzbek dominated areas in southern Kyrgyzstan into neighboring Uzbekistan in 1989-90 but they have not resurfaced in the last two decades.

enrichment , with key posts and institutions being controlled by family members of the president. Moreover, while Ukraine and Serbia did not have to look far to find severe problems in state quality, Georgia had by any definition come close to being a failed state in the 1990s and, though some recovery had taken place by the time of the Rose Revolution, it was widely recognized in the elite that the state was barely functioning any more. By contrast, particularly in Serbia and Ukraine, elements of the state were coherent enough to continue to enjoy relative autonomy from the political sphere. These contrasts in the nature of the state, as we show below, have also been highly consequential.

Serbia

From our comparison of the governance trajectories of the four colored revolution cases in the previous section, Serbia emerged as by far the most consistent success story. However, this assessment is at odds with the much more critical and pessimistic tenor of many of the analyses of post-Milosevic Serbia (Pribicevic 2004 Ramet and Pavlakovic 2005). Arguably, these differences are largely a question of comparative references: while Serbia undoubtedly improved in most respects compared to the abysmal situation of the late 1990s, and while its progress was faster and more durable than in the other three colored revolutions cases, even Fig. 2a-2d suggest some clear reasons for disappointment. After an initial sharp improvement in governance across the board from 2000-2001, Serbia largely stagnated in the following decade and even experienced some backsliding with respect to media and judicial independence. Second, the Serbian government failed to close the significant governance gap that separated it from Eastern Europe's more advanced reformers, and for the most part it even lagged behind its regional peers in the Balkans. Therefore, it is perhaps less surprising that despite absolute gains in governance scores, both political analysts and Serbian voters have been underwhelmed with the

achievements of the post-Bulldozer Revolution regime. Therefore, in this section we explain both why Serbia outperformed its revolutionary peers and why its trajectory ultimately fell short of geographically and developmentally based expectations.

The first part of this task more straightforward and can be roughly summarized as follows: by toppling the Milosevic regime the Bulldozer Revolution simply removed the artificial constraints on the country's democratic development and brought it closer to the "normal" levels we would expect given the country's socio-economic development and international incentives. Thus, even under Milosevic's repressive regime, Serbia had had a reasonably well developed civil society and political opposition, and once in power we would expect the anti-Milosevic coalition to pursue significant democratic reforms in line with societal demands for cleaner and more democratic governance and with the aligned incentives of European integration. One example of this type of "easy" reforms, which explains the initial improvement in democracy and governance scores, was the repeal in 2001 of Milosevic's highly controversial 1998 *Law On Public Information*, which had been one of the main impediments to the development of an otherwise active independent mass media prior to the Bulldozer Revolution (Ivanisevic et al 2000). Similarly, within the first year the new government targeted some of the most visible corruption culprits from the Milosevic era, including a reform of the customs service (which had been a main source of funding for the previous regime) and the prosecution of a number of high-ranking former officials, including Milosevic himself, on corruption-related charges (Freedom House 2003).

Turning to the question of what went wrong - or at least not sufficiently right - in post-Milosevic Serbia, two factors stand out: the conflictual dynamics of the fragmented anti-Milosevic coalition, and the entrenched institutional and attitudinal legacies of the old regime. In

itself, the fact that the broad and diverse Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) coalition, suffered from internal disagreements following the achievement of its *raison d'être* - the overthrow of the Milosevic regime – was hardly surprising, especially considering the earlier experiences of their Romanian and Slovak counterparts. Nonetheless, the depth of the disagreements was arguably even deeper in the Serbian case, since it involved fundamental questions about the country's international orientation (including the status of Kosovo and cooperation with the ICTY) and how to deal with the institutional legacies of the Milosevic regime. As a result, this conflict did not simply slow down the pace of democratic reforms but in some cases actively undermined democratic governance. Thus, when the intense personal rivalry between Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić and President Vojislav Koštunica culminated in mid-2002, Đinđić removed 45 members of Koštunica's Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) from Parliament on the grounds that they had boycotted parliamentary meetings. Đinđić then ignored a Yugoslav Constitutional Court ruling that questioned his constitutional authority to dismiss the MPs and took advantage of the altered parliamentary power balance to vote in 6 new Constitutional Court judges, who promptly delivered a favorable ruling. (Freedom House 2003) While Đinđić eventually reinstated the DSS MPs in late 1992 following Koštunica's clear victory in the December 2002 presidential elections, the incident nevertheless illustrates the negative repercussions of these conflicts for democratic governance reforms in Serbia.

Beyond the coalitional conflicts facing the new government, their reform efforts were complicated by a number of unfavorable institutional and attitudinal legacies of the Milosevic regime. Perhaps most importantly, Milosevic's security apparatus, which had famously switched sides in the decisive moments of the Bulldozer Revolution, proved very resilient to post-2000 reform efforts. In part this resilience was probably the result of the new government's

halfhearted approach to reforms which was in turn rooted in sharp disagreements between the different coalition partners: thus, whereas the Democratic Party (DS) favored a significant overhaul of the police and security forces, whereas Koštunica proposed significant personnel changes on the grounds that “it would be quite irresponsible, at the moment when we are controlling things, to start experiments with the police and the secret police.”⁵ However, the depth of the problems with security reform run much deeper, and are rooted in the powerful links between the Serb security forces and organized crime dating back to the Balkan wars of the 1990s. Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of these difficulties was the assassination of Prime Minister Đinđić by a member of the “Zemun gang” an organized crime organization in cooperation with the Unit for Special Operations (Red Berets) of the State Security Service in March 2003. While Đinđić’s death triggered the dissolution of the Red Berets less than two weeks later and contributed to more decisive action against organized crime, Đinđić’s successors stopped short of a genuine reform of the state security service (Freedom House 2005). The failure of these security reforms arguably had an important negative impact on Serbia’s progress with respect to both corruption and judicial framework and independence.

Another important and resilient legacy of the Milosevic era was the prominence of ethnic nationalism in Serbian politics, which was reinforced by the successive collective traumas of the Yugoslav secession wars and the Western embargo, and more recently by the secession of Kosovo and the NATO bombings. Milosevic’s skillful use of the ethnic card had been one of the main reasons for his prolonged ability to hang on to power, and even after his fall successive free elections confirmed the broad electoral appeal of nationalism: thus, not only was the extreme-nationalist Serbian Radical Party (SRS) and its somewhat more moderate offshoot, the Serbian Progressive Party, the most consistent electoral performer in the post-2000 period (with 28-30%

⁵ Cited in Pavlakovic(2005:30).

of the popular vote) but even important parts of the democratic opposition, particularly Koštunica's DSS, featured important nationalist electoral appeals, including staunch opposition to Kosovo's independence and to surrendering suspected Serbian war criminals (including Milosevic) to the ICTY. These issues not only contributed to some of the conflicts within the new government (as discussed above) but they also undermined Serbia's European integration prospects and therefore reduced the incentives to pursue additional democratic governance reforms as part of the EU integration process.

