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Social Movements, Media, and Democratization in Georgia

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Social Movements, Media, and Democratization in Georgia

by

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Dedication

To my mom, Nunu Giorgadze, and my dad, Jemal Jejelava, who taught me to pursue my interests, to think creatively and critically, and to work hard.

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Abstract

A purpose of the study was to analyze the construction of reality around the Georgian media democratization movement in 2010-12. The qualitative analysis of movement statements (n=17) and in-depth interviews with movement activists (n=12) found that the movement relied on mobilizing master frames linked to the concept of democracy: *free speech, access to information, fair elections, transparency, plurality*, and devised an innovative frame, *it concerns you*. The movement pursued two goals with its framing efforts: improvements in the media environment and mobilization of citizen participation.

The quantitative analysis of news stories about the movement (n=552) by six pro-opposition, pro-government, and independent news organizations found that the news organizations used movement-advanced frames, and, in general, used more mobilizing than demobilizing frames. The marginalization of the movement, a dominant mode of news coverage of social movements based on the literature, did not occur. However, the study found differences in coverage based on news organizations' ties with the government and the opposition, or lack thereof. The pro-opposition and independent TV stations covered the movement more frequently, aired reports at better viewing times, gave greater voice to the activists and their key frame, *it concerns you*, and used more mobilizing frames (the pro-opposition station), than the pro-government TV. The pro-

opposition newspaper used a more positive tone and lengthier stories, and the independent newspaper more frequent coverage, than the pro-government newspaper.

However, the pro-government newspaper featured the coverage more prominently and used activists' key frame more often. Both pro-government news organizations used government sources more often, than other media, and focused on those movement issues that were eventually endorsed by the government.

In-depth interviews with news journalists (n=5) in these news organizations found that journalists in the pro-opposition and independent media supported movement issues, engaged in supportive reporting, and approved of advocacy journalism when press freedoms were in danger. Journalists in pro-government media supported most of the movement's demands, but were suspicious of political motives behind movement activism (the movement mobilized ahead of the Parliamentary Elections 2012) and did not engage in and disapproved of advocacy journalism.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Social movements and activism are on the rise in Georgia. Grown out of protests over violations of civic and human rights in past years, activist groups have moved from disorganized expression of grievances to sustained and coordinated collective action. While there are a few activist groups around the country, the groups pursuing a broad agenda of democratic rights and values, with backing from major local human rights organizations and democratically-minded citizens, are by far the best organized and articulate. These groups are engaged in coordinated and sustained collective action and are emerging as social movements. They cluster together, forming the force of democratization in the country¹. The proposed study intends to analyze one of these movements, which we call *the media democratization movement*, and its activism to democratize the media sector of Georgia carried out from 2010 through 2012².

¹ The term is admittedly broad. Many groups see themselves as contributing to democracy, but few interpret democracy holistically, as a system of rights and values.

² MDM activists, interviewed by this study, referred to their struggle variously as “media advocacy”, “media activism, and “a coalition.” The literature has referred to speech and media rights movements as “free speech movements” (Postigo, 2012), but also as “media democratization movements,” especially, in the developing world (Mauersberger, 2012).

The democratization of media became a pressing issue before the 2012 parliamentary elections in Georgia, in which the government's control of the country's biggest TV stations created uneven and unfair competition among those running for elected office (IREX, 2013). The media democratization movement's activism to ensure greater transparency of broadcast media ownership and equal access to diverse content produced spectacular results. The government introduced legislative amendments in the broadcast and election laws to require the disclosure of ownership structure in the broadcast outlets, and mandatory distribution of all broadcast signals by cable operators during the two months prior to Election Day. Georgian citizens gained immediate access to both government and opposition campaigns and the plurality of factual information and opinion. The Parliamentary Elections of 2012 were held in a free and fair environment, and resulted in "the first peaceful, democratic transfer of power since the country's independence in 1991" (U.S. Department of State, 2012). The government ceded power to a coalition of opposition parties.

While media democratization movement (MDM)³ employed a range of institutional and extra-institutional tactics, it has greatly benefited from securing extensive and mostly positive media coverage. The activists produced effective frames that resonated with the public and, arguably, members of the media. The movement presented proposed media reforms as serving citizens' democratic right to free speech, access to plural sources of information and transparency, a strategy that has proven successful in other countries (Mauersberger, 2012). The frames fit well with Georgian journalists' professional values of free speech, access to information, and transparency.

³ The media democratization movement will be abbreviated as MDM in this study.

The media democratization movement partnered with the media by forming a coalition with journalists' associations and watchdog groups.

The purpose of this study is three-fold: 1) to identify the dominant tone and frames of coverage of the Georgian media democratization movement across the dominant news organizations in the country, 2) to analyze whether and perhaps how political factors and frames constructed by the media democratization movement influenced the news coverage, and 3) to interpret meanings attached to the media democratization movement by movement actors and the news media. At a more abstract level, the study intends to enhance our theoretical knowledge about how media covers social movements, and how social movements can influence news coverage. Current theory holds that movements opposed to the status quo have little leverage over news coverage, and that they generally receive negative and marginalizing media coverage because the media tend to protect the status quo (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980). This study will explore if some media outlets in transitional political and media systems, such as Georgia, are likely to report on social movements in a fair and substantive manner. The core argument is that dynamic changes in emergent democracies, such as Georgia, lead to great disparities among political elites and the media, and the emergence of a new type of independent media, open to change. These media are new forces in civil society, and were outside the circle of social and political power during the previous, totalitarian regimes. In general, these media develop and gain strength as a result of the process of transition (Spark, 2008). These media occupy disadvantageous positions in relation to other media and thus experience undue government control and unfair business practices (Freedom Forum, 2011, 2012,

Transparency International – Georgia, 2011). These media are expected to question the status quo rather than support it, and sympathize with social movements advocating change. Social movements in these environments have the independent media, but also pro-opposition media, as their allies against the government and the system. Since media's support for the status quo is the key premise of negative coverage of social movements (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980), media sectors that oppose the status quo are not expected to be negatively biased towards social movements. Social movements that manage to exploit tensions in the “media-state dynamics” (Mauersberger, 2012, p. 588) and differences in the media (Weaver & Scacco, 2013) have a chance to gain good access to audiences and fair coverage.

In more established and stable political and media systems, productive interaction between social movements and media and fair coverage of social movements are rare. Media propaganda (Herman and Chomsky, 1988), media hegemony (Gitlin, 1980), and media and conflict theories (Olien et al, 1995), developed in the 1970s and onwards, explain media's negative framing of social movements by media's entrenched ties with the elites and their interest in maintaining the status quo. In the media and community conflict perspective (Olien et al, 1989, 1995), media act as “guard dogs” for the elites, helping them fend off challenges emanating from social movements. The media propaganda model (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) considers the media to be an integral part of the elite hegemony, opposed to any change in the existing social structure and order advocated by social movements. Gitlin (1977, 1980) explained that structural influences, emanating from elite ownership of the media, interact with aspects of

journalists' professional codes (fetishism of facts, objectivity, newsworthiness) and invariably lead to negative and marginalizing framing of social movements.

The protest paradigm, advanced by Chan and Lee (1984), builds on Gitlin's ideas. It posits that journalists' coverage of protests is determined by their ideologically-based "reporting paradigms," which inform "where to look (and where not to look), and ... what to discover" (p. 187), and whether to support or denounce protests. These reporting paradigms tend to emphasize social controversy or violence surrounding protest activities, rather than the issues being protested. Yet, contrary to strong hegemony models, the protest paradigm seems to suggest that an ideologically-inspired "reporting paradigm" might offer positive news coverage of protest that is ideologically aligned with the movement at hand. More recently, scholars found greater diversity in the coverage of protests. As Weaver and Scacco (2013) argue, the recent trend of media diversification, fueled, in part, by the diffusion of the Internet and media's greater ideological posturing, leads to greater opportunities for social movements to secure neutral and even positive media coverage. This idea is echoed in Harlow and Johnston (2011), who found that the coverage of Egyptian protests in social media and blogosphere broke away from formulaic, marginalizing coverage. This holds true in other non-Western contexts (Mauersberger, 2012; McCarthy et al, 2008; Yuan, 2013). In these contexts, those outlets in the media landscape oriented towards social change are more sympathetic towards movement causes.

By quantitatively analyzing Georgian newspaper and TV news content, the study will look for instances of negative and demobilizing news coverage of the media democratization movement in 2010 through 2012, as predicted by the Western political

science and political communication literature, across the dominant news media in the country's news ecosystem. It also intends to examine the extent to which the media have employed "mobilizing" frames. The study hypothesizes that negative coverage of the media democratization movement will appear in pro-government news media. However, it hypothesizes that opposition-aligned news media will provide positive coverage of the movement. The study will explore the nature of coverage of social movements in the independent news media. The divergent news camps are expected to grant different levels of prominence to the movement in terms of the length and substance of the coverage and to use different sources and frames. The study expects to find frames pushed by movement actors in the news coverage of independent and opposition-aligned news media.

