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**Freedom and Independence of TV-Media
in Post-Revolutionary Georgia (2003-2009)**



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Introduction

*(Democratic society – “Government of the people, by the people,
and for the people” Abraham Lincoln)*

1. Role of media, privately television, in functioning of democratic political system

A media plays huge role in a political life of society; it makes influence on a political agenda of society, it is also important in building of pluralistic society and a state.

Role of media in democratic, political system functioning is defined as how and how much it can reach and analyze current processes, ensure transparency of administrative and other system activities of the state and to become as a guarantee of democratic management.

Media, as an important instrument of political processes, gains especially big importance when it connects to political sphere. Political workers consider that – the person (persons) who governs TV-Media, controls all the country as well. Indeed, modern politics is hard to imagine without informational means. Media creates space for monitoring political processes, opposing political positions and their connection to a society. It is reality, that media holds an important position in development of Georgian state system, especially after “Rose Revolution”. And that’s why, because of such important role of media in Georgian society and political life; it is a permanent subject of discussion, by scientists, experts and even journalists.

Chapter 2. Research subject

For the present work, I would like to discuss theories of media-researches and in accordance to these will try to analyze, that televisions function under the influence of political and economic factors. Michael Schudson¹ had defined three traditional approaches of “news” organizing: political-economic (this theory is discussed in accordance to the works by E. Herman and N. Chomsky)² social-organizational (Tuchman)³ and culturological. Political-economic approach follows from those critical traditions of sociology, which comes from the theories of Marks particularly. Would like to mention that post - soviet media research basically leads towards that direction. During research process, researchers basically consider mass communication mainstream theories of 60-70s and do not maintain new tendencies, using of which would gave us diversity of the media-research. I would like to cite Michel De Sarto, who stimulated basically new views of sociological researches and not only in a sphere of mass communication. Especially should be marked his definition of tactics and strategy. Agenda strategy is a dominant, influencing of established rules, determined by political or economic powers. Subordinated people become subordinated to the rules. But also they have opportunity to replace the established agenda by the other one. De Sarto calls this opportunity – “tactics”, it is always temporal and is determined on short term result. That’s why it is never stabile. But this absolutely does not mean that mass communication means are universal and they can totally determine important or less important social problems. The hole pathos of De Sarto is that his ideas lead towards recognition of “weak agents”⁴, estimated improperly by other researchers. It should be mentioned that, ideas of De Sarto took as a principal of development of other same

¹ Schudson M. The Sociology of News Production Revisited. In James Curran & Michael Gurevitch (eds.) Mass Media and Society. London, New York, Melbourne, Auckland: Edward Arnold, 1991.

² Herman E. S., Chomsky, Noam. Manufacturing Consent. The Political Economy of the Mass Media. New York, Toronto: Random House, 1988.

³ Tuchman, Gaye. Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality. New York: Free Press. 1978.

⁴ Certeau, Michel de. The Practice of Everyday Life. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1984.

kind of theories. Jesus Martín-Barbero's⁵ work was very influential on me, whose importance is growing day by day. Martín-Barbero cast doubt in the works of western researchers, in accordance to which society is divided in dichotomic shape: on one hand "people's will", expressed by means of democratic procedures and on the other hand "will of people having no right". He has underlined that the decisions, made by "empowered people" are not results of their independent will, it includes itself, interests of "people having no right" as well. At the end, Martín-Barbero placed mass-media in this oppositional forces center. However, not existence of democratic society always do not mean automatic existence of strong repressive government, which can totally subordinate media. The present point of view, with political-economic approach of media research is quite important for my research. Because, in my opinion, some kind of power in existing reality owns the society itself and media is forced to consider this. So, the strategies of partial owners come from the interests of society and not on the contrary.

I have used political-economical theories for my research, by N. Chomsky, Murdock, L. Althusser, also I found very interesting "Theory of Elites" by V. Mosco. By the opinion of political economists, "ideology and power of media organization is determined by economic base".⁶ Media-sources mainly express their owners' interests, which basically are representatives of dominant parties or oligarchs.⁷ There are like connections between media-elites and the rest political, economical and cultural elites⁸, also between the processes, in which participates the leading classes during creation of politics or its regulation.⁹ In accordance to this point of view, the media, in cooperation to the government, organizes ability of preservation dominant party.¹⁰ According to L. Althusser, "Content of press is in direct correlation with the interests of press sponsors".¹¹ So, media gives special character to some information or occasion by choosing

⁵ Martín-Barbero, Jesús. *Communication, Culture and Hegemony. From Media to Mediations*. London, Newbury Park, New Delhi: Sage, 1993

⁶ Murdock and Golding (1977) "Capitalism, Communication and class relation". in Curran, J., In Gurevitch

⁷ Altschull, J. h. (1984) *Agents of Power: The Role of The News Media in Human Affairs*. New York: Longman

⁸ Vincent Mosco, *The Political Economy of Communication: Rethinking and Renewal*. (London: Sage, 1996)

⁹ Herman E. S., Chomsky N. *Manufacturing consent: the political economy of mass media*. N.Y., 1988

¹⁰ Altschull, J. h. (1984) *Agents of Power: The Role of The News Media in Human Affairs*. New York : Longman

¹¹ Altschull, J, H .& Reese , C., D, (1991) *Mediating the Message*. White plains: Longman. 254

some questions and themes, getting them into the frames and neglecting other ones, this mainly depends on political beliefs and interests of their owners. As the media is in close connection to dominant bodies, it would be interesting to know and describe what kind of communicational strategies uses media in preparing informational programs. Liberals often say that, elite media usually contacts with other authorized elites, among them a government. Despite media representatives' announcements that they are independent from external pressure, this is not always true.

“It is not necessary to advise them how to write, because in any matter they will say truth” says Chomsky.¹² In these words “they will say truth” Chomsky means the “truth” that is convenient for media owners and editors. Media resources are selling their auditorium to other corporations. As larger auditorium they recruit, more success they will gain. Auditorium does not participate in this purchase-selling process; it is just in a role of “supervisor”. Such mechanisms are not unfamiliar in world practice - writes Chomsky.¹³ V. Adorno, G. Deborah, P. Golding, D. Kelner, D. Shiller and others were always thinking about media and government problems for tenth of years. Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman say that “political economy of mass informational sources gives us critical analysis of large corporative mass sources of America”. Displays propagandistic model of its functioning. The authors discuss showing-interpretation of worlds' news by the elite mass informational sources (“New York Times”, “Time”, “Newsweek”, “CBS News” and so on) and come to conclusion, that acting mass informational sources serves to elite like a state organs, which are trying to preserve their positions and at the same time enjoy privilege in a society more than systems based on censorship of official bodies.¹⁴ “Money and power allows governors and other commercial rulers to give desirable information for them to audience”.¹⁵

¹² 2004. Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance*.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Nino Danelia. “Media Independence and Means of its Control”. Tbilisi, 2008 year.

¹⁵ *Herman E., Chomsky N. Manufacturing Consent. The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. London: Vintage, 1994. P. 2.

The point of view, according to which media space functions with an influence of political and economical forces, is very important for my work; this means that inside position of TV-Media is determined on the bases of its owner's interests. In modern democratic countries media is practically independent from political powers. But very often suffers from economical problem. To be more precise, political powers make pressure on televisions, using economical factors. Media space mainly functions under the influence of political and economic authority. Big corporation owners purchase mass informational resources and ensure high degree of control on informational groups. Frequently, there are gathered different mass communicational resources only in one unity (television, radio, newspaper) and all of them are directed towards the promoting only one idea.¹⁶

Kolin Spark is also talking about influences of political and economic factors – in many systems media independent degree depends on how an authority is distributed in a society, especially when it covers to economic and political separation. Commercial mass-media is much more pluralistic in western countries, because pluralistic society means decentralization of authority, but “market” model of mass informational resources in the third countries perfectly co-exists with dictatorship.¹⁷

In accordance to media traditions of East-Europe and Asia countries, ruling political powers maintain important role in subsidizing mass information. One of the reasons is that some media-organizations could not gain financial profit. Integrated political-economic “elite” faces media-companies towards political problems, but guarantees its economic business. Accordingly,

¹⁶ Champagne P. Double dependence. Several remarks regarding correlation between fields of politics, economics and journalism: Trans. from // Socio-Logos'96. Anthology of Russian-French centre of social research of the Institute of Sociology PAH.M.: Socio-Logos, 1996. p. 212

¹⁷ Sparks C., Reading A. Communism, Capitalism and the Mass Media. London- Thousand Oaks-New Delhi, SAGE Publications. 1998. p. 21-38

owners of mass-media, managers of high rank do not care much for financial independence and consciously serve to their sponsors. In post soviet space and near East countries media-organizations, owned by oligarchs, are partially financed by state structures. Such secret financing is the fee of political direct or indirect loyalty.¹⁸

Stanford University professors S. Zibert, U. Schramm and T. Peterson, offer very interesting model of relationships between a state and media, actual even today (work “Four Theories of the Press”). Despite that the work was published in 1956, in USA, modern scientists still frequently use this work during their researches of media place and role.¹⁹ *Their basic thesis is* (and it is very important for my work too): **“media always changes its form and gains that social and political in which it has to function”.**²⁰

Social-political structure, which determines society consciousness and is spread in given society, defines development of mass communication. Authors, as we mentioned above, differ four model of media functioning and each one corresponds to determined social system.