As a result, whereas Serbia's fairly advantageous socio-economic development and geographic position facilitated a fairly rapid initial progress in democratic governance, the legacy of the violent conflicts of the 1990s, particularly with respect to the entrenched links between organized crime and parts of the security apparatus and the continued salience of ethnic-nationalism, continue to cast a long shadow over democratic reform efforts. The relative balance between this difficult past and the potential promise of a European future will be put to test yet again in the coming months, following the 2012 electoral victory of SNP and SPS, the two political parties most closely associated with the Milosevic regime. While both parties have recently adopted a more moderate stance, it is uncertain whether they will be willing and able to continue the far-from-complete governance reforms initiated by their predecessors.

Kyrgyzstan

At the other end of the spectrum of colored revolutions, and in some ways the mirror image of Serbia, is Kyrgyzstan. While Serbia has been the democratic laggard in its region, Kyrgyzstan has stood out from the rest of its neighbors in Central Asia as an island of rambunctious competitive politics in a sea of largely consolidated authoritarian regimes. Much of

Kyrgyzstan's exceptionalism can be understood as being a function of initial political and economic conditions and structural factors that have made the consolidation of power in the country very challenging. Paradoxically, the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan represented less a boost to competitive politics in the region, but ultimately served to move Kyrgyzstan more in the direction of its neighbors and less in the direction of democracy. In the longer-term, however, the failed experience of the Tulip Revolution meant that different institutional solutions were tried following the second revolution in 2010. However, the factors that have explained Kyrgyzstan's over-performance on political competition relative to its neighbors have also made it difficult to consolidate real gains from the two revolutions that have taken place in the country.

Since independence, Kyrgyzstani politics have been quite different from those elsewhere in Central Asia. Rather than moving into the new era with the same leadership intact and no real political competition (as did Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan), or falling into civil war (like Tajikistan), Kyrgyzstan has seen two decades of quite robust, even rather chaotic, but mostly peaceful political competition. Kyrgyzstan's first post-Soviet president, Askar Akaev, enthusiastically endorsed a democratic vision for Kyrgyzstan, which rapidly became the darling of the international community as the "Switzerland of Central Asia". Akaev, however, was unable to fulfill the promise of his vision and over time his rule became both more authoritarian and more corrupt. In 2005, he was overthrown in the Tulip Revolution, amid protests against election fraud in the parliamentary elections of that year.

Following the revolution, there was a period of uneasy cohabitation between the various factions that had united against Akaev. The new President Kurmanbek Bakiev was a former mayor, regional governor and prime minister and was reputed to be one of the richest men in the country. The prime minister, Feliks Kulov, also a former mayor, regional governor and cabinet

member under Akaev, was a northerner with a background in state security. After two years of tense competition, instability and growing political violence, Bakiev managed to gain the upper hand, firing Kulov and launching criminal cases against many of his other competitors (Engvall 2011: 99-100). Bakiev then proceeded to integrate the running of the state with his family, notably two sons and his brother, clamping down on the media and on the courts. While Bakiev emerged dominant, he alienated so much of the ruling elite that he too fell to street demonstrations in April 2010.

The ouster of Bakiev opened up a new era in Kyrgyz politics. Twice burned by centralizing presidents, the Kyrgyz elite drew up a parliamentary constitution designed to prevent one group consolidating authority. After a referendum that endorsed the new constitution and relatively high quality elections, a new parliament met in Bishkek. Despite intense and prolonged wrangling, Kyrgyzstan has now seen two different ruling coalitions in office. On the other hand, the ouster of Bakiev was also followed by ethnic violence in and around the southern city of Osh that resulted in hundreds of deaths and hundreds of thousands of primarily ethnic Uzbeks being forced from their homes. As a result, the future of Kyrgyzstan remains very uncertain and pessimists seem to outnumber optimists in the Kyrgyzstan expert community.

In looking at the trajectory of Kyrgyzstani politics, there is clear evidence of how it has been shaped, sometimes in unexpected ways, by structural factors that limit and direct the impact of big political reversals like the Tulip Revolution. On the one hand, and perhaps counter-intuitively, low levels of economic development combined with the absence of a natural resource stream, helped to contribute to Kyrgyzstan's democratic "over-performance" of the 1990s. Faced with low levels of economic development and a severe economic crisis at the moment of independence, the new regime in Bishkek was extremely dependent upon international financial

support both from bilateral and multilateral donors. International donors, consequently, became heavily involved in donating money that shaped both policy and the political landscape in the country. This has worked through at least two different mechanisms.

First, in return for substantial support from the IFIs, and in the absence of any obvious alternative development model, the Kyrgyz government undertook a rapid and thorough-going program of economic reform, including privatization. This program is credited with creating a dispersed structure of ownership in the country that produced many small, local “oligarchs” but no dominant center of wealth that could be used to consolidate political power (McMann 2006, Radnitz 2010b). This meant that maintaining control at the national level has required leaders to negotiate with local power centers rather than disciplining them through use of clientelistic resources.⁶

Another mechanism through which aid dependency contributed to Kyrgyzstan’s over-performance in the 1990s was the growth of organized civil society. Aside from balance of payments and budget support from the IFIs, international aid money was often channeled through civil society groups, and this helped fuel a burgeoning (certainly by Central Asian standards) organized third sector. Many have questioned the role of such aid dependent civil society groups in contributing to democratic development (Knack 2004), and it is clear that Kyrgyzstan is no exception. Many, indeed most of these groups were not bottom-up grassroots type organizations, but instead were often political vehicles for local elites, or were organizations conjured up by and answerable to the donor community rather than to the communities they claimed to serve. However, in a country that often lacks policy specialists with international training, these groups, for all their imperfections played an important part in liaising with the

⁶ Authors’ interview with Dmitri Shevkun, IFES, June 2010, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

government and checking its power.⁷ This role has continued with NGO representatives chairing three of the four subcommittees charged with drafting the new constitution in 2010 and exerting considerable influence on aspects of the constitution relating to human rights and religion.⁸

However, diffuse ownership and an aid dependent NGO sector are not enough to generate durable democracy and structural factors have made it hard to Kyrgyzstan to break out of its cycles of instability. The absence of a strong taxable economic base has stood in the way of state-building. The weakness of the Kyrgyz economy and the diffuse nature of political power across regions, clans and ethnic groups have made building a useable state extremely difficult. Corruption is not a problem afflicting the economic system in the country; it is a central part of that system (Engvall 2011). There is a strong tendency to treat state positions as personal or family assets that are there to be exploited. Hence, under both Presidents Akaev and Bakiev growing authoritarianism was associated with increased family involvement in state affairs.