The qualitative part of the study will further clarify the construction of meanings around the media democratization movement. What were its goals and mobilizing frames it has used? What was the rationale behind framing choices? The study will answer these questions by interviewing activists and activist journalists⁴ in the media democratization

⁴ The term "activist journalist" refers to professional journalists, working in the media, who joined the media democratization movement and openly engaged in activism as volunteers. "Activist journalist" is different from "news producers" and "news reporters," the terms reserved for professionals working in the media but not engaged with the movement. The study has interviewed both "activist journalists" and "news producers" and "news reporters."

movement. Interviews with news producers and reporters will answer the question about their possible support of the movement through advocacy reporting.

This study relies on the framing theory and social constructivist framework to explain how social actors, such as social movements and media, engage in meaning construction, that is, framing, to advance their interpretation of issues in the discourse (Entman, 1993; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). The critical perspective informs the study's conceptualization of social movements, political elites, and media as potential parties in social conflict, engaged in mobilizing and demobilizing framing (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980; Olien et al, 1995).

The study hopes to make important contributions to the scholarly literature on the news media's interaction with social movements in non-Western contexts. In these contexts, Western structural and ideological models may not apply, as ownership patterns are different, political ideologies are not fully formed, social movements and independent media maintain close ties, and some types of news media are more susceptible to government control efforts than others. Independent media have emerged as strong mobilizing forces in the color revolutions in Georgia and other formerly Soviet republics (Manning, 2007). Their role in less radical collective action, such as lobbying for democratic improvements in the media and electoral process, warrants attention. Greater understanding of the successful media democratization movement in Georgia will help media scholars understand more fully the news media's interaction with social movements in transitional democracies and, in general, the role of social movements and media in democratic transformation.

The first chapter of this dissertation provides background on the media democratization movement. The chapter will also outline the media and political environment in the country. The second chapter deals with the concept of framing, its psychological and sociological roots and its current uses in mass media and political communication studies. Further, the second chapter summarizes the current thinking about the framing of social movements in media, including critical perspectives on media's role in the functioning of social movements, and the framing strategies applied by social movements to reach their audiences, including the media. The third chapter outlines the hypotheses and research questions advanced by the study and the methods it used. The fourth chapter presents findings and discusses the qualitative analysis of movement statements and in-depth interviews. The fifth chapter presents quantitative findings and discussion of the media coverage of MDM. The sixth chapter synthesizes findings in chapters four and five, and presents conclusions.

Before proceeding to the discussion of the substance and scholarly knowledge in the area of proposed analysis, the author wishes to acknowledge her personal involvement in the media democratization movement in Georgia, understanding this may have influenced the selection and treatment of the subject of this study.

Media Democratization Movement

In modern politics, social movements are increasingly seen as engines of social innovation and change, counteracting forces of social control as embodied by the state (Goodwin, 2013). Emergent movements in Georgia, united around the democratization agenda, have scored some spectacular victories in their struggle to secure rights to free press and information, free and fair elections, and freedom of political assembly. These

freedoms make the country one of the most progressive transitional democracies of the former Soviet Union. These movements cluster together, and form the *force of democratization* in the country. Georgia's democratization movements are political rights-oriented programs. They advocate for new rights but also for the protection and implementation of the constitutional rights promised to the citizens of Georgia. While democracy, as a system, enjoys widespread popularity in Georgia⁵, with groups across the political spectrum voicing support, only some of these groups, united by the democratization agenda, interpret democracy holistically, as a system of rights and values, and act consistently in its service.

The origins of these movements can be traced to the declaration of Georgian independence from the Soviet Union and the installation of a democratic system of governance in April, 1991, but their roots are deeper. These roots reach back into the distant past to the courageous and daring activism of Soviet dissidents and Georgia's national liberation movement. By employing the master frames of human and citizen rights, constructed across years of struggle, emergent movements tap into Georgians' long standing desire to secure rights and freedoms, withheld during almost two centuries of Imperial and Communist rule.

⁵ The recent public opinion poll by the National Democratic Institute in Georgia established that 13% of Georgians considered freedom of speech and independence of media as the most important issues facing the country, ahead of jobs and territorial integrity (Navarro & Woodward, 2013)

The media democratization movement has emerged out of a long-standing goal of democratically-minded groups to open and improve the Georgian media environment and the media themselves. The country has a partially free media system (Freedom House, 2013), which means censorship and other repressive tools are not in place, but the government still has the power to manipulate the media. The former governments have maintained close ties with the owners of nationally-distributed TV stations; if a station owner did not cooperate with the government, the government often helped find the station new “loyal” owners. Government’s control of big media businesses has allegedly stripped independent newspapers and broadcast stations of advertising funds (Transparency International - Georgia, 2011), and its manipulation of the broadcast regulatory body led to withholding licenses from unwanted stations in the past (Freedom House, 2011).

Over the years, the media democratization movement has pressed the government for reforms to improve the media environment. The democratization of media became a pressing issue ahead of the 2012 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia, which was regarded as a litmus test for the young Georgian statehood and its democratic credentials. Democratically-oriented groups have been actively advocating for a peaceful and constitutional transition of power through competitive, free and fair elections. However, the government was suspect in his desire to use all available means, including the bureaucratic apparatus and the control of country’s biggest TV stations, to create an uneven ground for contenders. Government-dominated major broadcast stations provided news to 95% of the population, while access to alternative news outside big cities was poor (Caucasus Resource and Research Centers, 2009).

The media democratization movement has focused on two goals, transparency of ownership and equal access to diverse media content, as key to its action program. Not only were these goals important for the freedom and health of the media system, they were essential to holding free and fair elections. Letting the audience know who stood behind media messages and bias, while simultaneously providing it with diverse sources of facts and views, equalized the chances of both the government and opposition forces for a successful campaign. The movement was fully aware that the access to diverse content was a prerequisite for meaningful and deliberative process (Dahlgren, 1995).

The recent activism started around summer 2010, when activists formed informal working groups and sketched the program of media democratization (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014; Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). As the first step, these groups started identifying problems and putting pressure on the government to introduce changes. The government started discussing, and, in April, 2011, enacted legislative amendments requiring the disclosure of the ownership structure in broadcast media. Next, the activists initiated a coalition of major local human rights organizations, professional journalists' unions, media development organizations and pressure groups, with the backing of the Open Society Georgia Foundation, also known as the Soros Foundation. On April 13, 2011, the Coalition for Media Advocacy was officially launched. "We publicly declare that we will take all appropriate measures to improve the media regulatory legislation, establish control over the implementation of all laws and protect the rights of journalists and the financial independence of the press," stated the founding document. The coalition was made up of key non-governmental organizations, including the Georgian Young Lawyers Association, Transparency International --

Georgia, Civic Development Institute, Non-governmental organization for Civil Society, Media Club, Open Society – Georgia Foundation, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, and the independent journalists’ associations, including the Georgian Regional Media Association, Georgian Regional Broadcasters Association, Regional Broadcasters Network and the Georgian Charter of Journalism Ethics. These non-governmental organizations and unions occupied a position similar to that held by advocacy, pressure and interest groups in Western societies, which hold critical middle ground between political elites and the public and represent the views of a particularly engaged segment of the public (McCluskey & Kim, 2012). The coalition became the social movement organization (SMO) in the media democratization movement.

That the Coalition for Media Advocacy brought watchdog organizations and media unions together was one of its best strategies. This helped forge ties with the independent media, but also with the pro-opposition media, which were the members in the unions. The independent media, have always supported the democratization cause. The first independent media organizations were started by democratically-minded young journalists, who distanced themselves from the Soviet media and their propagation of the Soviet system, and by activists from civil organizations (Topuria, 2000). Over the years, independent media and civil sector groups have existed almost symbiotically, with human rights groups lobbying for the freedom of the press and the press emphasizing a human rights agenda. The independent media have relied on the support of the civil sector organizations when faced with legal troubles and government pressure.

The coalition started a sustained, high-tension, high-profile campaign which used a range of institutional and extra-institutional tactics, from the It Concerns You campaign

to legislatively enforce a mandatory distribution of all TV stations around Georgia to active denouncement of government's media policies and violations of journalists' rights in the news media and protest rallies outside government buildings. From April, 2011 to October, 2012, the Coalition for Media Advocacy actively lobbied the government for media reforms: it made regular statements on the progress of its media democratization movement; it was visibly engaged in all cases of media rights violations; it engaged in direct action, staging protests, and worked to secure supportive statements and actions from international human rights watchdogs and friendly governments. The coalition engaged in effective negotiations with the opposition and the government. This activism produced spectacular results. The government agreed, in June, 2012, to adopt into law the "must-carry" rule, requiring cable operators to carry all broadcast signals during the two months prior to Election Day. These were major improvements, contributing to greater freedom, diversity and viability in the Georgian media (IREX, 2013).