1. Authoritarian theory
2. Libertarian theory
3. Social responsibility theory
4. Soviet communist theory

According to the authors' point of view, there is possibility to discuss these four models in two models: authoritarian and libertarian. Because, soviet communist is a prolongation of authoritarian model, and social-theoretical is development of libertarian ideas in modern world.

¹⁸ Sparks C., Reading A. Communism, Capitalism and the Mass Media. London- Thousand Oaks-New Delhi, SAGE Publications. 1998. p. 21-38

¹⁹ . Siebert F., Peterson T., Schramm W. Four Theories of the Press. Urbana, 1956. In Russian language.: Сиберт Ф., Петерсон Т., Шрамм У. Четыре теории прессы. М.: Carnegie Foundation, 1998.

²⁰ Siebert F., Peterson T., Schramm W. Four Theories of the Press. M.: Carnegie Foundation, 1998. p. 16

Chapter 3. General image of Georgian TV space

Two private TV channels – “Rustavi 2” and “Imedi” dominate in Georgian TV market. According to the data of the first 6 months of the year 2009, “Rustavi 2” dominates in the country, with its market share 35,6% and is the most popular channel in Georgia. It is followed by “Imedi” 25,4% market share. Together they hold 61% of the market, that means that Georgian viewers from each 100 hours, 61 hours they spend in watching “Rustavi 2” and “Imedi”. The First Public Broadcasting channel owns only 8% market share and cannot valuably reach its basic aim that is providing society with critical and objective information. Adjara Autonomous Republic administration has its own channel (Adjara TV). Adjara TV receives funding, about 5 million Gel. for each year, from Autonomous Republic budget. Adjara TV employees are public persons. “Caucasus” and “Maestro” are channels with a little budget, and their coverage area spreads only in Tbilisi and its surroundings. These two channels own together only 6,7% of market share. Some little, local cable televisions are functioning in regions too.

3.1. Funding of TV channels

Problems, existing in Georgian media market, allow TV sponsors to interfere in editorial policy. Advertising market is such undeveloped in Georgia that profit from advertising does not give chance to television to make some progress and the most part of TV channels are based on owner's subsidies. For little televisions it is almost unimaginable to bring such quantity of advertisement, that would give chance to do high quality shows programs, expand coverage area and to have much audience. Minuteness of advertising market not only prevents appearing of new TV channels but also makes serious problems for existing national televisions.

Unfortunately, we have no precise data on advertising market in Georgia, because there is no organization which could be working on clear expenses or increasing income of an advertisement in Georgia. Some Georgian televisions work at a loss. IREX estimates Georgian media – “New industry is based on accidental financial support, from sponsor politicians and other non-commercial sources.”²¹

Chapter 4. Intransparency of television owners

Explanation of influence on TV-Media in political-economic theory space, implemented by different political forces fully reflects reality of Georgian TV-Media. Together with a policy, “economical basement defines ideology and power of media organization”.²²

Media resources express their owner’s interests, which are representatives of dominant political party or oligarchs.²³ There is connection between media elites and the rest political, economic and cultural elites²⁴, also between that processes, which are lead by ruling classes in creation and regulation of policy.²⁵ According to this thought, media along with the government, creates ability of preserving dominant party.²⁶ “Content of press is in direct correlation with the interests of press sponsors”.²⁷ In my research, one of the first problem, as it was said by media representatives, appears the question of media owners. Respondents, by common consent, sounded that TV-Media is not transparent for today. Researches show that the question of TV owners is closely connected with televisions’ control aspects and degree of confidence towards them. Intransparency and lack of diversity complicates and makes impossible development of democratic TV media.

²¹ “International Transparency Georgia”. Media research: Television Space in Georgia. ” Owners, the chamber of control and legislative environment.

²² Murdock and Golding (1977) ”Capitalism, Communication and class relation”. in Curran , J., In Gurevitch

²³ Altschull, J . h. (1984) Agents of Power :The Role of The News Media in Human Affairs . New York : Longman

²⁴ Vincent Mosco, *The Political Economy of Communication: Rethinking and Renewal*. London: Sage, 1996

²⁵ Herman E. S., Chomsky N. Manufacturing consent: the political economy of mass media. N.Y., 1988

²⁶ Altschull, J . h. (1984) Agents of Power :The Role of The News Media in Human Affairs . New York : Longman

²⁷ Altschull, J, H .& Reese, C., D, (1991)Mediating the Message . White plains: Longman. 254

According to Georgian legislation, person receiving license must be citizen of Georgia or registered legal entity in Georgia, though Georgian legislation does not forbid owning of shares of media-sources by foreign countries' citizens and registered companies abroad.

One of the owners of most influential TV channels in Georgia "Rustavi 2" and "Mze", is an offshore company "Degon Limited", registered in Virginia, British Isles. Also information on "Imedi TV" owner is vague.

5. Implemented methods for replacement of television owners and influence on televisions

New political establishment did not take a course towards clear political system. But monopolization on political and economic sphere became privileged, this, at the same time, meant establishment of control on social-informative and communicational sphere.

Government and partially some governmental bodies, are trying to make pressure using not only economic but also other kind of influential methods.²⁸

Political "elite" had been attempting to make media under own control, on one hand, and on the other hand abolish it at all, by the way of influence on economical fundamentals. This process went so: Owners of media resources were changed and replaced by new ones, which were loyal towards the government; there were also many facts of factual purchase of media resources, when controlling interest formally was registered on the name of private entity.

²⁸ [Pierre Bourdieu](#). Power of journalism. p. 94

After some times, owners of 11 existed private TV companies were gradually replaced with the people who were associated with different political forces. Using different kinds of legal-political and economic means, former television owners were replaced with the people, bearing ruling elite interests. “Content of press is in direct correlation with the interests of press sponsors” (Althusser), and that was reflected on editorial policy of Georgian televisions.

Chapter 6. Editorial policy of Televisions

Most of respondents think that, interests of media owner directly effects on editorial policy of televisions. TV owners hire producers, editors, journalists because of one simple principle – to show information as his/her employer desires. Big corporations’ owners, which have purchased mass informational resources, ensured high quality control on large informational groups. Influence and control of media owners on journalists’ activities is regulated by producer as mediator. Most of inquired experts consider that editorial independence does not exist in private televisions for today. “Selective” approach towards an information, existing in media information policy that means selecting of some kind of information in consideration of political, economic or other interests and sympathies of determined people (managers, produces), leaves really important problems for society without paying attention, very often. Herewith, social problems, broadcasted by mass-media, include sensational elements and come to viewer in “packed” form.²⁹

By the views of journalists, there is spread common informational policy in TV space, where “Rustavi 2”, “Imedi” and “Public Broadcaster” participate as loyal broadcasting companies towards the government bodies. News of national televisions frequently bear identical contents, succession and even applied sources. And the same could be said on “Caucasus” and “Masetro” news.

²⁹ Ibid. P. 60

Editorial policy in televisions is quite far from independence, and does not play the role of objective media. Broadcasted “News” by Georgian media, are mostly set within such ideological frames, which on one hand serves to ruling political elite, and on the other hand Interests and demands of oppositional parties. Media owners’ interests, make a huge influence of a content of private televisions.