Furthermore, high levels of poverty, particularly in the context of a relatively young population, have ensured that there is always a “reserve army” of the underemployed willing to participate in the political projects of the elite. As a result, paid groups of young rural underemployed men played a very significant role in both the revolutions of 2005 and 2010, and in many other street conflicts that have shaped politics in the post-Soviet era (Radnitz 2010a, 2010b:38).⁹

In addition, relative poverty makes Kyrgyz political balance vulnerable to changes in external flows of money. The delicate equilibrium between Kyrgyzstan’s competing regions,

⁷ Authors’ interview with Sheradil Baktygulov , Office of the President, and with Asyl Aitbaeva, International Center, Interbilim. June 2010, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

⁹ Authors’ interview with Ishkak Masaliev, leader the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, June 2010, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

⁹ Authors’ interview with Ishkak Masaliev, leader the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, June 2010, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

clans and businessmen was disturbed by the US desire for an air base in the country from which the US could pursue its war in Afghanistan. Agreement was reached to set up the base at the end of 2001 and the financial windfall in terms of rents and contracts were channeled by President Akaev to his own family, cutting out the other Kyrgyz elites that had shared in the resources from international aid. These efforts to centralize the flow of resources ultimately gave rise to accusations of growing authoritarianism and contributed to the Tulip Revolution and his ouster from power. Kurmanbek Bakiev, Akaev's successor, tried a similar policy and met a similar fate (McGlinchey 2011:81).

A weak state and a weak economy have meant that Kyrgyzstan has been unable to build upon the relatively favorable human development legacies of the Soviet period. Furthermore, key infrastructure has aged with neither investment being made in maintaining it, nor a new generation of specialists being trained to operate, maintain and develop it or to educate others with the necessary skills.¹⁰ This has hindered economic development and is likely to continue to do so in the future. In short, while Kyrgyzstan has clearly out-performed its neighbors in terms of political competition, media freedom, civil society development and judicial independence, it has proven increasingly difficult overtime to maintain that position, and indicators suggest a strong regression to the broader pattern of regional politics, which the Tulip Revolution accelerated rather than reversed.

Nevertheless, the other effect of a weak state and weak economy is that it has been hard, and is likely to continue to be hard, for a single group to consolidate power around itself. Furthermore, Kyrgyz elites drew clear lessons from the bloody and dangerous aftermath of the Tulip Revolution, and have taken steps to put in place institutional barriers to dictatorial consolidation. Hence, while the Tulip Revolution did not improve the prospects of democracy

¹⁰ The authors are grateful to Sean Roberts for pointing this out.

and good governance, the Revolution's failure played an important role in underlying the need for cross-alliances to protect political freedom in the country.

Georgia

The fall of the Shevardnadze government popular protests following the fraudulent elections of November 2003, was as much the result of regime weakness as of the strength and unity of the Georgian opposition. Long before the elections, Shevardnadze's government had lost some of its most charismatic ministers and the ruling Citizens' Union of Georgia (CUG) had splintered (Welt 2006: 9-11). As a result, it took only a small push at what was already an open door. Protests in the first weeks after the November 2 elections were very small -- the largest saw no more than 5000 people (Mitchell, 2004: p. 345).¹¹ Even after an aggressive television campaign to mobilize protests, the largest crowd on the day Saakashvili and his supporters stormed the parliament was not more than 60 000 (Welt, 2006: p. 14). While there is a vigorous debate about whether Shevardnadze had the capacity to try to repress protests (Welt, 2006: 20-23), no serious attempt to do so was made. In fact, Shevardnadze's Georgia was far from being a fearsome dictatorship but instead allowed a high degree of media independence and tolerance for political dissent (Ó Beacháin 2009). It was, however, a thoroughly corrupt and ineffective state, over which the central government had limited control and which was thoroughly delegitimized in the eyes of most citizens. Moreover, even that capacity it did have was limited in scope, with South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Ajaria outside of Tbilisi's control. Consequently, while the international media presented the Rose Revolution as a victory for democracy over dictatorship,

¹¹ Mitchell notes that the grandiose rhetoric of the protest leaders "appeared out of place for what seemed like small demonstrations largely by the political class" (2004: p. 345).

this spin is misleading. This revolution was not about democracy, but about building a new state, and this fact of its birth has strongly shaped developments in the post-Rose era.¹²

The almost complete lack of a functioning state in the wake of the Rose Revolution, combined with widespread poverty and a rapidly deteriorating infrastructure turned out to be a blessing in disguise for the new government. On the one hand, the state weakness created a massive political challenge for the country's new rulers, particularly given their youth and lack of real political experience. On the other hand, the implosion of the old regime, combined with its thorough delegitimization among the population allowed the revolutionary cadres around Mikheil Sakaashvili to pursue an unprecedented remaking of the Georgian state. While the complete details of these changes have been discussed at length elsewhere, they included a number of elements that were not matched by any of the other colored revolution cases. Thus, in 2004 the government disbanded the notoriously corrupt traffic police and created a new patrol police, whose officers were selected on a competitive basis (Freedom House 2005) and they drastically overhauled the customs and border protection departments. At the same time, the government waged an aggressive campaign against public sector corruption which resulted in the firing and arrest of a broad range of public officials (including ministers of the new government)¹³, and it pursued tax evasion and theft among economic elites through a "plea bargain" system whereby individuals could avoid criminal charges as long as they agreed to pay into the state budget their estimated back-taxes or stolen property.¹⁴ These measures were rounded out by a simplification of many official procedures, which lowered the opportunities for bribe demands, and the significant increases in the wages of many public officials in an effort to

¹² Authors' interview with Ghia Nodia, Tbilisi, June 2011.

¹³ Authors' interview with Akaki Minashvili, Member of Georgian Parliament, United National Movement, Tbilisi, June 2011.

¹⁴ Authors' interview with Irakli Alasania, Free Democrats Party, Tbilisi, June 2011.

ensure a reasonable living standard and thus reduce the temptation to rely on bribes as a source of income.

This sustained anti-corruption campaign led to an immediate and noticeable reduction in low-level corruption, which despite more modest and contested progress vis-à-vis top-level corruption, was reflected in the growing public perceptions of corruption and the related improvement in corruption scores in Figure 5d.

In parallel to the anti-corruption efforts the new government launched a sustained campaign to gain greater control over the country's territory. The campaign included a highly publicized string of military operations against smugglers and local strongmen directed by Interior Minister Giorgi Baramidze.¹⁵ This campaign scored some remarkable successes, most notably in Ajaria, which had been run by Aslan Abashidze as a semi-independent fiefdom since 1992 with minimal intervention from the Georgian government. Even though this progress was more modest in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and was completely reversed following the 2008 war against Russia, the central government's greater ability to monopolize the legitimate use of force within its territory was crucial for the success of its anti-corruption campaign both because it allowed for the more consistent implementation of anti-corruption measures and because it boosted the government's credibility in the eyes of its citizens. At the same time, the legitimacy boost and the significant increases in tax revenues associated with the fight against corruption arguably bolstered the government's ability to intervene against local mafias. Thus, the two most notable successes of the Rose Revolution - the reduction of corruption and the centralization of political power – mutually reinforced each other in important ways.

In other areas, however, the interaction between different governance reforms aspects was less complementary. Thus, in the name of anti-corruption efforts in the judicial system, the

¹⁵ Authors' Interview with Hans Gutbrod, Regional Director CRRC, Tbilisi, June 2011..

Saakashvili government replaced most Supreme Court judges within the first three years after the Rose Revolution through a combination of attractive retirement packages and disciplinary measures (Freedom House2007). Furthermore, a number of critics, including the ombudsman, Sozar Subari, have charged that in its zeal to punish corruption and organized crime, the government routinely pressured judges to deliver guilty verdicts against criminal suspects, thereby violating judicial independence.