Georgia: The Overview of Political and Media Systems

To put the media democratization movement in context, this study will describe Georgia's political and media environment. Georgia is one of three nations in the South Caucasus. Its transitional political system has been variously described as "centralized" (Lavery, 2008), "hybrid" (Freedom House, 2011), and "flawed democracy" (Zielis, 2010). The country of 4.5 million inhabitants secured independence on April 9, 1991, shortly before the Soviet Union declared itself defunct. The first years of independence were marred by street violence, military coups and civil wars. The wars in Abkhazia and Ossetia, territories of Georgia, resulted in their secession and de-facto independence. In the late 1990s, Georgian politics stabilized, but economic chaos and widespread

corruption delayed development. In a defining historical moment, Georgians staged mass protests against rigged parliamentary elections and deposed the “neo-patrimonial government” of President Shevardnadze in November 2003 (Lavery, 2008). The event, which became known as the Rose Revolution, brought to power the government of Michael Saakashvili. Saakashvili, who served two terms as the President of Georgia, and his team of young politicians launched an impressive program of reforms with the near total backing of the population. These reforms helped radically reduce corruption, streamline the government apparatus and produce sustained economic growth. On the negative side, the government’s weakening of the Parliament and the civil sector, imposition of control on independent television stations and harassment of political opponents and business owners damaged the country’s human rights record. The 2008 war with Russia over disputed territories led to the questioning of government’s leadership and a new burst of activism. In years following the war, political life became extremely polarized (Caucasus Resource and Research Centers, 2012). The opposition parties formed a coalition, initiated by billionaire philanthropist and political newcomer Bidzina Ivanishvili, in April 2012, which defeated President Saakashvili’s National Movement party in the 2012 Parliamentary Elections and the 2013 Presidential Elections.

Georgia’s social movements. In the tense and polarized political environment ahead of the 2012 parliamentary elections, citizens and organizations in Georgia’s civil sector stepped up activism, engaging the public in the discussion of social and political problems. Coalition building became a good strategy to follow. The activists organized around human rights and civil society agenda pushed for greater individual and political rights, the civil sector’s role in public affairs, and institutionalization of liberal, secular

values. Other groups have formed conservative agendas, and introduced hard-core nationalist and chauvinist discourse. Church-based conservative groups follow an agenda premised on strengthening the Georgian Orthodox Church and repealing liberal reforms, such as gay and abortion rights. They have distanced themselves from the mainstream civil society organizations, which they criticize as grant-driven, Western projects.

Georgian media environment. Georgian media outlets reflect the political and social flux in the country. Pending research on Georgia's media system, the country clearly belongs to the type described as "television-centric." The comparative media research (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, Norris, 2002, Shehata & Stromback, 2011) defines media systems by "the relative roles of print and electronic media" (Hallin & Mancini, 2004, p.24). In Georgia, newspaper readership is meager (with leading dailies selling up to 10,000 copies and weeklies no more than 35,000 copies), while TV reaches 95% of the population (Caucasus Resource and Research Centers, 2009, 2012, IREX, 2013). TV-centric systems are more common in "pluralist and polarized" political systems (Norris, 2002, p. 84).

Politically, the news media are one of the most influential institutions in Georgia (Caucasus Resource and Research Centers, 2012). Big TV stations have mass viewership. Print press, with its limited circulation, targets the elites. The media are deeply polarized. In the recent years, they have "essentially split into two opposing camps, leaving little room for neutrality and balance in the news" (IREX, 2009, Introduction section, para. 1).

The Georgian media are assessed as "partially free" (Freedom House, 2013). There is greater independence in the print press than in the TV sector. Most newspapers, magazines and radio stations are free and independent. The Internet is free. Unlike

Western media, in which the nature of ownership (profit-oriented firms, community media, public media) and ideology (conservative, liberal, and centrist) are key influences on news reporting (Scheufele, 1999), the Georgian news coverage is best explained by news organizations' level of dependence or independence from the government or the opposition.

In 2010 through 2012, three TV stations, Rustavi 2, Imedi and Georgian Public Broadcaster, dominated the market, spreading their signal around the country via terrestrial lines. Rustavi 2 and TV Imedi, and, to a lesser extent, the Georgian Public Broadcaster, supported the government. The popularity of these TV stations stemmed from their accessibility around the country at no material or technological cost to viewers. Smaller independent TV stations were either stationed in Tbilisi or in regional centers and were unavailable to large parts of the population. Two Tbilisi-based stations, Kavkasia TV and Maestro, voiced opinions of the opposition. Ahead of the Parliamentary elections 2012, the key opposition figure, billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili, started the 9th Channel on April 30, 2012. Maestro, Kavkasia and 9th Channel distributed their signals via cable and satellite, and reached primarily the population in Tbilisi and other big cities. Private ownership of TV stations has been “non-transparent” (Freedom House, 2012). The ownership of the biggest TV station, Rustavi 2, was not clearly stated, while another big station, TV Imedi, was the object of a legal battle over ownership. The Georgian Public Broadcaster, Georgia's only publicly funded TV station, has been much criticized in the past for having grown “more friendly with the authorities” (Eurasia Partnership Fund, 2012; Freedom House, 2012).

Newspapers enjoy the most freedom in Georgia, apart from Internet-based media. They provide diverse views, but reach a tiny segment of the population. Tbilisi-based dailies *Resonance*, *24 Saati* and *Kviris Palitra*, lead the list of serious print newspapers. They have loyal readership, diverse content and modern management. Other popular newspapers -- *Alia*, *Akhali Taoba*, *Versia* and *Asaval-Dasavali* -- have less stringent professional standards. Tbilisi dailies carry much political content, and engage in ideological posturing. Regional newspapers come out once a week. Precise data on newspaper circulation are not available, but in the regions sales rarely reach 4,000 copies. Local newspapers outside of Tbilisi and Internet-based publications are less politicized than Tbilisi-based dailies (Mikashavidze, 2010).

Economically, the Georgian media face many challenges. The media business is hampered by limited advertising. Newspapers rely on newsstand sales. Most news organizations are poor and cannot invest in development. News journalists, with the exception of few TV personalities, have moderate incomes, are not unionized, and often do not even have labor contracts. Politically, Georgian journalists, as a group, are considered to be powerful and influential. While the public views journalists as mostly biased and manipulated by the government and the opposition (Caucasus Resource and Research Centers, 2012), journalists' self-concepts stress independence, professional esteem and civic responsibility (Mikashavidze, 2009).

Georgian media legislation is liberal and progressive. Article 19 of the Constitution states: "Every individual has the right to freedom of speech, thought, conscience, religion and belief." Article 24 of the Constitution guarantees the freedom of media and information. The Law on Freedom of Speech and Expression, adopted after

the Rose Revolution in 2004, is the key legislation guaranteeing freedom of the press. It has replaced the earlier law on the Press and Other Means of Mass Media, introduced shortly after independence in 1991 (Freedom House, 2005). The 1991 law abolished censorship of the press and introduced some other guarantees for free speech (IREX, 2001). The 2004 law improved the legislative framework by decriminalizing libel, one of the most widely used tools against free press in repressive regimes (Freedom House, 2005). The law on broadcasting, adopted in 2005, established rules for obtaining licenses for air frequencies and the code of conduct for broadcast entities. The Georgian National Communications Commission (GNCC) regulates the broadcast sector and is in charge of implementing the Broadcast Law (IREX, 2005). Provisions that are pertinent to the freedom of press and information are included in other legislation, such as the Election Law, the Administrative Code, and the Criminal Code (Mikashavidze, 2009).

While Georgia has exemplary media laws, governments in the past have done little to ensure they are implemented. Government-controlled courts have rarely ruled in favor of greater media freedoms (IREX, 2005). One of the most controversial cases of selective enforcement of media-related laws happened during the 2012 election campaign, when the police seized, on court orders, 140,000 satellite dishes that had been distributed to viewers by Maestro TV, an opposition-leaning TV station, and Global TV, an opposition-owned programming distribution company. The antennas were needed to transmit the signal of Maestro TV and Channel 9, another opposition-aligned station, to the regional population to break the government's effective stranglehold over nationwide news. Prosecutors claimed that Ivanishvili, the opposition leader, paid for the distribution of the satellite dishes, which the courts ruled amounted to vote buying. The prominent

rights advocacy groups described the move as illegal. The satellite dishes were returned to the television companies immediately after Ivanishvili's Georgian Dream Coalition defeated the ruling party in the October 2012 elections (Freedom House, 2013; IREX, 2013).