Chapter 7. Hard professional surrounding – controlling sources of an editorial policy

Independence of journalist, in conditions of weak editorial independence, first of all depends on concentration of mass informational resources, if your employer is in “small amount”, you have more fair of loosing the job. Also determinant in an existed media space, state of determined media-organization, is it more “intellectual” or “commercial”. Important decisive factor is also direct authority of a journalist in a media-organization, where he/she is employed.³⁰ In condition of weak editorial situation, journalists have to choose from the two: first, they must stop working relationships with defined media-organizations, or the second – continue working in conditions, which are offered by their employers. In this case, we are facing conflict between journalistic ethics, professional standards and political/economical position of employer. Of course, because of low professional standards and low professionalism of TV journalists in general, function of journalist, as defender of public interests, was neglected, and especially in consideration of fact that working compensation in Television companies is much more than in media resources. With a consideration of this factor, we can explain such full clearness from journalists – “come and we are ready to serve you.” At the same time some journalists represent this action as influence and pressure. Especially, in conditions of acting working legislation, journalist is quite unprotected.

³⁰ Goulemot J.-M., Oster D. Gens de lettres. Ecrivains et Bohemes. Paris: Minerve, 1992). Bourdieu P.. . Power of journalism

In the parliament report of public defender there are discussed some cases on breaking journalists' rights for the reason of no existence working contract. In ombudsman's office people say that, there is no any standard, which could restrict influence of media owner on "news" editing process.³¹

Chapter 8. Freedom degree of Georgian media (TV-Media)

According to my research, there is no equal opinion towards this question. However, the most number of inquired people consider that freedom degree of media and televisions in general is quite low and worsened. Respondents also say that from 2003 until the present day, there is no made any changes in this field (this estimation mainly concerns to national broadcasters). But some people think that, freedom degree of TV-Media after revolution has been improved a bit.

From 2003 there were talking about media independence degree in Georgia permanently and these talks still continue. Journalist Eka Kvesitadze, in the interview of 2005 year with newspaper "Resonance" marks that because of many subjective or objective reasons; media, especially televisions, could not survive their freedom.³²

I think, researches of an international organization "Freedom House" is very interesting too, the researches display media freedom dynamic from 2002 up to present. This organization, annually publishes press independence ratings of world's countries.

According to the polls, published in 2009, Georgia holds position between "semi independent" countries. Freedom House studied media space of almost 196 countries. It was discovered that media is free only in 69 countries; semi-free in 64 countries and the rest countries have really serious problems towards this direction. In this rating Georgia shares 126th place (as semi-free)

³¹ "Public Defender" 2009 Annual Report.. Web: <http://www.ombudsman.ge/index.php?page=21&lang=0>

³² Newspaper "Resonance", interview with Eka Kvesitadze. 2005 y. Web: <http://www.media.ge/ka/node/7181>

with a following countries: Honduras, Nepal and Paraguay. Georgia comes after countries such as: Bhutan, Senegal, Kenya and Thailand. The best position, from former soviet union, holds Estonia, which shares 19th place with Germany. The report where there are reviewed general situation in 29 former communist countries of Europe and Asia, Georgia is discussed too. According to that report, Georgia takes places between those 18 countries, where the degree of democracy has been degraded, even more, on the bases of Georgian findings total situation, after 2003 year, went on lowest level and democracy degree has been worsened.³³

The president of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili, does not share conclusion of international right defender organizations, about worsening democratic situation. “There are TVs in Georgia which are in complete sympathy with president, but there some TVs which are opposite to Saakashvili and hate Georgian government”.³⁴ Representative of the third sector very often have same position. Politologist Gia Nodia, declares in his interview that – “broadcasting of television channels “Maestro” and “Caucasus” mainly consists of talk-shows, where, almost all invited visitors accuse authority in all possible and incredible crime.” Some days ago, Public Television 2nd Channel began its broadcasting in C-Span format and now all radical oppositional forces can make speech without any limitations. But critics have strong arguments too... Many radios are also oriented only on a criticism of authority. Internet space is also opened for internet users. May this called “lack of freedom?”³⁵ In the opinion of professionals working in media space, freedom of speech in Georgia is not regarded as high value in comparison with other maintained values. They are bringing different reasons. In the opinion of some respondents, there is narrow and not universal understanding of freedom of speech in televisions. The only television where the freedom of speech is protected appears “Caucasus”. But as some respondents mention, in an authorized talk-shows, editorial spirit is often shown too. Because of the above said, respondents

³³ http://www.freedomhouse.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=242:nations-in-transit-2009&catid=46:nations-in-transit&Itemid=121

³⁴ News from Georgia, Media Portal, radio “Tavisupleba” (Freedom) www.civil.ge; www.media.ge; (<http://www.tavisupleba.org/content/article/2028926.html>).

³⁵ Radio “Tavisupleba” <http://www.tavisupleba.org/content/article/2028926.html>

are skeptical about televisions in Georgia and watch informational programs only for their operative features. They receive objective and reliable information from printing press, internet media resources and radios. Some respondents even say that none of media resources is responsible to provide audience with objective and reliable information.

Chapter 9. Television – ideological, propagandistic means

Generally, propaganda means “aimed manipulating communication”.³⁶ It is, at the same time, one of the instruments of democracy, because only on the bases of propagandistic convince can democracy gain support of masses, without violation, that destroys society in many occasions.

In modern world, direct propaganda is not effective any more, that’s why televisions are using mixed propagandistic methods: advertisements, PR and etc. The most of respondents say that televisions which remain loyal towards the authority focus only on advertising and PR of governments’ activities and oppositional channels on critic of the authority. Different political powers use different forms of influences for realization their own aspirations and interests.

According to qualifies models of E. Herman and N. Chomsky, I will try to explain how televisions satisfy wide propagandistic demands of “elites” (here is meant dominant political powers). Ideology, which spreads TV companies are based on their self—censorship and is determined as a preferable role of media - propagandistic system. Loyal televisions deserve more trust and respect than other systems, which are based on state censorship, because “Rustavi 2”, “Imedi”, “Real TV” and partially “Public Broadcaster” serve to “ruling elite” like as other state organs.

³⁶ Propaganda and Communication in World History // ed. by H. Lasswell, D. Lerner, H. Speicr. Honolulu, 1979. Vol. I. p. 4

Oppositional televisions use analogical propagandistic methods too, for maintaining interests of different political powers and “oppositional elite”.

Theoretically journalists can refuse to participate in such “filtering” process of televisions, but in this case they could appear in such terrible circumstances from their managers and TV founders that at last they could not bear existed situation. There were some examples of this, one or two journalists have moved to another TV channel. But eventually they remained as participants of that ideology process, because they are most committed from this system. Broadcasting company “Rustavi 2” has shown a topic on leaving the company by eight collaborators, with their own desire. This eight journalists explained their decision as that they remained devoted to their principles. Tengiz Gogotishvili even said that “it is harder to stay in “Courier” than to leave it”. But these journalists still actually serve to leading political power. For an example, we can also consider G. Sanaia, I. Grigolia, T. Gogotishvili and transmission of journalists on different television channels.

Chapter 10. Pluralism and dividing of television channels in accordance to political sympathies and insurance of pluralism in TV space

Two private TV channels – “Rustavi 2” and “Imedi” dominates Georgian TV market. According to the datas of the first 6 months of the year 2009, “Rustavi 2” dominates in the country, with its market share 36% and is the most popular channel in Georgia. It is followed by “Imedi” 35,4% market share. Together they hold 61% of hole market, that mean that Georgian viewers from each 100 hours, 61 hours they spread in watching “Rustavi 2” and “Imedi”. According to International Transparency Georgia researches, general part of Georgian population receive information from “Rustavi 2” , “Imedi” and “Public Broadcating”, financed by the Georgian government. 51 % from quoted people regard these channels pro-governmental. What about

oppositional channels “Caucasus” and “Maestro”, their common market share amounts just 6.7%. Coverage area of “Caucasus” spreads only on Tbilisi and its surroundings. And TV-company “Maestro” has recently reconstructed with its satellite broadcasting.

Today the current situation in Georgian TV space shows that in terms of pluralism TV media is vulnerable. Dominant TV companies (including Public Broadcaster) are grouped by their political positions. Governmental and oppositional consciousness appears as simple dividing tool. Privately in case of broadcasting facilities, engagement is hard to be regulated. Broadcasting of oppositional television channels “Maestro” and “Caucasus” mainly consists of talk-shows, where, almost all invited visitors accuse authority in all possible and incredible crimes. Some times ago, Public Television 2nd Channel began its broadcasting in C-SPAN format and now all radical oppositional powers can make speech without any limitations.