At the same time, the excesses associated with the anti-corruption campaign contributed to the significant human rights violations that Georgia continued to experience after the Rose Revolution: these violations included the use of excessive and even deadly violence during arrests, the increase of pre-trial detentions from 30 to 90 days, and the poor treatment of prisoners, reflected in the rising casualties in prisons. In part these problems may have been the unfortunate side effects of the success of the government's anticorruption campaign in the context of a country constrained by weak institutional and physical infrastructure: thus, the rise in the number of court cases overburdened the country's legal system and contributed to the high proportion of prisoners who were being held awaiting trial. Similarly, the explosion in the number of prisoners, which rose from 6000 in 2003 to 13000 in 2006, led to prison overcrowding and thereby contributed to the noticeable deterioration of prison conditions (Freedom House2007).

In part too, though, they are the result of the creation of a state that relies heavily on police measures to achieve its ends and one in which the new police force developed personal loyalty to Saakashvili rather than to state.¹⁶ In this context, human rights abuses are justified as being a necessary consequence of state building and anticorruption campaigns. These practices

¹⁶ Interview with Giorgi Gogia, Human Rights Watch, Tbilisi, June 2011. Gogia recounts how police officers involved in clashes with opposition demonstrators in 2009 were heard to chant "Misha! Misha!" as they fought with protesters.

have included arresting opposition activists on bogus charges and seizing their property when “the accused person failed to prove his innocence”.¹⁷

Similarly, the government motivated its imposition of limitations on media freedom following the 2007 antigovernment protests, which included the temporary shutdown of the opposition TV station Imedi, by the threat of a Russian-backed coup allegedly planned by Imedi’s owner Badri Patarkatsishvili. Even some of the problems in the electoral process category were linked to the fight against corruption: opposition politicians have repeatedly claimed that the government used fabricated corruption or criminal charges to intimidate their political opponents,¹⁸ and that laws supposedly intended to increase the transparency in party financing were in fact aimed at disincentives for businesses who support opposition parties. (Freedom House2007)

At first glance the Georgian case illustrates the importance of human agency in governance reforms: after all, a relatively small group of young revolutionaries in the inner circle of President Mikheil Saakashvili, managed to achieve a radical transformation of the Georgian state, which would have been impossible to imagine under the country's previous political leadership. Nevertheless, a closer analysis reveals an important role for a number of structural constraints. First, the very fact of the rapid rise to almost uncontested power of the Rose revolutionaries is intimately tied to the legacy of poverty, corruption and state failure under Shevardnadze, which had left behind a population willing to back even radical political solutions and a morally exhausted and weakened political elite that was neither willing nor capable to resist. Second, the country's traumatic loss of territory in the early 1990s and the continuing security threats from Russia shaped the key strategic priorities of the Georgian government and

¹⁷ Interview with David Usupashvili, leader Republican Party, Tbilisi, June 2011.

¹⁸ Interview with Irakli Alasania, leader Our Georgia – Free Democrats Party, Tbilisi, June 2011.

arguably had far-reaching effects on the nature of governance reforms. Thus, the early focus on reforming and strengthening the state's security institutions can be more easily explained in the context of the fears of and preparations for a possible conflict with Russia over the breakaway republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. From this perspective, the governance reforms can be seen as part of a broader economic reform effort designed to improve tax collections in order to bolster defense spending. Furthermore, the presence of a serious and immediate external threat contributed both to the unity of the government and it weakened the political opposition by making it vulnerable to government accusations of undermining the national cause.

A third important set of structural constraints lie in the country's high dependence on foreign aid. While this dependence had been high even before the Rose Revolution due to a combination of poverty and lack of natural resources, it further increased after 2003 due to the growing salience of the economically and militarily highly uneven Georgian-Russian conflict. Nevertheless, even with large amounts of aid, western leverage was limited by a lack of coordination among donors, and by the fact that US assistance in particular after the Rose Revolution was increasingly directed away from democracy assistance toward direct support to the government.¹⁹ Consequently, aid continued even as media freedom and judicial independence eroded after the revolution. This is not to say, however, that the Saakashvili government was insensitive to donors' criticisms. The government's agenda featured not just western aid, but more importantly integration into western institutions and most importantly NATO. Fear that backsliding would limit integration prospects certainly played a role in limiting the extent to which the Georgian government would deviate from democratic norms, and may

¹⁹ Authors' interview with Alexander Rondelli, Director GFSIS, and with George Khelashvili, Tbilisi, June 2011. Several sources noted that US aid once again became to flow to civil society projects after President Obama took office.

have been crucial in its willingness to accept its electoral victory in the 2012 parliamentary elections.

One may of course ask why Georgia's political reforms, which were so successful in terms of state building and corruption control, yielded such modest dividends in other crucial areas of democratic governance, especially given the close Western partnership discussed above. Based on our interviews, one possible answer lies in the pathologies of decision-making by a small group of politicians without meaningful input from either the political opposition or civil society²⁰, and particularly the siege mentality triggered by the Russian conflict which led them to dismiss their critics as either corrupt or as tools of Russian interests in Georgia. But here too, a number of structural constraints played an important role: first, the political dominance of Saakashvili's United National Movement party was arguably due less to government repression, and more to the weakness of the opposition, which suffered from the implosion of the Shevardnadze regime and the subsequent inability of government opponents to articulate a genuine and unified alternative platform.²¹ This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that when the opposition managed to present a united front under the leadership of Bidzina Ivanishvili in the 2012 elections it was able to defeat the UNM, and the latter accepted its defeat and went into opposition.

Second, at least in the early years after the Rose Revolution, the lack of improvements in media independence seem to have been due less to the legal framework governing the mass media (which actually improved, especially with respect to libel laws) and more to the structural economic problems confronting the Georgian media: thus, the limitations on advertising

²⁰ Authors' Interview with Hans Gutbrod, Regional Director CRRC, Tbilisi, June 2011.

²¹ Of course, this is not to say that the government did not use its control over administrative resources even outright intimidation to tilt the electoral playing field in their favor. Interview with David Usupashvili, leader Republican Party, Tbilisi, June 2011

revenues imposed by Georgia's small size and relative poverty meant that most TV stations were controlled by a small number of businessmen who used them to further economic and political interests, which in turn made political reporting very vulnerable to indirect manipulation by the government (Freedom House 2007).²² Finally, the vulnerability of the judicial system to government pressures was undoubtedly exacerbated by human capital limitations and particularly the fact that many judges from the Shevardnadze era were incompetent and/or corrupt and thus represented easy targets for the government's efforts to replace them with their political allies.

Ukraine

Ukraine's Orange Revolution in 2004 was, along with the Rose Revolution, the archetype of the colored revolutions: Post-election mass protest leading to the departure of a supposedly authoritarian regime and the anticipation of a major shift in political orientation towards a more democratic, pro-western politics. Like the Rose Revolution, the Ukrainian Revolution is now generally viewed critically by most political analysts and scholars. The verdict of ordinary Ukrainian citizens is similarly negative: thus in a nationally representative public opinion survey from December 2012²³, only 18.7% of respondents thought of the Orange Revolution as a "mostly positive event," while almost twice as many (34.5%) viewed it as mostly negative. When asked about the lessons of the Orange Revolution, Ukrainians endorsed a variety of interpretations but by far the most popular (29.3%) was that the purposes of the Orange Revolution were good but it was let down by its leaders. This sense of betrayal was reinforced by

²² By 2011 four main pro-government channels dominated the airwaves, with the formerly critical Rustavi-II and Imedi providing strongly pro-government accounts of sensitive issues such as the 2008 War with Russia, opposition protests and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Interview with Georgi Gogia, HRW, Tbilisi, June 2011.