Chapter Summary

The Georgian political and media environment is in transition from totalitarianism and authoritarianism to democracy. Before the watershed Parliamentary Elections of 2012, the system was deeply polarized and divided. The chapter has outlined key characteristics of Georgia's political and media systems. Georgia's media system is television-centric and has uneven patterns of freedom, professionalism and independence in the media. The 2012 elections consolidated Georgia's democracy by facilitating the democratic transfer of office through free and fair elections. Georgia's activists moved from spontaneous protests to sustained and coordinated action, built around the agenda of democratic rights and values. The media democratization movement mobilized around 2010, and stepped up activism in 2011 and 2012 -- ahead of the 2012 Parliamentary elections -- to press for greater transparency of media ownership and mandatory distribution of all broadcast stations, including opposition-aligned stations, around the country.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Concept of Framing

Definitions of framing and the framing Process. In exploring the research questions and hypotheses introduced earlier, this study will rely on the framing theory, rooted in the social constructivist perspective. Social constructivism posits that there is no single, “objective” reality, but that there are multiple, socially constructed and perceived realities. These realities are continually created, reproduced and recreated by human beings (Berger & Luckman, 1967; McQuail, 2005). Frames are tools used in constructing and perceiving the reality.

The concept of framing is widely used in the fields of psychology, sociology, political science, linguistics and mass communication. As a downside to its breadth and popularity, the concept of framing lacks theoretical and empirical clarity. The definition provided by Entman (1993) captures the sociological approach to framing. According to Entman, “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p.52). Frames, in his view, are products of framing, and exist in at least four locations: a) communicator, who consciously or unconsciously uses them in its text, b) text, c) receiver and d) culture, which is “a stock of commonly invoked frames”

(p. 53). Entman proposed to treat framing as a paradigmatic approach explaining just how a communicated text exerts its power⁶.

Next, Entman (1993) defines framing effects. In his view, framing effects are salience-based. By highlighting certain aspects and diminishing others, framing makes some aspects more salient, i.e. “more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences,” than others, and increases the probability that a receiver perceives, processes and stores information in memory (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Making the element salient would not necessarily lead to effects. Salience is achieved if frames connect with receivers’ schemata, which may or may not happen. Therefore, the presence of frames in text does not guarantee their influence. When effective, framing “determines whether most people notice and how they understand and remember a problem, as well as how they evaluate and chose to act upon it” (Entman, 1993, p.54).

Framing in mass communication studies. Mass communication studies are primarily interested in framing done by the media. Scheufele (1999) offered the model of media framing process. He divides the process into frame building, frame setting, individual-level framing processes and a feedback loop between individual and media frames. Frame building refers to processes whereby media frames are influenced by

⁶ D’Angelo (2002) argued against a single paradigm of framing. In his view, there existed at least three framing paradigms: a) the cognitive model, in which frames are embodied in the thoughts and words of those affected by a text, b) the constructionist variant, which emphasizes creation of frames as interpretive packages, c) the critical paradigm, which sees frames as the reflection of values of the elites and tools of hegemonic influence.

various influences, such as journalist-centered, organizational routines (Gans, 1979; Schoemaker & Reese, 1996) and external influences. Frame setting is concerned with the transmission of framing effect. The literature is looking into two explanations: that framing transmits salience, making certain frames more accessible for individuals to retrieve from their memory, and that what gets transmitted is frames' importance, resulting in higher perceived importance of frames for an individual. Individual-level effects of framing include media's influence on individual frames, that is, schemata, and the links between individual frames and various behavioral, attitudinal and cognitive variables. Finally, a feedback loop refers to the interaction between individually-held frames and the way individual journalists frame media content.

Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) connected the framing process with three stages in the news process: news production, news consumption, and news effects. The news production stage is described in frame building. Broadly speaking, news production is contingent upon sociological, economic, critical and psychological factors, and so are news frames. Building frames refers to journalists and other elites advancing their "modes of presentations" (p. 12) in an effort to relay information in ways that best fit the audience schema. According to Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007), journalists are not trying to spin or deceive receivers of information. They rely on the use of frames to reduce complexity of information and meet time and space constraints. Unlike an agenda-setting effect, which refers to "whether we think about an issue", framing describes "how we think about an issue" (p.14). Framing effect comes from the description of an issue or a label attached to it. Contrary to Entman's (1993) view, Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) argue framing relies on applicability effect rather than salience effect.

Applicability effect refers to the fit between news frames and concepts attached to an issue in a receiver's own mental schema of the issue.

Sociological perspective on framing. The definitions of framing originating in sociology stress human agency and purpose behind framing, and are primarily interested in framing of contentious issues by social actors, such as social movements, governments, specialists, and media. Media are seen as both producers of frames and sites of framing contests. A framing contest is a contentious process to construct a definition of an issue. Framing is defined as “signifying work or meaning construction” (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614; See also, Gamson et al, 1982; Snow et al, 1986; Snow & Benford, 1988). While frames operate at different levels, sociology is primarily interested in the meso and macro levels of framing. In a seminar study (1989), Gamson and Modigliani explained how issues are framed and how “issues cultures” are created (p. 2). In their view, public discourse produces various frames of an issue, and frames' relative “careers,” i.e. progress relative to each other, determines issue culture. Individuals' interpretation of that issue and any related events depends on their pre-existing knowledge, held in cognitive schemata, which are heavily influenced by issue culture. Frames originate in various discourses, such as media, specialist, challenger (social movements and interest groups), and policy-maker discourses. While media discourse is not the only contributor of frames, it is the only platform for the various discourses to interact and contest for the issue definition. It is also the key link to public opinion, both in terms of its formation and reflection. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) also discuss media framing technique. In their view, media tend to organize information in interpretive packages to give meaning to the reported events. Each interpretive package

contains a frame, or an interpretive angle, a range of positions within that angle, and supportive devices, such as catchphrases, metaphors, causal links and other symbolic and reasoning devices.

Scheufele and Iyengar (2012) have raised concern about the sociological perspective on framing and similar approaches in the mass communication literature. They described the dominant sociological approach as “emphasis framing,” which, in scholars’ views, is different from the original concept of framing in experimental psychology (Kanneman and Twersky, 1977). The original concept, “equivalence framing,” is defined as differential presentation or labeling of identical information. By contrast, “emphasis framing” refers to selective presentation of different content elements. Scheufele and Iyengar (2012) think these two approaches to framing cause confusion and inconsistency in the literature. The scholars themselves adhere to “equivalence framing.”

Psychological perspective on framing. Lakoff clarifies frames are “mental structures that shape the way we see the world” (2004, xv). This definition obviously refers to the cognitive-level frames, which, for clarity’s sake, are termed as “schema” in this study. The definition by Tannen (1993) also refers to the cognitive processes, whereby frames act as structures of expectation. “On the basis of one’s experience of the world in a given culture (or combination of cultures), one organizes knowledge about the world and uses this knowledge to predict interpretations and relationships regarding new information, events, and experiences (Tannen, 1993, p. 16). Tannen (1993) traces the lineage of the term “frame” to Bateson (1972), who used it to describe a meta communicative message about what was going on in a situation, and to Goffman (1974),

who defined frames as “schemata of interpretation,” helping people to “locate, perceive, identify and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences” (p.21).

Political and critical perspectives on framing. Nelson and colleagues (1997) define political framing as "the process by which a source defines the essential problem underlying a particular social or political issue and outlines a set of considerations purportedly relevant to that issue" (p. 222). Because frames create certain definitions of reality and cause audiences to have different reactions, they play a role in how power is exerted. Frames are therefore highly contested in the political discourse (Entman, 1993).

The text, in Entman’s view, is “the imprint of power,” identifying actors and interests that contested for its domination (p. 55). The contestants aim to sponsor the dominant frame, which refers to the meaning most heavily supported by frames in text and congruent with most common audience schemata (Entman, 1993). According to critical perspective scholars, dominant frames reflect the elite views and are used as tools of the hegemonic power (D’Angelo, 2002; Gitlin, 1977; Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

Social Movements

Social movements as forces of change. Social movements are agents of social change and innovation in a society. Historically, social movements have been responsible for the majority of progressive legislative and cultural changes. Goodwin (2013) defined social movements as “conscious, concerted, and sustained efforts by ordinary people to change (or preserve) some aspect of their society by using extra-institutional means” (p. 391). Other definitions (Lofland, 1985; Snow & Benford, 1992) interpret social movements more broadly, as an extra-institutional but also institutional collective action,

underscoring that movements often utilize institutional channels of decision-making and pressure.

Ideas about movements have evolved across time, from earlier theorizing about movements as fearsome deviations from normality, dangerous mobs (LeBon, 1897; Mackey, 1841[1980]) and irrational, contagious behavior (Blumer, 1969; Park, 1924) to understanding the rationality behind their formation and action (Olson, 1966). Current literature on social movements relies primarily on three theoretical perspectives: the social psychological or constructivist perspective, the conflict perspective and the functionalist perspective. The social constructivist approach is focused on meanings and perceptions. The conflict perspective emphasizes destabilizing factors, such as social inequalities and social change (Markovsky, 2011), and is particularly useful in studying the issues of power, domination and social conflict. The functionalist perspective treats social movements as sub-structures of an interconnected system, and focuses on their function, such as social movements' role in the setting of political agendas or in the formation of new political parties. This study draws its ideas from social constructivist and conflict perspectives, as relevant to complex, multilayered interaction between social movements and media.