In my opinion, existence of oppositional channels in Georgian TV-space leads towards pluralism, but counter arguments are quite strong too. Above mentioned oppositional TV company Caucasus, broadcasts only in Tbilisi. TV-company “Maestro” has recently begun its satellite broadcasting. Three general TV channels cover only all territory of Georgia, private channels: “Rustavi-2” and “Imedi” and the first channel of public broadcaster. Informational programs of all three channels are clearly pro-governmental. Despite regular inviting of oppositional powers in political discussions on “Rustavi 2”, “Imedi” and Public broadcaster, with the purpose of making influence on public views, all the rest TV channels can hardly compete with these three national channels. Most of inquired respondents think that Georgian television space is distinguished with low level inter pluralism.

Today, Georgian media is influenced by powerful political and economic systems. It should be mentioned that process of oppositional channels’ broadcasting more or less balances TV space

in pluralistic sight, but media-organizations itself are not distinguished with a successive dependence towards democratic values. Their political engagement - is so high, that it prevents growth of democratic quality of TV-Media, whose inevitable conditions are impartiality, balance of existed tendencies in a society and broadcasting, based on facts.

Chapter 11. Civil society organization problems and media self-regulating

Today, in a concept of civil society, more often consider forms of social relationships and activity, which does not come into sphere of family, business and state. Civil society do not rely on personal and natural connections, and that's why it does not come in family sphere. Civil society is in public sphere, this means that it overcomes personal or relative bounds. But total isolation of these two questions is quite difficult, because important point of inter-crossing still remains. Civil society and state power are connected with political parties, which are, by their characters, civil society organizations. ***On the crossroad of business and civil society, there is such important public institution as media.*** Media, as a rule, is basically oriented on a profit, so it is a business. But most often articulation and popularization of public interests and values, public group mobilization around them, occurs through a media. That's why a media is often regarded as a part of civil sector.³⁷ Such connection of independent media and civil society interests logically creates expect of high degree cooperation and partnership between two sectors. Journalists have the same expect, which say that in case of strong civil sector, existence of independent, impartial televisions and their editorial freedom could be possible.

Herewith, civil society is powerless in this direction, because civil society stands on values, but today there is deficit of values in televisions and they introduce pseudo culture in a society, which they think is the best. Respondents named some powerful organizations, which are

³⁷ Gia Nodia. "Civil Society Development in Georgia: Achievements and Provocations". Tbilisi 2005. p.48-51

interested in media business. Among them “Young Lawyers’ Association”, “Fair Elections” and “International Transparency Georgia”.

Journalists express strong objection, that civil sector is very weak, and ability of its self-organization is also weak too. Strong media organizations and journalistic unions could not be organized in Georgia, which would try to lobby media problems and solve them. In these later days, there is much talking about media ethics, professional development and journalistic self-regulation, however, it is quite clear that for today media itself does not understand essence of professional self-regulating in Georgia. There are many reasons, but the **main of them is interfusion of journalistic rights and responsibilities**. Journalists today hold on self-regulation unions, because they think that NGOs and the media union will return broadcast television to them suppressed by its owners. According to the studies, professionals working in media field in reduction of speech freedom quality impose equal responsibility on media owners as on the community. Because democracy has a few players. The more powerful, developed and informed public is, much better can protect own rights. Low quality of democracy is caused by weakness of society and vice versa – respondents say. Public weakness is significantly caused by televisions. There are no strong disputable platforms, so the political culture is low. Society is not able to put information policy of televisions into some frameworks.

Chapter 12. From "Rose Revolution" until now, succeeds or failure actions of government with respect to TV stations

Experts were asked to name specific actions taken from the government.

Successful actions	Unsuccessful actions
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<p>Related activities towards reorganization of the Public Broadcast: reorganization of the First Channel into a Public Television; access of an independent experts in Board of Trustees of Public Broadcaster, however in small size; appointment of Gia Chanturia as a Director General of Public Broadcaster</p>	<p>After the Rose Revolution from the 12 private televisions, existed in TV space, 11 TVs, except "Caucasia," were deprived broadcasting license or changed the owner. The owner was replaced by the people close to government or loyal person to it.</p>
<p>The second channel 's reconstruction is a step towards right direction, if it gives the air to the objective political discussions, with this it will help establishment of constructive political dialogue in Georgia.</p>	<p>Establishment of the influence on televisions by the government.</p>
<p>Establishing more or less liberal legal environment was successfully evaluated with respect to the media;</p>	<p>National Regulating Commission has become very polarized. Important decisions taken by the commission are more politicized and fully biased.</p>
<p>Granting TV Maestro with broadcasting license of public - political nature.</p>	<p>All steps taken towards Imedi TV of the authority are unsuccessful. Including simulated Chronicle;</p>
<p>Initiative on granting financial amnesty for television companies.</p>	<p>Strong influence of the authority still could be felt in televisions</p>
<p>Renewal of public - political talk – shows gradually on different TV channels.</p>	<p>Pluralism has decreased in tele-media</p>
<p>"The first Caucasian Channel" Creation</p>	<p>Investigational programs has been removed from Air</p>

	Topics, not politically profitable for government, are covered.
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The journalists interviewed, **not similarly** estimated the following issues: Granting TV Maestro with broadcasting license of public - political nature; government's initiative on granting financial amnesty for television companies.

Functioning of TV-Media and political factors

Media should understand its role in Public Life, must reflect the reality, and in result of this, people will have the opportunity to make thoughtful, recognized decision. Better fulfills the media all these, more independent it will be in its activities.

TV Media, due to its qualitative characteristics, as mentioned, is very favorable partner for political players. In consideration of this, various political forces are trying to find more influence on the media. This is able to perform successfully. The obvious example of this appears personal contacts of media – owners and journalists with various political entities.

direct connection of media companies towards dominant political parties often perceived as the government control of mass media.

Chapter 13. Censorship and its types in Georgian TV space

Media freedom in Georgia is caused by liberal legislation, in addition to that, prohibits censorship, journalists as well as exempt from criminal responsibility in case of defamation. Talks, on existence censorship in media is paradoxical, in consideration of the background, when the country had received the freedom of speech and one of the most liberal laws in Europe

in the field of broadcasting. But despite this, today the problem of censorship in the TV-media (its various manifestations) according to all existing surveys, is still fixed.

In accordance with 2009 year's research (study of the media in-depth: summarizing results) of "The Caucasus Research Resource Center" (CRRC): 63% of respondents shared the view that the government should not control the media. As well as one of the problems was named censorship itself. As one journalist explained: "those who do not apply for censorship are marginalized.

According to my research several kinds of censorship were nominated, political (censorship of various political forces), influential institutional (church, national self-independence), Georgian traditional fundamental values and etc. The journalists say that political censorship is prevailed. Respondents believe that direct government censorship (journalists were in direct contact with the representatives of the Government) is not implemented any more. Today, the censorship is carried out by owners of TV channels and intermediate rings - producers, editors. Television owners bring people for leading information policy, who he can trust, the same principle is used for the selecting officers of the lower level as well. Part of the respondents believes that **self-censorship** is a part of that censorship which is spread in televisions. Reasons of self-censorship is also named conformism; real danger of losing job; low indicator journalists' professionalism and education.

Chapter 14. Legal environment for TV-Media

Legal environment was liberally assessed in general by interviewed journalists, but some people think that in the various laws there was made amendments recently, which have "slightly" worsen the legislative environment. Especially, when the issue concerns to legislative changes

related to a demand for public information. Mostly the journalists interviewed believe that today the problem is not the legal environment, but also the implementation of the legislation.

Chapter 15. TV-Media program priorities

The studies showed that the content priorities of TV-Media should to be changed. There is so-called "Deficient themes" that are not on air, or is covered less by television channels. These topics are:

Social issues, economic issues, investigative journalism; Minorities, be it sexual, ethnic or religious; religious issues; science, culture, art, literature; youth programs; children's programs; human rights; healthcare issues; education reform; court issues; political events in other countries; territorial integrity problems; regional life; educational programs; exclusives; gender problems; media problems; Muslim Meskhs and others;

Chapter 16. Public Broadcasting

The survey showed that respondents' attitude towards the public broadcasting is ambiguous. Most of them consider ongoing processes of the **public broadcaster** as positive. People note that the day air has been improved significantly, morning program became interesting. News program "Moambe" is more diverse than the "Courier" or "Chronicle." Number of regional reports has increased. In the first and second blocks of News social stories in a qualitatively and quantitatively increased as well. According to respondents' opinion, the public broadcaster is trying to prove that honesty might be interesting.