²³ The survey of 1804 adult Ukrainian citizens was designed by the authors and executed by Razumkov Center from December 14-20, 2012.

the fact that only 14% of Ukrainians professed their continued support for the leaders of the Orange Revolution, while 23% said that they had supported them at the outset but no longer did.

As we demonstrated above, however, the actual legacy of the Orange Revolution is a mixed one. Some real progress has been made since December 2004, particularly in the fields of electoral processes and media freedom, but the hoped-for transition to a less corrupt and more law-bound society has not materialized. This scorecard is in many ways the opposite of that of Georgia. In this section we explain why.

Many analysts, politicians and observers of Ukraine blame the disappointing results of the Orange Revolution on the personality and nature of the leader of the revolution itself, Viktor Yushchenko. Yushchenko, the virtually unanimous consensus says, was not the right person to lead Ukraine after the revolution despite all the hopes and dreams that had been pinned on him. The particular problem with Yushchenko's character varies – he was really a conformist in revolutionary clothing, he was corrupt, he was interested in rewriting Ukrainian history not implementing reform in real life, he had no agenda and he was too ill to conduct reforms even had he wanted.²⁴ While some or many of these charges may have some basis in reality, Ukraine's political successes and failures since the Orange Revolution can also be understood in terms of the structural conditions that have strongly shaped the context within which politics in Ukraine has played out. These include a polarized and divided society and a dispersed structure of ownership and wealth that have favored political pluralism, but have made fighting corruption extremely difficult. Relative prosperity and a big domestic market, at least relative to Georgia, have also helped shape the competitive nature of politics in Ukraine, while, paradoxically, the relative resilience of the Ukrainian state, compared to Shevardnadze-era Georgia, also made fighting corruption more difficult.

²⁴ Each of these interpretations of Yushchenko's character flaws were heard in interviews in Kyiv in June 2012.

Whatever disagreements might exist about the character of Ukraine's new president after the Orange Revolution, there is no doubting that the group taking power after the Orange Revolution was much more of a broad and fissiparous coalition than the United National Movement that took control in Georgia. The so-called Orange team was bitterly divided between Yushchenko and his Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. Part of the divisions in the team lay in the very broad and poorly focused nature of the coalition that had brought the Orange team to power (Beissinger 2013). In part too, as is well known, there were deep personal divisions between the two leaders, with neither willing to play a secondary role. The perception on the Yushchenko side was that the Tymoshenko was out to destroy Yushchenko in the belief that she would inherit his supporters, while on the other side Yushchenko was seen as being in the pocket of Russian-allied oligarch, Dmytro Firtash, who was supposedly intent on destroying Tymoshenko.²⁵ Moreover, unlike in Georgia where the new President Saakashvili enjoyed vast powers, the institutional compromise that made the Orange Revolution possible robbed Yushchenko of key powers. Ironically, had Yushchenko stormed the parliament like Saakashvili, as Tymoshenko supposedly advised, he may not have been forced to cooperate with either her or Yanukovich after the revolution and the infighting might have been less.²⁶

The personal and political conflicts within the Orange coalition were, however, only part of the story of a divided Ukrainian polity and society. Unlike Saakashvili, Yushchenko did not enjoy a huge mandate from the population to sweep away a morally bankrupt regime. However, morally bankrupt the Kuchma regime might have been, even in the presidential re-run of December 26, 2004, Kuchma's preferred successor, Viktor Yanukovich took 44 percent of the

²⁵ Interview with Oleh Rybachuk, former Chief of Staff to President Yushchenko and with Roman Olearchuk, Kyiv, June 2012. For more on the alleged relationship between Yushchenko and Firtash see: http://georgiandaily.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20614&Itemid=132

²⁶ Interview with Roman Olearchuk, Kyiv, June 2012.

vote. Moreover, as is well known, that vote was geographically concentrated creating a situation in which Yushchenko had a substantial mandate in the West and Center and very little mandate in the industrial east, south and Crimea. Whether divisions between the regions reflect deep differences in cultures, as some argue, this lack of a mandate certainly hindered implementation of Georgian-style changes in Ukraine.²⁷ For example, traffic police eliminated for corruption by Yushchenko in 2005, in a direct copy of Saakashvili, were reinstated by Yanukovich in 2006 after he became Prime Minister (following Tymoshenko's resignation in 2005).

Divisions at the societal level were also mirrored in divisions among the owners of capital that fund Ukrainian political parties. Like Kyrgyzstan, but unlike Georgia, privatization had left Ukraine with a dispersed structure of ownership. Despite, extremely high levels of inequality, capital in Ukraine is not dominated by a single group nor is it even mostly centered in one place – Kyiv does not dominate the economic picture in Ukraine the way that Tbilisi or Moscow does in Georgia or Russia. Instead, there were deep political divisions among the economic elites both regionally, with financial clans from Donetsk, Kyiv and Lviv all having quite different political preferences, and across sectors, with big capital more reliant on Russia and therefore more supportive of Yanukovich and mid-sized capital tending to favor Yushchenko.²⁸

Another crucial and important difference that underlies the divergent political trajectories of Georgia and Ukraine after the colored revolutions is the radically different nature of the state in each country. In Georgia, the state had become so weak and debilitated that Saakashvili was able to make dramatic changes by decapitating the bureaucracy, establishing tight control over the Ministry of Interior and then using this as a police tool to solve a range of problems, notably

²⁷ Interview with Myhailo Mishchenko, Razumkov Institute, Kyiv, June 2012.

²⁸ Interview with Roman Olearchuk, Kyiv, June 2012

corruption and non-payment of taxes. In Ukraine, by contrast, the security forces were much more institutionalized and consequently retained a far greater degree of autonomy from politics. Changing the leadership of the SBU was not enough to subordinate the security forces to politicians, never mind to change the culture of operations.²⁹

These regional, political and financial divisions and the relative autonomy of the Ukrainian state are central to understanding the very different post-revolutionary paths of the two countries. The real gains of the Orange Revolution came in terms of media freedom and electoral processes, both of which are closely related to the sociological and political divisions and the regional/sectoral dispersion of wealth that provide both money and audiences for different political parties and interests.³⁰ The weakness of the Orange Revolution, on the other hand, lay in building a law-bound and limited state and in fighting corruption. In both these regards, the smaller and more unified context and, paradoxically, the less autonomous state in Georgia proved much more conducive to making an impact than in Ukraine where agents of the security forces enjoyed more autonomy from political control.