Social constructivist perspective. The Social constructivist perspective on social movements posits that social movements affect social change by influencing the construction of individual and shared social reality. This approach pays close attention to individual-level, micro processes, meaning-making, beliefs, identity and other cultural orientations. The approach has gained greater currency in the social movement literature as the importance of meanings, symbols and knowledge grew in post-industrial

“knowledge societies.” In this environment, movements attain their goals by asserting and maintaining the control over societies’ symbols and self-understandings (Goodwin, 2013). The adoption of the constructivist approach has also been a reaction to hyper-rationalism of earlier theories, such as the resource mobilization theory, and their neglect of social psychological and ideational factors (Cohen, 1985; Gamson, 1988; Klandermans, 1984).

Benford (1993) argued in favor of the constructivist approach to social movement, stressing the importance of meaning-making associated with interpreting and perceiving grievances, collective identities, structural opportunities and resource availability for action. Movements “frame” and articulate the grievances and ways to attend to them for potential recruits, supporters, by-standers and targets. Framing, which is synonymous with “meaning construction,” is the essential process in social movements’ operations (Gamson, 1982; Snow & Benford, 1992, p.614).

Arguing against cost-benefit calculations as the sole basis for involvement in collective action, as posited in the rational choice and resource mobilization theories, Gamson (1992b) emphasized the importance of collective identity, collective consciousness and solidarity, which helped “to blur the distinction between individual and group interest, undermining the premises on which such utilitarian models operate” (p. 57). He urged to consider cultural and ideational elements in the micro-mobilization and other social movement processes to explain movement dynamics.

Klandermans (1997) further articulated the role of social construction of collective meaning for the transformation of individual and collective discontent into collective action. He introduced the concepts of “consensus mobilization” and “action

mobilization”. The former refers to the generation of ideological or consensus support for a collective action, and “implies a ‘struggle’ for the mind of the people”, while the latter refers to the generation of behavioral support for the collective action, and is “a ‘struggle’ for their resources – their [people’s] money, time, skills” (1997, p. 7). To achieve both types of mobilization, a social movement must tap into the attitudes and ideologies of its target audiences (Klandermans & Tarrow, 1988, p. 10).

Conflict perspective. Championed by Marx, conflict perspective on social movements emphasizes the conflict between social groups. Resource mobilization theory, theories of social revolutions, and breakdown theories of social movements all have roots in conflict perspective (Markovsky, 2011).

Media and Their Framing of Social Movements: Demobilizing Frames

Media as agents of social control. If social movements are forces of social change, the media’s role in a society has long been recognized as a force of social scrutiny and social control (Duster & Manza, 2013, p.455). This understanding dates back to 18th and 19th century ideas about the press as the Fourth Estate of power, exercising oversight over other branches on behalf of the public (McQuail, 2005). This view is still widely held, but is contested. Critical scholars suggest that the mass media today support corporate power, militarism, and the interests of the wealthiest elites (Klinenberg & Wachsmuth, 2013). The essence of right-wing criticism is mass media’s “leftist agenda,” geared towards promulgation of liberal, post-modern values of feminism, environmentalism, global culture, and acceptance of homosexuality and atheism (Klinenberg & Wachsmuth, 2013). What connects these criticisms is the belief that the media do much more than just pass along facts to the public. The key question,

pertinent to this study, is about media's motives and "purposes which underlie the strategies of creating one reality instead of another" (Molotch & Lester, 1974, p.111; Tuchman, 1978).

Media's "watchdog" function. The beliefs about media's watchdog function, the oldest and most widely-held way of thinking about the press (Boyce, 1978; McQuail, 2005), treat the media as an independent, powerful institution, exercising control over branches of power on behalf of the public. The media monitor and scrutinize society, and circulate facts and information for the formulation of public opinion that holds the government accountable and exercises democratic self-rule. This thinking still dominates the public policy and public opinion about the press, justifying many legislative and practical freedoms and privileges available to the press corps.

Organizational and structural perspective – gatekeeper studies. Gatekeeper studies appeared as media scholars started paying attention to internal and external factors influencing news reporting (Gans, 1976; Schoemaker & Reese, 1996). These factors are journalist-centered influences (journalists' ideologies, norms, and values), organizational influences (journalistic routines, ownership patterns) and external pressures (political actors, authorities, interest groups and other elites). The gatekeeper studies emphasize media's role in defining what makes news. In his seminal book, *Deciding What's News*, Gans (1979) applied the concept of perspectives (Mannheim, 1936) to the work of the news media and concluded that journalists and the news media saw "the country from their position in society," that is, their class perspective (p.3). Media's lack of interest in grassroots politics and social movements and hyper-emphasis on the government and politics stemmed from the perspective of journalists and editors,

who typically held educated, white, middle class views (Gans, 2011). The framework of organizational routines and professional standards of journalism shaped how that perspective was expressed in the news. The journalists were also guided by a set of structural preconditions, such as working for profit-making firms and having to capture the interest of large, not very informed and not very interested audiences in a limited amount of time and space. These conditions led journalists to compress and simplify news, emphasize the conflict and drama, and attempt to remain neutral on controversial items. Deficiencies in coverage, such as an excessive attention to government's doings and wrongdoings, stereotypes, atypical happenings and extreme behavior, and the lack of analysis and reflexivity, stemmed from these conditions. The gatekeeper studies are criticized (Gamson, 1991) for treating media as "isolated worlds" and failing to embed them in the broader political and economic context.

Media as "guard dogs" of elites. The influence of structural orientations on media's coverage of social conflicts (Tichenor et al, 1970; Olien et al, 1989, 1994, 1995) is elaborated in the media and social conflict theory and its perspective on the media as "guard dogs." The theory posits that the media protect power structures, acting as sentries for powerful elites. Unlike the media hegemony perspective, "guard dog" perspective puts media outside the power structure, but subservient to this structure. In homogenous and consensual structures, such as small local communities, (Olien et al, 1995) media's alliance with the local elite prevents reporting on social conflict. In more pluralistic structures, such as big cities, the presence of several power groups, each protected by its own "guard dog" media, leads to greater likelihood of social conflict reporting (Olien et al, 1995). Grassroots movements rarely get covered unless their actions threaten those in

power, as the media are focused on the elites. The “guard dog” perspective rejects the belief about media’s watchdog actions on behalf of the larger public, as well as the more submissive role as a “lapdog” of power or media’s membership in the powerful elite (Olien et al, 1994, 1995).

Media propaganda model. Media propaganda model, rooted in the political economy perspective, views media as an integral part of the power elite (Herman & Chomsky, 1988), entrenched in political and economic relations. Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model posits that the role of media is to inform, entertain and ingrain citizens with national values and to suppress dangerous oppositional perspectives. While propaganda is ubiquitous in totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, in developed democracies the propaganda is less manifest but nonetheless pervasive. The concentration of media ownership in the hands of small but powerful elites, media’s excessive reliance on advertising income and on government officials and corporate leaders for information, coupled with the power of governments and corporations to subdue and discipline critical media, all contribute to media’s instrumental participation in the elite rule (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). Media’s opposition to social movements stem from their interest in preserving the existing institutions and social order. The media propaganda model is criticized for overestimating the deterministic role of power in media production, and rejecting the opportunity for social movements to advance their messages through the media (Ryan, 1991).

Media hegemony perspective. Relying on Gramscian ideas of hegemony, the media hegemony perspective views media as part of the hegemonic cultural power. According to Gamson’s (1991, xiii) description of the hegemony, “the dominant culture

works its magic in ways so subtle that the operation of power is thoroughly veiled.”

Gitlin (1977) analyzed media practice in great detail, and the patterns of media’s reporting about social movements, and concluded that the way media shaped and “certified” (p. 797) the reality for social movements left no chance for their success. The media diminished importance of social movements and crippled their development. Gitlin offered a two-part explanation: one deals with journalists’ unspoken “journalistic codes,” rooted, at the level of practitioners, in their assumptions about “objectivity,” “newsworthiness,” “timeliness,” and their “fetishism of facts” (p. 793); the second explanation is structural as the codes journalists use reflect media’s integration with the power elite and their interest in maintaining social stability and the status quo. A typical coverage of a social movement starts with the media raising the awareness of a movement and popularizing it, but the media focus on movement’s style and manner rather than its issues; Next, the media polarize a movement by contrasting it with more moderate groups while also trivializing, stereotyping, and marginalizing it; Finally, when a movement gains the power and its “facts will be speaking very loudly for themselves,” the media “seals off” a movement by censoring most of its news or barring it from airwaves (p. 797). Among demobilizing frames used by the media against movements are overemphasizing movements’ reliance on violence, flashy symbols, imagery, and radical rhetoric, and stressing protesters’ emotional deviance (Gitlin, 1977, 1980). Gitlin concludes that social movements are “caught in a fundamental, an inescapable dilemma:” if they use radical tactics, they are marginalized and trivialized by the media, their issues ‘sealed off’ and the movement obscured. If they adopt moderate tactics, they are assimilated in hegemonic politics, and their effectiveness, their ‘oppositional edge is

blunted' ” (1980, p. 291). Gitlin thinks more moderate movements, which appear to be working within the system, get more favorable coverage but stand a lesser chance to defeat hegemonic powers. While recognizing the role of power in the production of news, media hegemony perspective recognizes active contestation of meaning in the media, thereby allowing greater agency for social movements to counter-hegemonic forces (Ryan, 1991).