This perspective establishes the fact that after the elections "Public Broadcasting" has enjoyed admiration from the European Union and the United Nations Representatives for its balanced coverage. Free interpretation coverage of the pre-election period later has also noted by the OSCE - the monitoring mission. "Media environment is mixed and diverse, but often the media companies suffer from the influence of owners. Transparency in media ownership issue should be more transparent. "Public Broadcasting" in a whole has offered more balanced picture to the viewers, all other TV coverage was unbalanced "- was mentioned in the report. Of course, this estimation was included only in the news of the first channel.³⁸ However, there are some counter arguments as well. Part of the respondents think that the public broadcaster, is still not an institution representing public interests and still is considered as state television. Respondents noted that the government makes directives very frequently. Public Broadcasting independence degree is reduced by its funding mechanism too. According to the acting legislation, the government defines a budget of Public Broadcasting. Accordingly, its funding depends on the good will of the government. From 2005 until 2009 the budget of the public broadcaster amounted 0,15% of Domestic Product. This system of government, set media free from dependence on government.

Chapter 17. Regional TV problems

Most part of respondents interviewed named main problems of existed regional television stations and more than 80% of televisions, and this is an ownership of media channels by local authorities or their family members. Studies of "International Transparency – Georgia" made in 2009, says that:

in accordance to the article 37th of broadcasting law, in Georgia any individual can receive the broadcasting license, who lives in Georgia and any legal person, which is registered in Georgia.

³⁸ Rusudan Rukhadze, June 8, journal "Liberali" <http://www.liberali.ge>

Exceptions are: administrative units, public servants, agents, and those legal persons, who are in connection with political parties and administrative units. Despite this, in the list of broadcasting companies, given by the regulatory commission itself, appears TV channel “Akhmeta TV-1”, which is fully owned by Akhmeta Municipality. Some regional TV co-owners also appear officials of local government or member of their families.

Independence and objectivity of televisions often depends on personal factors. In some cases, are the people that are part of the government, but less active. Of course it is also within the frames of censorship, freedom of speech depends on whether television directors have citizens’ position and how it is controlled by the owner.

Chapter 18. Conclusion and recommendations

During TV media researches the first line problem – intranperancy of media owners was emerged. On its part, the issue of TV holders is tightly connected with TV controlling aspects and quality of trust towards them. Lack of transparency and diversity in TV media ownership, complicates and makes it impossible development of democratic media to Georgia. The contents of the press is in direct correlation with the interests of major funders. We have only supposition about the owners and sponsors of televisions. Legislative gaps promote legalization of this uncertainty. According to Georgian legislation a person receiving license should be a citizen of Georgia or legal entity registered in Georgia, however Georgian legislation does not prohibit foreign citizens and companies registered abroad to hold shares in media companies.

Accordingly, Georgian legislation can not regulate what market share of media may be a under control of individual or legal person. An example is the “Georgian Industrial Group”, which

owns 30% shares of the "Rustavi 2", 45% of "Mze" and 65% of "The First Sreteo". And its sister company "Georgian Media Incorporated" is the owner of "Imedi" shares. In total, "Industrial Group" controls two-thirds of the media market.

Solving this type of problem is easily available, in the way of making amendments in Broadcasting Law. It is important that the Georgian National Communications Commission hold more information on broadcasting companys' stakeholders, having licenses, and this information should be available to everyone.

Media-Organizations style and power are determined by political and economic factors. Media resources express their owners' interests, which, as a rule, are representatives of the ruling political parties or oligarchs. In addition, there is a close connection among elite media and the rest of the political, economic and cultural elite, also between the processes which participates in policy creation and regulation of it as well. Media with the government creates the ability of maintaining ruling party. As mentioned above, media content is in a direct correlation with the funders of media interest. Thus, by selecting certain themes and issues, rejecting others and making coverage in certain frames, TV-media attributes certain importance to events, which often reflects the interests and political belief of their owners. Elite Media makes contact to other powerful elites, including government. Although some TV reporter says that is independent from the external pressure, but often it is not true. As N. Chomsky says: "They should not be dictated how to write, because everything they say is still correct." In the spoken right " is meant about what the owners and editors think is correct.

Money and power privileges leader and dominated commercial interests to supply audience with desired information. Corporation's owners bought - the media assets and provided high quality control on over big media groups. There are situations when under the one association are

gathered various means of mass communication (television, radio, paper) and they all are focused on one idea propaganda.

In Georgia democracy is still a young; TV owners believe that their main goal is not to inform the public, but to lead any commercial or political "message"; this could be a deviation, to the side of the government and ruling sector; it is important for public and private company owners to realize social responsibility towards the society, to realize that their media ownership is reliable, giving objective information and not "promotion" of their own short-term interests.

Media has always changed its form and takes the shape of the social and political structures, in which it has to function. At some system media freedom quality depends on how power is distributed in the society, especially when it concerns the political and economic redistribution. In western countries, commercial mass media is much more pluralistic, as the capitalist society means the decentralization of a power, but in the third countries "market" model of mass media coexists with dictatorship, without any pain. According to the media tradition in the Eastern - European and Asian countries, the ruling political party maintains an important role in mass subsidization. One of the reasons is that certain media - organizations can not achieve financial profit. Integrated political - economic "elite" construes political tasks to media companies, instead, it makes economic activities guaranteed. Accordingly, mass - media owners, managers of high rank less take care on achievement of financial independence and purposefully serve to their employers. Media - organizations owned by oligarchs partially are financed by the state structures. Such secret funding is the cost of direct and indirect political loyalty.

As a result, editorial policy in TV stations are quite far from independence and unable to perform the role of an objective media. Media "news" is often gets to the ideological frameworks, which serves on the one hand to the ruling political elite, on the other hand the opposition parties'

interests and needs. The interests of media owners directly affects on the content nature of private television, because the contents of the press reflects the interests of the major funders for the press." (Chomsky).

Classical traditional understanding of media business – free media based on liberalism, which implies independence from the state and any political party; do not exist in modern conditions. TV in Georgia so far failed to fulfill key functions in democratic culture determined for media - is not a place for discussions, summing up the different opinions, analysis processes free from the influence of politicians and investigation.

Also, problems existed in Georgian TV market, allows TV sponsors fully manage editorial policy of channels. Advertising market is so small that profit which comes from it do not allow I total, ability of media development and the most part of televisions, exist on their owner's consumptions. For small televisions it is almost unreal bringing such amount of advertisements that is needed for preparation of high quality TV program, extension of coverage area and attract more audience. Lack of advertising market, not only prevents building of new channels, but also makes serious problems for existed channels. Unfortunately, there is no any exact datas about Georgian advertisement market. Existence of organizations, which would be working on loss and profit questions of advertisement, is desirable.

One of the important tools of restriction journalistic freedom and working on editorial policy is an unregulated labor law.

Independence of journalism (editorial independence) is a painful topic for the Georgian media. Policy logic, which is based on the interests and power of category, always represents temptation for every politician to use media resources for its own interests. As well as from media activities

economic principles, any media owners attempt to manage media subjects' activities according to the own business – interests, or at least not to challenge the influential political forces. Control on journalistic activities, is not an exception to our country, it is characterized by a consolidated democracy countries as well. In most radical cases a media becomes as a tool of strong political and economic ideological centers.

Taking into account the factors listed above may say that TV media has not realized accountability towards the public yet. As a rule, any profession is accountable before to its user. In our case the media feels the responsibility towards those who makes it subsidize. The problem gets deeper because of «close" relationships of oligarch owners with the government. It is this factor that determines the final analysis that media is least oriented on customer and explains the fact why has public trust the least importance for media. However, financial instability is not the only reason and in many cases we have the business with value system deficit.

In modern world, direct propaganda on a person is not effective any more, that's why televisions are using mixed propagandistic methods: advertisements, PR and etc. The most of respondents say that televisions which remain loyal towards the authority focus only on advertising and PR of governments' activities and oppositional channels on critic of the authority. Different political powers use different forms of influences for realization their own aspirations and interests. The classic example of this is the propagandist model of "news", during which the "powerful force" can affect on the opinion of public while giving news. In this case, the media serves on support and mobilization of specified interests of ruling elite in public and private sectors and as a result, reaches public agreement. Ideology, which TV stations are reporting mostly is realized on the basis of self-censorship and defines prevailing role of the media as system propaganda. TV stations which are loyal toward the government deserve trust and more attention than other

systems, that are based on state censorship, however the "Rustavi 2", "Imedi", "Real TV" and "public broadcaster" partially serve, as other state organs, to "ruling elite".