Conclusion

In this paper we have set out to evaluate and explain the democratic governance trajectories of the four most prominent cases of colored revolutions in the post-communist world: Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. While our analysis confirms earlier findings (Hale 2005, Kalandadze and Orenstein 2009) about the significant gap between the high initial hopes about the democratizing potential of these second-generation post-communist revolutions and their more modest and uneven achievements, our focus on a broader range of democratic

²⁹ Interview with Oleh Rybachuk, former Chief of Staff to President Yushchenko, Kyiv, June 2012.

³⁰ Interview with Sergei Kvit, President of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla, Kyiv, June 2012.

governance aspects, including not only elections amid independence but also judicial independence and corruption control - has revealed some significant variations, which are at odds with Hale's (2005) interpretation of the colored revolutions as business as usual. Thus, Serbia experienced significant progress along all dimensions in the immediate post-Milosevic periods and largely stabilized thereafter, Kyrgyzstan experienced a very brief and modest electoral opening after the Tulip Revolution but this was followed by significant backsliding and authoritarian consolidation after 2007, while Georgia and Ukraine had mixed and highly uneven trajectories across different aspects of democratic governance.

One of the most striking findings - especially given that it is based on the comparison of four countries that experienced dramatic and unexpected political openings and brought to power a new set of leaders - is that much of the post-colored revolution change conforms to structural legacy-based expectations. Thus, in Serbia significant progress largely represented an (albeit incomplete) convergence to the governance patterns we would expect based on its favorable geographic location and socioeconomic development, whereas Kyrgyzstan's backsliding is consistent with its economic backwardness and authoritarian regional environment. Tellingly, Georgia's most impressive progress occurred precisely in the area – corruption - where its pre-Rose Revolution performance had been the most disappointing relative to its neighbors. From this perspective, it appears that the colored revolutions simply move countries closer to their structurally “normal” governance profiles. In this respect the findings of our paper suggest rather pessimistic conclusions about the prospects for democratic governance breakthroughs in other structurally disadvantaged countries that experience revolutionary breakthroughs, such as most recently in the Arab Spring. On the other hand, we might also expect that countries that currently punch below their legacy-based weight in terms of democracy or other governance aspects - such

as Belarus or Russia - could be relatively promising candidates for real and sustainable progress following some kind of political opening.

Beyond these broad patterns, our case studies have identified a number of mechanisms linking structural conditions to governance trajectories. Thus, we found that in both Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan the high salience of regional cleavages and the fairly broad distribution of economic assets has made it very difficult to achieve the type of unified government that Georgia had after the Rose Revolution. The inherent instability of governments in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, which oscillate between uneasy broad cross-regional coalitions and ultimately unstable efforts at consolidation by one side (such as under Bakiev from 2007-2010), has mixed implications for democratic governance: on the one hand the compromises required to forge coalitions undermine the type of drastic reforms of the state along the lines implemented by the Saakashvili government in Georgia. On the positive side it also acts as a bulwark against authoritarian consolidation which posed a greater threat in Georgia than in Ukraine and may also explain why Kyrgyzstan continues to be more democratic than its Central Asian neighbors.

The nature of the state has also been extremely important in shaping post-revolutionary trajectories, though again here the effects are somewhat paradoxical. State weakness has been a growing problem in Kyrgyzstan as state institutions are increasingly hollowed out and turned into private fiefdoms of the ruling families. Similarly, before the Rose Revolution, the Georgian state was thoroughly penetrated by organized crime. In both of these cases, state weakness was a key cause of corruption and discontent.

However, state weakness, paradoxically, made taking action easier too. The decrepit nature of the state made the revolutions in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan possible, both in providing reasons for discontent and in making it difficult for the state to hold off relatively small mobs in

the streets. Moreover, the weakness of the state made it relatively easy for Saakashvili and his allies to take over key ministries and rapidly force through dramatic changes. In Serbia and Ukraine, the relative strength of the state, and particularly of the repressive apparatus, made the revolutions quite different in these countries. In Serbia, Milosevic faced down his opponents many times before finally succumbing in 2000. In Ukraine, it took a pre-planned, well-financed and tightly organized national campaign, as well as significant and later costly institutional compromises, to make the Orange Revolution happen. Furthermore, when in power, the revolutionaries' ability to reform the state in general and the security services in particular was severely compromised by the strength and autonomy of the bureaucracy and repressive apparatus.

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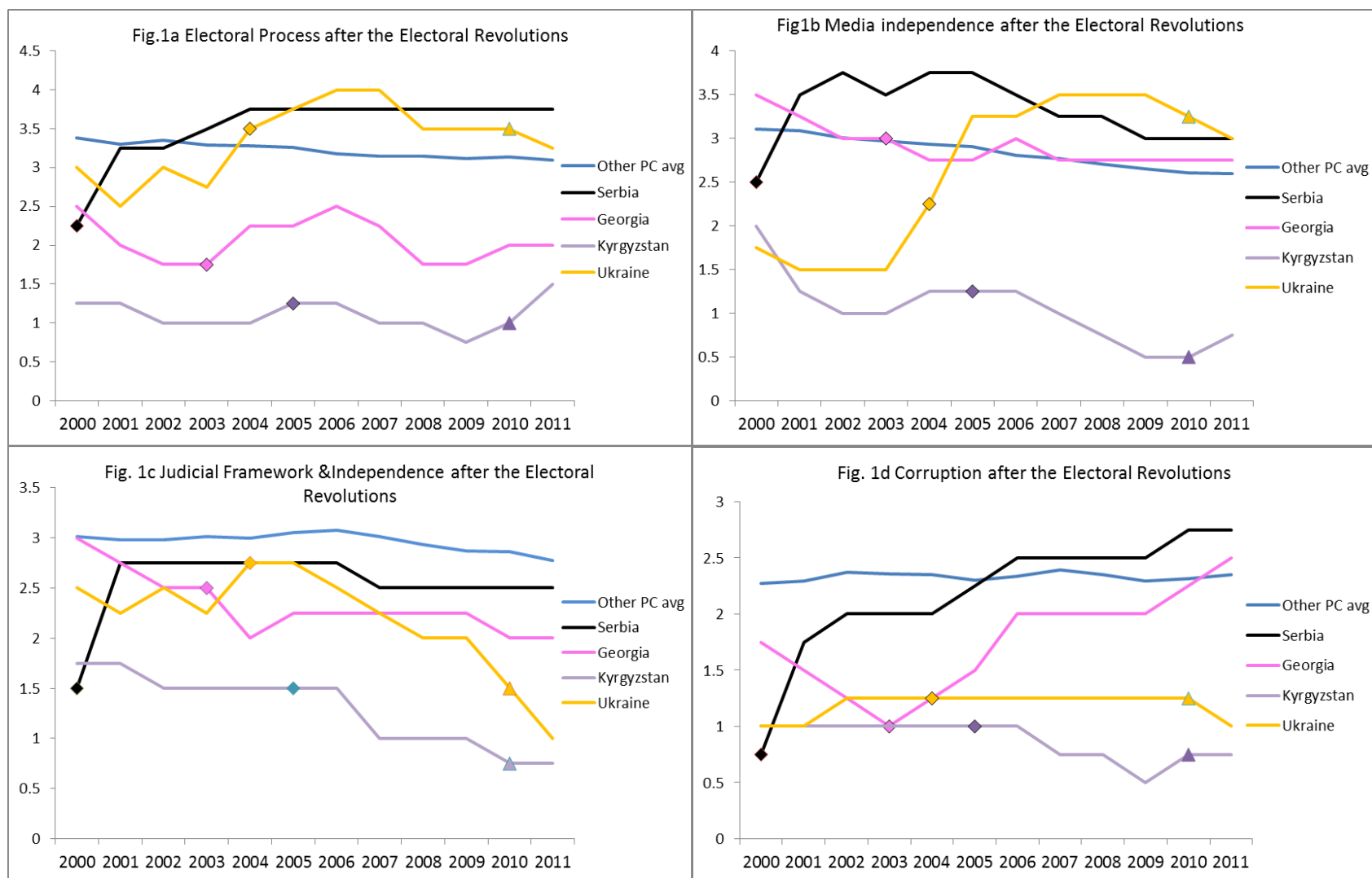
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Table 1: Overview of structural differences