Protest paradigm. The protest paradigm is an idea, based on Gitlin’s views (1977, 1980), that the media marginalize movements by relying on generic “reporting paradigms” or frames of coverage, which draw attention away from movements’ core concerns and demobilize their supporters. This formulaic coverage is structurally and ideologically-based. The more structurally and ideologically aligned the media with the ruling class, the stronger their tendency to cover social movements negatively to weaken their challenge.

In their seminal study credited with the emergence of “the protest paradigm,” Chan and Lee (1984) found that journalists covered civil protests through ideological prisms, which informed journalists “where to look (and where not to look)... what to discover,” (p. 189) “what type of cause-effect relationship” to anticipate (p.199), and how to treat protesters. The more ambiguous the conflict and the more radical the protest, the more journalists relied on generic frames of coverage. Chan and Lee (1984) analyzed the coverage of teachers and student protests over the closure of the Golden Jubilee School in Hong Kong, and found that the leftist, centrist, and rightist newspapers covered the protests in radically different ways. The rightist newspapers, supported by neighboring Taiwan, gave the protests sharply critical coverage. They marginalized the protests by

claiming they uprooted social order and traditional morality, politicized them by asserting the protesters were manipulated by external political powers, and supported government's repressive measures. The leftist newspapers, linked to the Chinese authorities, were more supportive of the protests, putting the blame on the government. The centrists, Hong Kong's rising independent, profit-oriented media, were most likely to frame the protests in terms of their substance, focusing on the issue at hand.

Over years, the "protest paradigm" came to denote not just ideologically-based coverage, but negative, marginalizing coverage of social movements. This interpretation of Chan and Lee's (1984) original idea developed in the political and media environment of the 20th century United States, in which the media were ideologically and structurally homogeneous and closely aligned with the ruling elites, while social movements were perceived as the leftist threat to the status quo. The emergence of right-wing, conservative movements, and greater structural and ideological pluralism in the media (Weaver & Scacco, 2012) prompted 21st century scholars to re-visit and re-interpret the protest paradigm.

Of special interest to the proposed study is the scholarship on factors that trigger or mitigate media's negative coverage of movements. The literature describes a range of factors, from the level of deviance of a protest to its size, location, tactics and strategies. In Western contexts, protests against the status quo get negative, demobilizing coverage more often than the protests that support the status quo.

The level of deviance best predicted the activation of demobilizing framing in the study of U.S. -based protests by Boyle and colleagues (2009). More radical protests were more likely to be framed episodically and less likely to feature protesters as sources. In a

comparative study of domestic and international protests, Boyle and colleagues (2012) supported the earlier finding that protest tactics influenced the coverage. More radical tactics were covered more negatively. Among other findings, political protests were treated more critically than protests over social issue.

Entman and Rojecki (1993) found the media used eight “framing judgments” in their coverage of the American nuclear freeze movement. The media produced mostly negative coverage, describing the protesters as emotionally charged, diffuse, nonpolitical, and marginal groups, which lacked expertise, public support, and partisan and strategic thinking, as well as any leverage over the power in Washington. Characteristically, the negative coverage intensified as soon as the movement gained strength, triggering its downfall. Entman and Rojecki (1993) linked the activation of the marginalizing coverage to certain stages in movement’s diffusion, echoing Gitlin’s (1977) observation that the media are more favorable towards movements in their early diffusion stage and become negative as movements gain strength.

Movements’ strategic decisions have a major bearing on their coverage in the media. Noakes and Witkings (2002) tested both the strong hegemony model, suggesting that the injustice claims advanced by challenging groups are systematically prevented from gaining media access and reported within the negative, protest paradigm, and the indeterminacy model, which posits that social movements are in greater control of their own media access and coverage. The framing study of the Palestinian liberation movement in the *New York Times* and the Associated Press found that none of the models held a superior explanatory power, and that the two models appeared to have worked together. Overall, the coverage was negative, as predicted by the hegemony model.

However, some of the strategies and tactics, such as grassroots uprising Intifada, and entering into negotiations with Israel, generated wider and more positive coverage, as predicted by the indeterminacy model.

Demobilizing frames. Western scholarship has accumulated rich descriptions of various marginalizing techniques used by the media to denigrate social movements. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) found politicizing protest was one of the ways to marginalize a movement and reduce its protest to a “dyadic conflict” with a government (p. 17). TV imagery of protesters as deviant individuals wearing bandanas and playing Frisbee and guitar was another technique of marginalization. McLeod and Hertog (1992, 1999) developed a typology of marginalization techniques. The most frequently used techniques were emphasizing protesters’ deviant behavior and appearances, violence at protest events, disapproval of protests by the public and the official version of events. Protesters were rarely featured in this type of coverage. Dardis (2006) improved the typology, and tested a hypothesis that marginalization devices were used in both negative and positive contexts for social movements. Rejecting media’s pre-determination to cover protests negatively, the scholar nonetheless found that demobilizing frames were predominantly linked to the negativism towards the protest. Dardis concluded his findings did not suggest the media tended to treat protests “unfairly in general,” but media’s use of certain reporting devices in the negative context led to “perceived negative coverage” (p. 130). In the author’s view, this type of coverage led to potentially negative consequences for social movements, such as public’s perception of protests as violent and “treasonous gathering of idiots” (Dardis, 2006, p. 131).

In the realm of electoral politics, Lupien (2013) described the marginalization of supporters of presidents Hugo Chavez of Venezuela and Evo Morales of Bolivia in the qualitative analysis of Bolivian and Venezuelan newspapers. Unable to contest public support for these leftist governments, rich media owners used marginalizing frames against their supporters to discredit the governments “from below.” These supporters, who were predominantly working class poor, were described as “lumpen,” “unreasonable,” “uneducated,” “emotionally bound to leaders” (pp. 230-231) and generally incapable of making good and rationale choices for their countries. The author theorized that the high concentration of ownership in the South American media and entrenched elite interests were the factors behind the negative coverage, lending support to the hegemony model.

Di Cicco (2010) introduced a concept of “public nuisance paradigm” (p. 135) to describe a qualitatively new type of protest coverage, stressing bothersome, impotent and unpatriotic nature of protests as a form of political participation. The coverage emphasizes traffic jams, upset commerce, and various other costs to non-participating publics. This type of demobilizing framing stresses ineffectiveness of collective action and indifference to protests among the governments and publics. Protests are also framed as “unpatriotic” and potentially harmful for the country.

Most studies stress the consequences of marginalizing coverage of social movements for the public sphere and for grassroots’ participation in politics. By analyzing the confrontation between pro-life and pro-choice movements, Husting (1999) demonstrated that the media radicalized and polarized both movements, used war rhetoric, and placed both groups outside the realm of normality. The protesters were cast

as different from “viewers like us” (p. 159) and “normal Americans” (p. 171). On the issue of abortion rights, the media spoke from a nonexistent centrist position, which opposed both stands and the protest in general. Mindful of media’s role in shaping the shared sense of reality among the public, the author expressed his concern that demobilizing framing placed dissent outside normal American political expression and the public sphere.

Recent scholarship on media’s coverage of social movements. The proliferation of the Internet and other major changes in the 21st century prompted scholars to revisit framing theories of media and social movements. Weaver and Scacco (2013) analyzed the framing of the Tea Party in popular evening programs on CNN, Fox, and MSNBC, and on the AP newswire. Based on Chan and Lee’s (1984) original idea about ideological influences on protest coverage, Weaver and Scacco hypothesized that the Tea Party’s coverage would vary across ideological lines. Indeed, the coverage of the Tea Party depended on the ideological hues of the channel. MSNBC, a channel ideologically least aligned with the Tea Party movement, used delegitimizing frames significantly more often than others, while Fox, as ideologically most aligned with Tea Party movement, and was least likely to marginalize the movement. MSNBC’s selection of marginalizing frames was consistent with the protest paradigm, and involved de-emphasizing the movement’s causes and issues, ridiculing its members, and asserting the Tea Party movement was at odds with the public and was controlled by the political elites. While CNN also used delegitimizing frames, it was the most neutral of the three cable channels in the study. The authors proposed to re-visit the claim (Gitlin, 1980) that conservative movements, supporting the status quo, would be covered positively. The

authors call for the update of the protest paradigm to apply in a new, politically polarized, ideologically-colored, fractured media environment.