Propaganda provides some basic circumstances:

1. Strong concentration of television ownership by small groups of society, strategic investment of oligarchies in media, protection of the state ideology in this way, causes maintenance of state stability, that is a guarantee of their business. Therefore, "ideology and strength of media organizations defines the basis of economic".
2. Advertisement, which included the mass media, is responsible for the great part of revenue as well. The commercial side makes significant influence on media content. TV Media - Production, whether it is "news" or programs is saturated with hidden advertising, which reflects the interests of different political "elite". (There is connection between media elite and the rest political, economic and cultural elites).
3. TV stations get information mainly from state and corporate officials, who have extensive experience to supply media with information as not to prejudice the interests of the ruling class.
4. Permanent "pressing" of TV companies is also an important factor. Different social groups often criticize TV media for its non objectivity, which makes media even more dependent on the government.
5. Permanent criticism of government authorities from the different social groups, makes stronger desire of government protection in television stations which have a sympathy towards the government and then they put in motion propagandist mechanism for this.

Similarly, the opposition television stations use propaganda methods for the interests of various political forces and opposition elites. Theoretically journalists can refuse to participate in such “filtering” process of televisions, but in this case they could appear in such terrible circumstances from their managers and TV founders that at last they could not bear existed situation. There were some examples of this, one or two journalists have moved to another TV channel. But eventually they remained as participants of that ideology process, because they are most committed from this system.

Media products, and especially television, because of its diverse nature bears the propagandistic function. Media makes not only reflection of events, but also its interpretation and thus affects on public consciousness. Propagandist feature of television diversity is also revealed that on the one hand it should ensure to focus audience on entertaining and educational programs, instead of public policy creation (TV Company “Imedi” is distinguished with its creativity) and on the other hand secure direct propaganda of such programs. Therefore, there are often a dominant TV companies, which directly serve the interests of the dominant political forces and the strengthening of their ideology. Such TV companies are: “Rustavi 2”, “Real TV” and “Sakartvelo”.

Some times before, Georgian society more or less was able to get propagandist informational policy into some frameworks. The possibility of this actually is very small, that could be explained due to improper activity of society. Otherwise, the media would be forced to foresaw society order. Because the strategies of media - holder partly derived from the public interests, and vice versa.

Today the current situation in Georgian TV space shows that in terms of pluralism TV media is vulnerable. Dominant TV companies (including Public Broadcaster) are grouped by their

political positions. Governmental and oppositional consciousness appears as simple dividing tool. Privately in case of broadcasting facilities, engagement is hard to be regulated. Broadcasting of oppositional television channels “Maestro” and “Caucasus” mainly consists of talk-shows, where, almost all invited visitors accuse authority in all possible and incredible crimes. Some times ago, Public Television 2nd Channel began its broadcasting in C-SPAN format and now all radical oppositional powers can make speech without any limitations.

In my opinion, existence of oppositional channels in Georgian TV-space leads towards pluralism, but counter arguments are quite strong too. Above mentioned oppositional TV company Caucasus, broadcasts only in Tbilisi. TV-company “Maestro” has recently begun its satellite broadcasting. Three general TV channels cover only all territory of Georgia, private channels: “Rustavi-2” and “Imedi” and the first channel of public broadcaster. Informational programs of all three channels are clearly pro-governmental. Despite regular inviting of oppositional powers in political discussions on “Rustavi 2”, “Imedi” and Public broadcaster, with the purpose of making influence on public views, all the rest TV channels can hardly compete with these three national channels. Most of inquired respondents think that Georgian television space is distinguished with low level inter pluralism.

Today, Georgian media is influenced by powerful political and economic systems. It should be mentioned that process of oppositional channels’ broadcasting more or less balances TV space in pluralistic sight, but media-organizations itself are not distinguished with a successive dependence towards democratic values. Their political engagement - is so high, that it prevents growth of democratic quality of TV-Media, whose inevitable conditions are impartiality, balance of existed tendencies in a society and broadcasting, based on facts.

Georgian media landscape has recently become a matter of debates, moreover, that the freedom of press in the ENP agenda is entered as the highest priority. The officials say that a free media is a major feature of a democratic society, but recognize that more should be done for media freedom in Georgia.

According to the "Freedom House" report the media is "semi free" in Georgia, but it is on the edge of "non freedom". Georgia is now, just on the verge of "semi free" and "non free" criticized the because of different reasons. However, Georgia has retained the broadcasting - television broadcasting, independent channels and wide network of international broadcasting, unlike many of its neighbors, which pose difficulties for international broadcasters. Despite above said, Georgia still remains in the state, which itself represents the field better than other former Soviet states, says the Baltic Sea studies.

After "Rose Revolution" there were complains over democracy development weakening, which is mainly reflected in decrease of pluralism and non-governmental sector activity in media. Independent media, as well as non-governmental organizations has been created with independence and development of democratic institutions. Their success on the one hand depends on development of liberal institutions, and on the other hand, is the main indicator of their development. Therefore, when we talk about the development of democracy, first of all give independent media and civil sector development as visual pattern. Such inter-connection of independent media and civil society interests logically creates expectation of high quality partnership between two sectors. Similar expectations have journalists too, which think that in case of strong public sector, existence of independent, impartial televisions and their editorial independent could be possible.

Herewith, civil society is powerless in this direction, because civil society stands on values, but today there is deficit of values in televisions and they introduce pseudo culture in a society, which they think is the best. The civil sector and media are in one plane and the state on another. Civil society can only utilize the legal instruments on different issues. For example, in case of breaking license conditions to use legal measures with National Regulatory Commission.

There were some initiatives in civil society for stimulating existence of self-regulating mechanisms in media. In particular, media conduct standards were established in accordance to the Free Institute initiatives, media council, which was joined by many media organizations and journalists, but secure monitoring mechanism of these standards still is not made. The Broadcasting Association was established on the bases of initiative and promotion of international programs acting in Georgia. Each such initiative has not become in effective self-regulating mechanism yet. However, working of this mechanism is very important for the development of professionalism and independence of media. Such self regulation mechanisms are depending on media organizations and journalists will. This sphere may become field of close cooperation of media and third sector organizations.

In Georgia strong media organizations and journalism associations could not been established, which would try to lobby the media problems and deliberate solving of them. At last time people talk a lot in Georgia about media ethics, the professional union, and the journalistic self regulation, however, it is obvious that the media itself can hardly understand the essence of professional self-regulation. There are many reasons, but the main of them is interfusion of journalistic rights and responsibilities. Journalists today hold on self-regulation unions, because they think that NGOs and the media union will return broadcast television to them suppressed by its owners. Obviously, these self-regulating journalist unions do not include only discussion of appeals against media, but they represent democratic institutes established by media itself, which

express media interests during relationship with government. It also helps journalist to feel themselves as the members of professional team and an important social group, fight for society progress. Social progress should start with media improve. This process directly depends on what degree of responsibility will media take on itself towards the society and here starts the main function of the media self-regulation: be supportive of this process, a kind of indicator, but not censor or professional union, as it some imagine.

Journalists must not pass all their responsibility to media organizations of self-organizational systems, because there is no journalistic solidarity, separate journalists activity is a serious problem in Georgian media. The journalists were not able to create effective public Union.

The civil sector, despite its some development steps, is still far from the classical model which, according to political theory, is a basis of its liberal - democratic political system. Public sector organizational development does not happen only through the efforts, for this civil society activities are also necessary. As well as support from government and assistance of donor organizations.

Self regulation and improvement of journalistic product quality is not a demand of media, because television stations care more to meet demand of their order maker, than to take customer needs. The only one to whom the interest of today is to improve quality of media products, is a civil society, which in this case is talking on behalf of society and which has perfectly acknowledged the role of high professional media in democratic society.

Media should understand its place in Public life, must tell the truth, as a result, people will have the opportunity to make thoughtful, determined decision. In addition better fulfill the media this, more independent it will be in its activities.