	Serbia	Georgia	Ukraine	Kyrgyzstan	EU-PC median
Int'l factors					
EU prospects	H	M	M	L	N/A
Neighborhood democracy	H	L	M	L	H
Socio-econ development					
GDP/capita PPP (2000)	6501	2502	3696	1507	12,240
% pop below \$2/day PPP	1%	34%	3%	67%	.5%
% Urban population	53%	53%	67%	35%	63%
Income share of top 10%	26%	31%	23%	25%	24%
HDI (2000)	.81	.73	.75	.68	.84
Ethnic/regional conflict					
Regional cleavage	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Ethnic violence since 1990	Yes	Moderate	No	Moderate	No
Separatist challenges	Serious	Serious	Minor	Moderate	No
% ethnic minorities	17%	16%	22.5%	29%	13%
% largest ethnic minority	3.5% (Hungarian)	6.5% (Azeri)	17% (Russian)	14% (Uzbek)	7%
Stateness					
Prior statehood	Yes*	Minimal	Minimal	None	Yes

Note: Blue shaded boxes indicate significant disadvantages, while yellow shaded boxes

Figure 1 Comparison of Democratic Governance in the Colored Revolution countries



Note: ◇ indicates timing of Colored Revolution; Δ indicates end of CR regime

Figure 2 Democratic Governance in Serbia in comparative perspective

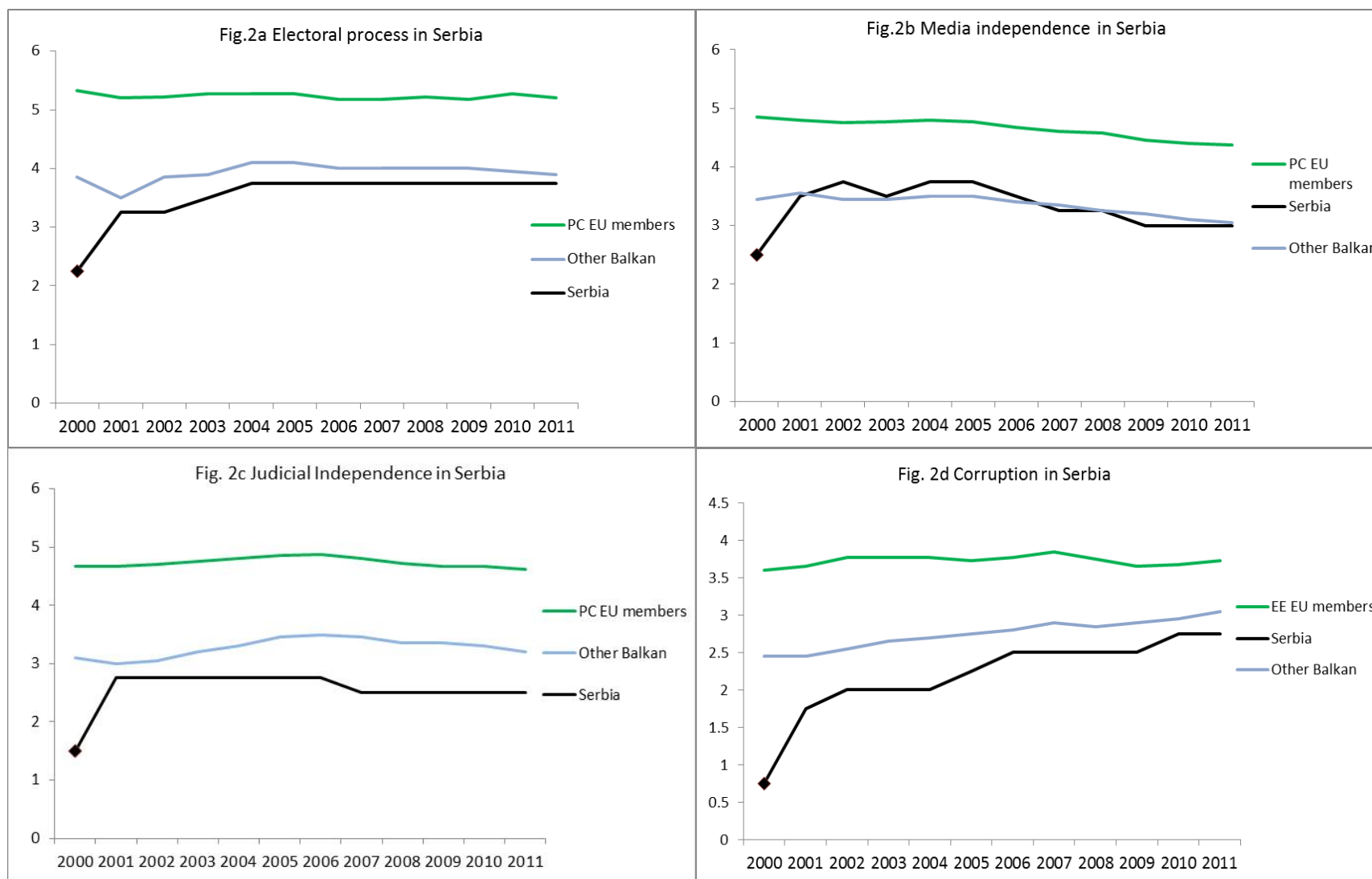


Figure 3 Democratic Governance in Georgia in comparative perspective

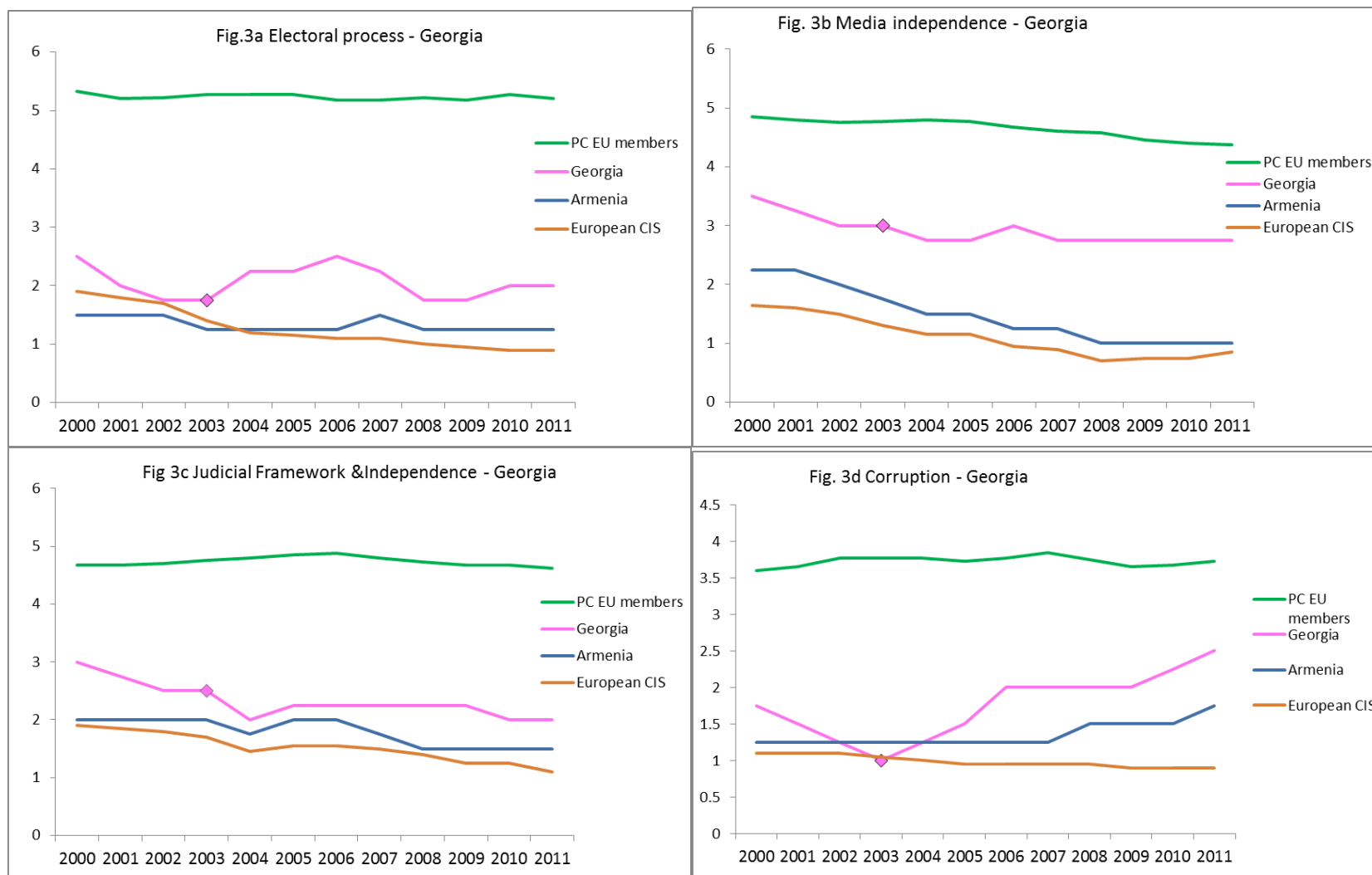


Figure 4 Democratic Governance in Ukraine in comparative perspective

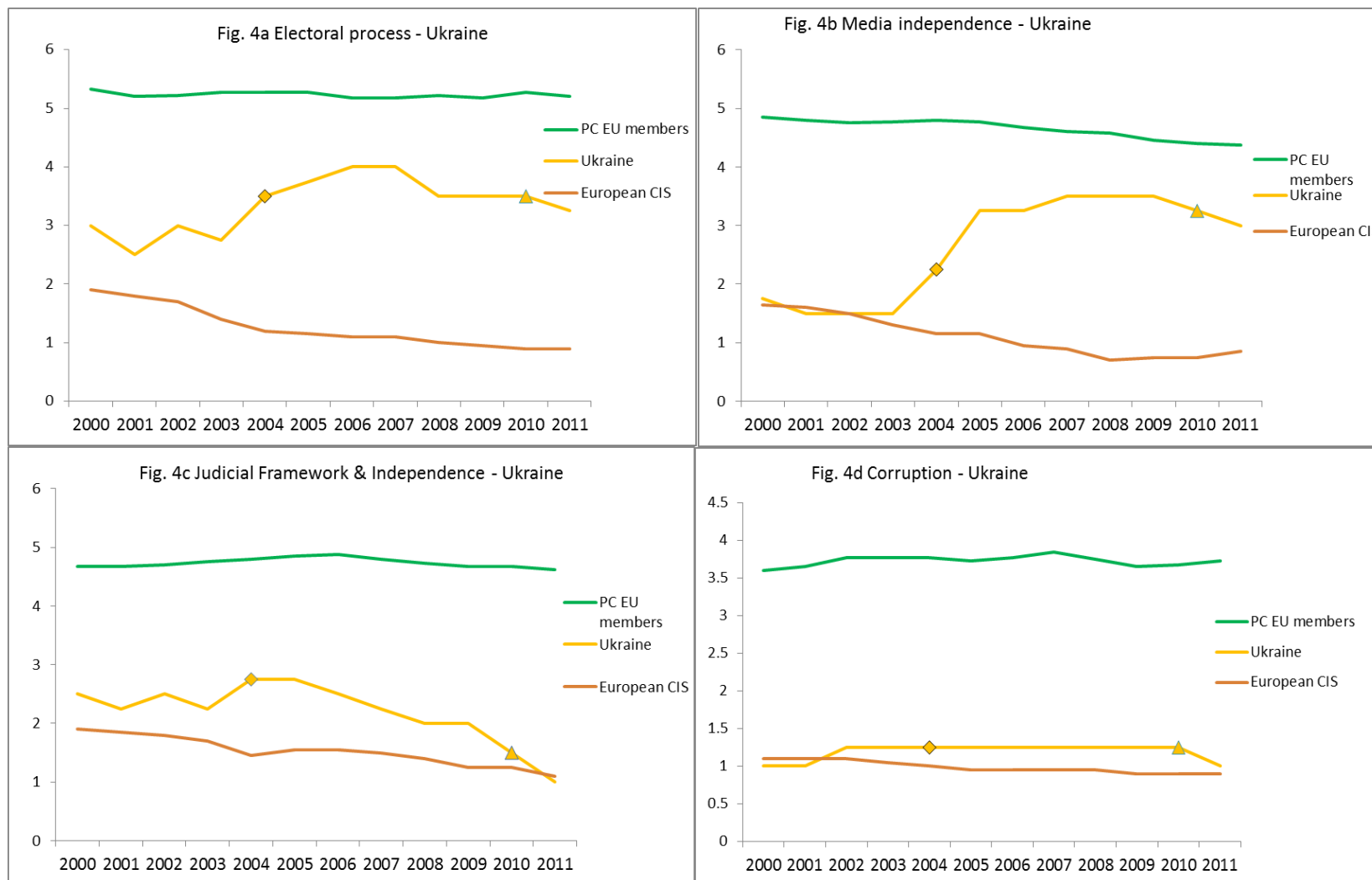


Figure 5 Democratic Governance in Kyrgyzstan in comparative perspective