Edgerly and colleagues (2011) described ideologically-based coverage of the major protest demonstrations over immigration rights. The discourse analysis of newspapers and niche TV stations found demobilizing frames dominated the coverage. While the protesters, mindful of the “protest paradigm,” managed to mitigate some of the marginalizing techniques -- the protests were not ignored but widely covered, and described as peaceful — they failed to advance their messages along the two chosen themes, economy and legislative rights. Newspapers, which reduced the event to episodic and tactical coverage, provided so-called “negotiated reading” (p.12) of the protest such that the reporting at times complied and at other times diverged from protesters’ intended meanings. Critical TV pundits gave protesters’ messages a “resistive reading” (p. 19), altering intended meanings of protesters. Friendly pundits gave protesters’ messages an “aligned reading” (p.19). They offered the context, explained the movement’s goals and issues, and generally focused on the intended meanings of the movement. The study supports the earlier claim that ideologically-aligned cable TV channels in the U.S. vary in their coverage of social movements.

Outside Western contexts, Yuan (2012) applied qualitative framing and discourse analysis to the coverage of a major Shanghai fire in a Chinese party newspaper and in three privately-owned Chinese metro dailies. The scholar found that the party organ and independent dailies used different frames of the event. The dominant frame in the party organ emphasized government’s rescue effort and support drawn to the victims, downplaying the failure of the quality assurance systems and possible system-level

corruption leading to the accident. The dailies, by contrast, drew a picture of human suffering and criticized the system. On the rationale that media's selection of frames is contextualized and determined by the structural characteristics of their respective audiences, the author linked the divergent frames to the structural characteristics of newspapers' divergent online communities: the officialdom and the older generation raised in communist ideals as readers of the party organ, and liberal, white collar, young urban professionals as readers of the dailies.

McCarthy and colleagues (2008) analyzed the likelihood of covering protests in the first years of Belarus' post-Soviet independence. Four ideologically diverse newspapers, formerly partisan *Soviet Belarus*, elective organ's *the People's Daily*, formerly Komsomol⁷-owned *the Banner of Youth*, and Soviet intellectuals' favorite *the Star*, differed in the likelihood of covering protests. Other factors influencing newspapers' coverage of protests were the size of the protest and the political standing of protest sponsors.

Framing by Social Movements: Mobilizing Frames

Social movements' interaction with media. Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993) spell out organizing principles of social movements' interaction with the news media and the outcomes for both parties. Structurally, the relations between social movements and the media are asymmetrical, and follow power-dependence pattern. Culturally, the parties are more equal in the contest for meanings. Social movements' dependence on the news media stem from their need for media to mobilize supporters, validate a protest, and expand the conflict in which they are contextualized. On the flip side of the relationship,

⁷ Komsomol was the youth wing of the Communist party in the Soviet Union.

news media need social movements for stories, but the need is not very high. Social movements are rarely treated as a beat, and have to compete hard with stories originating in the government and other institutions.

According to Lipsky (1968), movements maximize their exposure through communications media, which filter information that is available to followers, targets of protest, and reference groups of protest targets. When media coverage is extensive, reference groups' perception of the protest is positively influenced, and the targets of protest are more likely to dispense rewards, symbolic or material. Social movements are typically interacting with four constituencies: followers, the media, third parties, and targets of protest. Those movements that represent powerless classes and lack bargaining power try to use protest as a tool to strengthen their bargaining positions. They typically try to activate third parties. Their protest often is aimed at eliciting sympathy and support among the groups that are referent groups of targets of protest. This is one of the few ways in which the powerless groups can create bargaining resources to bargain with their targets. Movements also woo interest groups. These groups, by virtue of their being part of the political process, possess sufficient bargaining power and influence and can greatly help powerless groups. In general, the protest is highly indirect process in which communications media play critical roles (Lipsky, 1968).

Social movements and news media, along with other actors, are involved in negotiations over frames and meaning. These framing contests offer greater opportunities to movements. One of the success strategies is moving issues from the uncontested realm of factual coverage, which journalists considered objective and fully devoid of frames, to the contested realm of opinion and interpretative content (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993).

To win the contest for dominant cultural meanings, social movements engage in framing. Benford and Snow (2000) define framing by social movements as meaning construction through contentious process, involving human agency and purpose. The product of social movement's framing are collective action frames, which simplify and condense "the aspects of 'the world out there'" (p. 614) in such a way as to recruit and mobilize supporters and demobilize opponents. Framing, then, is an enabling instrument, used by social movements for mobilization and other goals (Snow et al, 1986).

Mobilizing frames. Social movements design and promote mobilizing frames, such as collective action frames and master frames. According to Benford and Snow (2000), collective action frames are movement-specific frames, and are shaped according to the tasks they serve. There are three types of tasks: a diagnostic task refers to identifying and articulating the responsibility for a social problem; a prognostic task is the articulation of a solution or a plan to deal with a problem; a motivational task stresses problem's severity, urgency, and infuses efficacy and sense of duty among supporters and potential recruits. Framing is associated with three types of processes: discursive processes articulate and amplify frames; strategic processes help align frames with the audiences and the political and cultural context; and contested processes are framing contests between mobilization and demobilization frames and internal social movement disputes over frames.

There are several variable features to collective action frames. The frames vary in terms of their attribution of blame or causality; the emphasis on internal or external causes of problems; rigidity versus flexibility, that is, whether they articulate a problem more narrowly or in a more elaborated way; and mobilizing potential. While elaborated

frames possess greater mobilizing power, so do frames that have resonance, that is, a power to strike a responsive chord with people (Snow & Benford, 1992). Resonance depends on empirical credibility and experiential commensurability, that is, frames' believability and relevance from the vantage point of individual experience, and narrative fidelity, also called cultural resonance, that is, centrality of frames' ideas and meanings to the belief systems of audiences, and their fit with cultural narratives and myths. The greater a frame's flexibility, inclusivity, scope and resonance, the greater is its influence and mobilizing potential.

Master frames. More inclusive and flexible frames, which also possess greater interpretive scope, resonance and power, evolve into master frames (Benford & Snow, 2000). Master frames are generic frames, which serve a purpose of punctuating, attributing and articulating social problems, but they do so at a higher level than movement-specific, collective action frames. Punctuating involves identifying and highlighting problems and injustices; attributing involves identifying sources of a problem and assigning responsibility for future action towards ameliorating the problem; articulating involves pulling together events and experiences in a meaningful thread such that "what was previously inconceivable, or at least not clearly articulated, is now meaningfully interconnected" (Snow and Benford, 1992, p. 138). Master frames, when effectively coordinated with movement-specific frames, strengthen a momentum for mobilization (Johnston, 1991; Noonan, 1995; Snow, 2004). Snow and Benford (1992) argue that master frames, as "ideational webs" (p. 142), can support the emergence and course of a movement and of the larger cycle of protest (Tarrow, 1983). An innovative master frame can provide a good reason for collective action and spur tactical

innovations. Sometimes, movements become progenitors of master frames for later movements, providing ideational anchoring. Master frames advanced by the American civil rights movement have inspired and served movements in later years (Snow & Benford, 1992).

Sociopolitical and cultural influences on social movement framing. Benford and Snow (2000) stress the influence of contextual factors on social movement framing. Among factors that amplify or constrain mobilizing frames are political and cultural opportunities and the audiences of social movements. Political shifts, such as conflicts in the elites or lessening of repressions, strongly influence social movement framing (McAdam et al, 1996), affecting the meaning and relevance of frames. These influences are mutual, with frames shaping how individuals perceive political events and opportunities, identity, injustices and needs in the society. Shifts in cultural “stock of meanings, beliefs, ideologies, practices, values, myths, narratives and the like” (Benford & Snow 2000, p. 629) also affect social movement frames and their resonance. Again, the influences are mutual, with the cultural stock replenished and altered by social movement frames.

Mobilizing frames are strongly influenced by target audiences of social movements. There is a consensus in much of the communication literature that the targets affect the form and content of a message. Since social movements have multiple targets, such as the government, potential supporters, media, or other movements, they attempt to craft frames that are meaningful to them and are influenced by these multiple targets. The audiences influence how movements devise and, from time to time, modify their mobilizing frames (Benford & Snow, 2000).