Media freedom in Georgia is caused by liberal legislation, in addition to that, prohibits censorship, journalists as well as exempt from criminal responsibility in case of defamation. Talks, on existence censorship in media is paradoxical, in consideration of the background, when the country had received the freedom of speech and one of the most liberal laws in Europe in the field of broadcasting. Furthermore, as the D. Maxwell considers, “theory of a free press does not need further improvement, but it is important not to be accepted such legislation by the state, which would also violate the principles of free press”. Law on "Freedom of Speech and Expression” took into consideration all the mechanism of journalist's work, which creates the legal protection of certain levers. But despite this, today the problem of censorship in the TV-media (its various manifestations) according to all existing surveys, is still fixed.

According to research several kinds of censorship were nominated. Political (censorship of various political forces), influential institutional (church, national self-independence), Georgian traditional fundamental values and etc. The journalists say that political censorship is prevailed. Respondents believe that direct government censorship (journalists were in direct contact with the representatives of the Government) is not implemented any more. Today, the censorship is carried out by owners of TV channels and intermediate rings - producers, editors. Television owners bring people for leading information policy, who he can trust, the same principle is used for selecting of officers on the lower level as well. Part of the respondents believes that self-censorship is a part of that censorship which is spread in televisions. According to the studies self-censorship quality of media is high and are directly linked with the editorial activities. Privately, with producing powers. The causes of self-censorship is also named compromise; real possibility of losing job; low indicators of journalists' education and professionalism. Journalists' self-censorship is also shown with regard to conjuncture, existing in a society and the

traditional, strong institutions. For example, issues of mutual separation of the church and religion, custom and traditional themes is tabooed, and journalists avoid to cover such issues.

The term "self-censorship", which international organizations consider corresponding to Georgian media, bore the political content. In general, political self-censorship always appears in conditions of hidden censorship. Therefore, when foreign experts have used the term "self-censorship" in describing existed condition, it is possible that they meant indirect participation of other political forces together with government in the activities of the media.

When media experts talk about the problems of journalists' professionalism, they do not take into account important factors: in terms of censorship raising of journalists professional standards is almost impossible. As John Tratcher and Thomas Nordoven, in the treaty about "freedom of speech" think, "If there is no freedom of speech, wisdom can not be born, and can not be a public liberty without freedom of speech".

TV distribution according to political affiliation greatly restricted the quality of freedom. In current conditions the contradictions are inevitable that exist between, media owners' freedom of choice and the freedom of choice of journalists. A problem of self-censorship appears directly here. It is not necessary that censors took form of power's sleepless eyes and iron fist directed towards employed. It may become as our inside echo, ally, which never allows us to forget that on scale lies social problems (unemployment).

As mentioned above Georgian legislation on freedom of speech in Georgia and in the field of broadcasting is one of the most liberal legislation in Europe. Is liberal legislation enough or not to express media journalistic freedom? According to the study in parallel of media liberal legislation, working on general and neutral regulatory acts occurs according to the interests of

political groups and the media owners, associated towards them. That makes journalist totally unsecured. For example, complex professional environment for journalists existed in the area of Georgian television, which in the basic is expressed by labor laws adjusting to employer. Other legislative changes as well, which makes media environment completely dependent, while the legislation does not interfere in journalist and employer relations, also failed to restrict interfere of political powers in the activities of journalists.

Liberal Law "on Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Expression" is unable to protect journalists and to give him/her possibility of free information distribution. One of the tools of "limitation journalistic freedom and drawing out corresponding editorial policy is an acting Georgian labor legislation".

Existence of legal assets in the legislation itself is not the guarantor of press independence, because these assets need to be used properly. Will to fight for the freedom is needed to exist in journalists and in whole media. This is a very serious problems, which are connected with not existence of inside editorial atmosphere and editorial independence, also deficit of journalistic professional education and solidarity.

The studies showed that the content priorities of TV-Media should to be changed. There is so-called "Deficient themes" that are not on air, or is covered less by television channels. These topics are:

Social issues, economic issues, investigative journalism; Minorities, be it sexual, ethnic or religious; religious issues; science, culture, art, literature; youth programs; children's programs; human rights; healthcare issues; education reform; court issues; political events in other

countries; territorial integrity problems; regional life; educational programs; exclusives; gender problems; media problems; Muslim Meskhs and others;

"News" and "Entertainment" has become a major principle of Georgian television development. It is remarkable that today Georgian televisions almost entirely repeat the model of an American TV stations. We can say with certainty that the cultural – recreative feature together with the information function has become the priority in TV space. We face the result of this; such topics as, the person in Georgia and the inviolability of property, existing problems towards the expression and freedom of conscience, public monitoring on the authority, problems of pensioners, disabled, unemployed people and other unsecured segments of the public, traditions of various religious and ethnic groups living in Georgia, their life and ethno cultural customs; economic, social, legal, educational and health care reforms; educative-publicist programs, programs telling about public, political and cultural life of neighbor and partner countries, are least covered by the broadcasting companies.

What is public broadcasting and why is it so important? First of all we should come out from the same logics. We must realize that public broadcasting is not a form of distribution, is not structure of TV channel or channels. Public broadcasting is a such dependence towards a content and auditorium, that is based on clearness, justice and relevance. Based on this approach we should to develop new serious interactive interfaces. Should not remain analogies in this community. Existence of truly independent public broadcaster is more important now rather than in well-formed democracy. Successor or authoritative or dictatorial regime, is a temptation – media financed by society to be considered as “their” - faced towards democratic regime, maybe is understandable but very destructive. It deprives a democracy from what it needs to become more improved, and maybe for survival – they are: understanding of common interests and purposes, which will come up to the political conflict. The country is facing a challenge, coming

from a former powerful conqueror and in this case a truly independent public broadcaster is more important for survival strategy. The more polarized internal political situation, the bigger is need for the existence of professional media, which will be isolated from the political excesses. The fact that, polarized system players are trying more to use public broadcaster for political purposes, underlines the opposite - inevitability of real independence existence. Together with an increase of quality, anticipations and pressure, implementation and protection of real independence get complicated. The only protection mechanism of independence is a depolitization of public broadcaster. For which concrete effective steps need to be taken (although this process started more or less). Organization of all members (and not part of) of the Board of Trustees according to public favorites is important. This is because first of all, it will return trust to Public Broadcasting, on the other hand, will increase the responsibility of members of the Council towards the public.

Most part of respondents interviewed named main problems of existed regional television stations and more than 80% of televisions, and this is an ownership of media channels by local authorities or their family members.

16 regional TVs confess that they officially have signed a contract with the local municipality. Regional self-governments are buying air time from local TV stations for information providing. In the agreement there is not defined, if the authorities, leadership of the channel can require placing the story in the news program, and has or not right to take part in their preparation.

Independence and objectivity of Regional televisions often depends on personal factors. In some cases, are the people that are part of the government, but less active. Of course it is within the framework of censorship as well, freedom of speech depends on whether television director have

a citizen's position and how it is controlled by the owner. Considering these factors, in Georgia there is a very good regional TV stations, which are determined to carry out their functions.

Currently the issues of regional television stations can be vitally important. One - the main problems is the question of financing. For regional televisions, there is allocated the certain amount from the local budget. There is a regional TV stations in almost all regions of Georgia, which function quite effectively, but like TV channels existed in Tbilisi, the most part of which are common national broadcasting and some televisions, which are restricted by their broadcasting area, they also have some kind of limitations and except this on the background of economic crisis there is standing even question of their functioning. Funding this type of television from donor organizations is very important. Local TV stations should be covered not only by "news", but also cognitive, educational, even the political programs, which will aim for the truth of the population. If there is donor funds for certain programs, then the result will be desirable. Today in Georgia is market requirements on real, solid and reliable information. For its implementation two factors are important: 1. A strong sense of journalistic ethics. 2. Social responsibility of TV channel owners before society. To achieve this, a good beginning will be the of public discussion of media state, to make the public see the problems of journalists working standards and trends, which TV owners express for reaching different goals, goals that do not coincide with their main purpose, to provide society with a real information. Society will more and more realize these problems at the professional level, this will establish healthy pressure on the media, which, ultimately, improves the quality of work of the media, and strengthens its independence. Any viewer has the ability to see problems in the media however, it is time to begin public discussions at professional level, that people knew exactly what is the problems due to the reasons are created. Of course the media business, which depends as on the political conjuncture, business space, as on public opinion. Media owners are interested to get returns from their investments, and this is natural. What makes the best returns in long term

prospects? Community much prefer to have the right and independent information than the fake news. In Long-term prospects quality is commercially profitable. Therefore, the correct way is to increase user numbers by offering good and quality media production, the to follow short-term interests spreading, because in the long-term consequences, society recognizes falsification, when it sees this. Media independence is the main fundament of grown, alive democracy.

Enclosure:

I. Methodology

Research type: qualitative sociological research, namely, expert guide-line.

Research method: detailed interview.

Inquire object were several groups of experts:

1. *Representatives of academic sphere, working on media and journalism issues (Ilia University; Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA); Caucasian University);*
2. *Representatives of civil sector, whose activity also is in connection with media;*
3. *Representatives from television media sphere.*

Members of Supervisory Board of Public Broadcasting;

Leaders of television channel;

Journalists, who have got author's show;

Media managers of news department; leaders and producers;

Journalists of news department;

Research object was to establish experts' point of view about tendencies of television freedom quality and generally development of broadcasting starting from the period of "Rose Revolution" up today. Namely, the guide-line comprised the following issues:

- *Quality of freedom of speech in broadcasting;*
Independence of television and mechanisms of control established on;
Requirements of democratic media and compliance of modern broadcasting;
- *First range problems of televisions;*
- *Pluralism in television space;*
Legislation circumstances of media;
- *Responsibility of public sector and society in the development of independent broadcasting;*
Positive and negative actions provided regarding television;
- *Transparency of the owners of television channels;*
Different types of censorship existed in televisions;
- *Weak and strong sides of television;*
Professional circumstances of journalists;

- *Issues which are not broadcasted by televisions;*
Editorial independence and categories of control;
- *Professionalism of television journalists;*
Competition in television space;
- *Problems of regional television;*
Public Broadcasting development tendencies.

Selection:

Selection of experts for guide-lines was performed purposely. Main principal of selection was an evaluation of experts regarding independence of television and freedom of speech. Profession and activity sphere of respondents was taken as main indicator of relevancy. None of other social-demographic indicators (sex, age, income, living place and other) were considered in selection of respondents. Accordingly, small amount of people, having specific characteristics and experience, was selected. Finally total 30 experts, who were interviewed in details face to face.

List of experts (see Schedule 1)

#	Experts	Organization which they represent	Position
	David Paichadze	I.Chavchavadze University Public Broadcasting – “Dialog with David Paichadze”	Assistant-Professor Author of the show and showman
	Nata Tvalchrelidze	Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA)	Assistant-Professor
	Zviad Koridze	Media School of Caucasian	Lector

		University Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) Studio “Re”. Radio “Utsnobi”	Producer, showman
	Ia Danelia	Caucasus School of Media Management and Journalism; Georgian Public Broadcasting	Assistant-Professor; Head of PR Master’s Program Member of Supervisory Board
	Lia Chakhunashvili	International Research and Exchange Council - Europe (IREX Europe), “Media Support Program for Georgia Georgian Public Broadcasting	Senior Adviser in Georgia Member of Supervisory Board
	Tamar Gurchiani	Association of Young Lawyers	Lawyer
	Dodo Shonava	Georgian Public Broadcasting, Second Channel	Director
	Nino Jangirashvili	TV company “Caucasus”	Director
	Ia Antadze	Radio “Freedom” Fund “Open Society – Georgia”	Journalist Member of Executive Council
	Nino Zuriashvili	Studio “Monitor”	Founder
	Tamar Chikovani	TV company “Maestro”	Journalist
	Shorena Shaverdashvili	Magazines “Liberal” “Hot Chocolate” Georgian Public Broadcasting	Editor Member of Supervisory Board
	Nino Japiashvili		Television Journalist
	Maia Tabagari	TV company “Imedi” 2003-2007 Informative department	Ex-Head
	Ketevan Kebabze	TV company “Rustavi 2” – News department	Producer
	Eka Kvesitadze	Public Broadcasting, show “Accents”	Author and showman
			Journalist
	Diana Jojua	TV company “Rustavi 2”	Journalist
	George Laperashvili	TV company “Rustavi 2”, news department	Producer

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Research instrument was a guide, which consisted of the list of issues. They were used by interviewer as a general guide orienteer. This means that I was able to follow the procession of interview in a free manner, to consider its inner flows and modify the guide considering characteristics of content of the interview.

The guide consisted from the following issues (see Schedule 2)

Schedule 2

Guide	
<i>1</i>	<i>What is the quality of media freedom presently? (In this case the subject of our research is television media, television space); What is general tendency of its development starting from Rose Revolution up today?</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>Which is the means of mass media (printing, television, radio, internet), which guarantees gaining of more a) in volume; b) objective; c) trusty; d) operative information?</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>What you think to be the most severe, urgent problem to solve for modern Georgian broadcasting?</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>What is democratic broadcasting? What requirements should it satisfy? Please list</i>

	<i>the standards which are necessary conditions in order to defend democracy and progress of broadcasting?</i>
5	<i>Which modern television satisfies presently the criteria listed by you or having been satisfying starting from Rose Revolution?</i>
6	<i>Is freedom of speech considered to be of higher value for the televisions of post-revolution Georgia, comparing to other defended valuables?</i>
7	<i>Nowadays is television the most influential media sector in Georgia?</i>
8	<i>By your opinion, which issues are the focused ones for modern broadcasting?</i>
9	<i>How do you think, is broadcasting oriented on spectator's ideology?</i>
10	<i>Is the quality of political interference in broadcasting high?</i>
11	<i>How can you evaluate circumstances of broadcasting legislation? What positive and negative changes have been implemented in broadcasting by the government?</i>
12	<i>Are laws executing and why?</i>
13	<i>What is successful and not successful action taken by the government regarding broadcasting stating from Rose Revolution up today? Which certain examples do you remember?</i>
14	<i>Do you think that independence and freedom of media is in direct connection with the government relation towards media? What relations have the government and media? Are there any other defining factors?</i>

15	<i>Is it possible for television to function properly without assistance by the side of the state or any political party? Is there such television in our reality?</i>
16	<i>Is editorial independence of television defended nowadays? Does television journalism (its independence) suffer from stagnation, resulted from frequent manipulation form the side of the government?</i>
17	<i>How do you think, who controls television editorial activity presently? Television management, executive government, businessmen, political leaders or society?</i>
18	<i>What are the methods by means of which the government set its control on televisions?</i>
19	<i>Is the society participant in decreasing the quality of speech freedom?</i>
20	<i>Would it be possible to defend editorial independence of televisions in case of existing strong civil sector and society?</i>
21	<i>There is an opinion that television channels in Georgia are divided in two streams: channels which defend interests of the government and oppositional channels. Accordingly, there does not exist an impartial television. Do you agree with such division?</i>
22	<i>Is presently media business transparent?</i>
23	<i>Is the issue of television owners closely connected to the aspect of the government control and as well to the quality of trusting them?</i>
24	<i>Is self-censorship a problem for post-revolution journalism? What factors result the self-censorship?</i>

25	<i>What kind of censorship exists nowadays in broadcasting? Which (three) prevail? What about any other kind of censorship can we talk regarding broadcasting?</i>
26	<i>Does pluralism exist in televisions? Is the information broadcasted by them objective, impartial, balanced?</i>
27	<i>What is the difference between Georgian media market and western one?</i>
28	<i>News of national broadcastings is often identical not only by content, as well by succession, used source and even by comments. How do you think is the news preparation some kind of coordination?</i>
29	<i>Is there competition between broadcasting channels? If yes, how is the competition expressed?</i>
30	<i>Is presently the media space corrupted? What kind of corruption exists in media? What does the phrase “media corruption” mean in the modern reality?</i>
31	<i>Weak and strong side of television media in modern reality?</i>
32	<i>If we would talk about contextual priorities of television media, how do you think, which are “deficit themes” which are not broadcasted at all or are broadcasted less by television channels?</i>
33	<i>Does Public Broadcasting present current events of the country in adequate manner? Does it express interests of the whole society? If no, why?</i>
34	<i>What is the main problem of regional televisions?</i>
35	<i>What are perspectives of television media in order to become more independent and impartial? What are your recommendations regarding this?</i>
36	<i>Is there any problem in television which was not discussed during this interview?</i>

Detailed interview was taken by me, sociologist-interviewer. In most cases, the interviews were taken in working offices of the respondents. Duration of one interview was approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. Conversations were recorded on digital Dictaphone, the content of which was interpreted by the interviewer. None of the selected experts have denied giving interview. None of the interviews were followed by any difficulties, what could result in early termination.

Analyze of Datas, was mainly depended on description procedure, though, there were used such methods as well as are interpretation and conceptualization.

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