Zuo and Benford's (1995) study of the Chinese democracy movement illustrates how social movements design mobilizing frames to respond to political and socio-cultural context and the needs and actions of the audiences. By analyzing frames that accompanied the emergence and growth of the 1989 Chinese democracy movement, the first major independent political movement in the People's Republic of China, the scholars concluded that the movement profited from successfully shaped and aligned frames. These frames resonated with the millions of bystanders and turned them into active protesters. The movement's framing stressed culturally salient values among Chinese citizens and their everyday experiences, while also targeting the state by stressing the protest was patriotic, nonviolent and Confucian in spirit. The protesting students, whose initial demands were for more democracy and freedom of expression, re-aligned their frames to denounce corruption and state profiteering to enhance the scope of protest and draw in the general population. After the state deployed counter-frames of "turmoil," "plotted conspiracy," and "violations of the constitution" (p. 143), the students re-aligned their frames again to neutralize the state. The new frames alluded to three major cultural value sources: service to society in the Confucian tradition, communism and national patriotism. The authors concluded that in repressive, totalitarian regimes, effective framing is more important and influential than in other contexts. Once successfully connected with belief and knowledge systems of the target population, frames trigger mobilization, which occurs at a faster pace due to similarity and typicality of grievances among millions of repressed individuals.

Noonan (1995) provided insightful analysis of the master frames used by the Chilean women's movement to fight for their rights and for the return to democracy

during Augusto Pinochet's authoritarian regime. This historical study provides empirical support of the importance of well-chosen, resonant frames, modified to respond to shifts in the environment. While the feminism frame served Chilean women well in the beginning of the 20th century, it lost its cultural resonance after the leftists came to power and advanced a more general "class oppression" frame. In response to the void, women developed the "maternal" master frame, which emphasized the importance of women as mothers in their families and in the larger family - the nation. With the arrival of Pinochet's repressions and "disappearances" of tens of thousands of Chileans, the maternal frame opened up new opportunities for protest. In fact, it was the only possible framing strategy in this authoritarian context. Women framed their activism and opposition to the government as maternal search for "disappeared" sons, husbands and loved ones, and as a traditional, maternal duty to care for a family. The "maternal" frame resonated with Pinochet's own conservative values and the emphasis on traditional feminine roles. Thus, women used the "maternal" frame to successfully subvert the regime. When the struggle reached a high point, several oppositional movements, including women's groups, came together under a new "return to democracy" master frame. This new master frame was elaborate and flexible to incorporate many different movements, including the groups that were not rights-oriented (the urban poor) but started including human rights in the broader definition of life necessities.

Fuchs (2013) studied the women's movement in Poland and its effective use of the "law" master frame. The law and rights discourses have been used by the political opposition in the Eastern Europe since the 1970s, and were highly resonant among the Polish public. The women's movement has successfully deployed the "law" master frame

to advance its abortion rights agenda. A media discourse over the reforms proposed by the movement was broad and predominantly supportive.

Markowitz (2009) described a case in which social movements' mobilizing frames failed to fit the socio-cultural context. In the late 1980s, Tajik and Uzbek national liberation movements, called Popular Fronts, adopted the imported master frame of "secessionist nationalism", successfully deployed by the Baltic and Georgian liberation movements. However, the frame failed to serve the goals of these movements because ethnic, regional disputes and violence in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan made the idea of nationalist unity irrelevant and marginal. Both movements failed to see the changes in the political context and adapt their mobilizing frames. As a result, the Uzbek and Tajik governments charged the movements with instigating ethnic violence and marginalized and repressed them with tacit support from the public.

Mauersberger (2012) analyzed the adoption of a new and progressive media legislation in Argentina, advocated by the Coalition for Democratic Broadcasting. The new law on audiovisual broadcasting, adopted in October, 2009, tightened media cross-ownership limits, diversified regulatory structure and guaranteed equal access to airwaves for public, private and private non-profit media. In the scholar's view, the movement's success in promoting the law was due to an unusually broad participatory process, which included coalition building with the members of media, "potent framing of media regulation as a matter of democracy and the changing media-state dynamics that disrupted the long-standing mutually supporting ties between the dominant media group and the government" (p.222).

The problem the movement set out to address was the high concentration of media ownership, which prevented access to diverse sources of information, a prerequisite for meaningful deliberative processes (Dahlgren, 1995). In August 2004, the Argentinean Forum of Community Radios organized the Coalition of Democratic Broadcasting, bringing together more than 300 national and international social actors, movements, unions, academics, and activists. The coalition framed its agenda, called “21 basic points for the right to communicate,” under “discursive umbrella” of democracy and human rights (p. 593). These points defined communication as a right and an essential service for the social, cultural, and education development of the Argentine people. The coalition dismissed the view that broadcasting was merely a commercial business, and stressed that the plurality and diversity of ownership was vital to democracy. The frames of human rights and democratization proved to be highly resonant among the audiences, and more capable than, for instance, socio-economic frames, of uniting diverse groups around a common media and communications agenda. A high profile of human rights organizations in Argentina amplified the frames and made it easier for the coalition to communicate its claims to the government. Borrowing the discourse of the coalition, President Fernández said the proposed law was “an old debt of democracy” and called on the government to endorse it.

The coalition successfully dealt with the challenge emanating from the powerful Argentine media organizations. The Argentine media have been known to have a “strong tendency ... to be controlled by private interests with political alliances and ambitions, which seek to use their media properties for political ends” (p. 177). By presenting media monopolies as a danger to democracy, the movement sought to neutralize its biggest

opponent, the powerful Clarín media group. The Clarin group was capable of blocking and marginalizing the coalition efforts. The coalition emphasized that the broadcasting spectrum was a public resource, and that market mechanisms and interests of big businesses had to be pushed back. The coalition managed to successfully exploit the disruption of “long-standing cooperative relationship” and “logic of understanding between government and dominant media” (Becera & Mastrini, 2010, p. 625) during President Fernández’ term in the office.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature on framing theory as the proposed theoretical framework for the study and outlined major theories of social movements and media. I have also summarized the current thinking on media’s framing of social movements and social movements’ use of media for mobilizing.

The section on framing theory provides several conflicting definitions of the concepts “frame” and “framing.” This study relies on Entman’s definition of framing as an act of selecting and highlighting the aspects of a perceived reality. This definition is consistent with the sociological stream of the framing literature (Benford & Snow, 2000; Gamson, 1982, 1989; Snow et al, 1986), and its reliance on “emphasis framing.” The emphasis framing refers to the selection and presentation of different elements of information rather than the presentation of the identical information under different labels, as in “equivalence framing” (Scheufele & Iyengar, 2012). It is this author’s view that equivalence framing, as a method, is more appropriate in experimental studies.

Drawing on emphasis framing, the study will attempt to clarify how the Georgian media

selected and highlighted certain aspects of the news related to the media democratization movement in order to produce mobilizing or demobilizing effects on the audiences.

The proposed study is interested in the framing that occurs at the issue level (Johnston et al, 2996), and, primarily, in frames that exist with a communicator and in a communicated text (Entmnan, 1993). The issue at hand is media democratization in Georgia. Based on the insights reviewed in this chapter, different media organizations are expected to frame in different ways. Some media, hypothetically, will present the proposed reforms as serving the people's right to know, while others may describe them as an interference with the free market or as a pointless protest by marginal groups.

The study will analyze the media democratization movement's framing decisions, that is, frames that exist with a communicator (Entman, 1993), and media's framing of the movement, found in a communicated text. The text is Georgian newspaper and TV stories.

The section on social movements outlined the key perspectives in the sociological and political communication literature on social movements. The study will rely on social constructivist and conflict approaches. The social constructivist idea that meanings and reality are socially constructed helps explain how framing shaped the reality around the media democratization movement in Georgia. The outcome of this effort is understood and hypothesized as a success of media activists in constructing the issue of media reforms as a necessary step towards greater, rights-based democracy. The second approach that informed the proposed study emphasizes social conflict. This perspective, reviewed in the section on social movements, and media propaganda, media hegemony and "guard dog" media theories (Gitlin, 1980; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Olien et al,

1995), reviewed in the section on media, are all rooted in conflict. The section on media's coverage of social movements is organized around the idea that "journalists do not simply report on news, they actually help create and change it", thereby setting the context for making events in the world intelligible (Schudson, 2003, p.11). Media's social function is to scrutinize and control. But is the media acting on behalf of the public or on behalf of elite, powerful groups? The studies in the gatekeeper tradition stress journalists' role in producing news, and note the influence of organizational values and routines, while "guard dog media," media propaganda and media hegemony models emphasize structural and ideological influences and the issues of power. This section provides an overview of these views as necessary to understand media's framing of social movements. The conflict perspective helps conceptualize the deployment of mobilizing and demobilizing frames in the coverage of the media democratization movement as the reflection of a conflict between divergent interests in the issue. Reforms to democratize media had powerful opponents in Georgia, such as the government and government-aligned broadcast media. The movement had supporters, such as the political opposition and opposition-sponsored media, geared towards political change. Hypothetically, the independent media, held in disadvantageous position by the government and therefore interested in greater fairness in the media sector, were also aligned with the media democratization movement. The study anticipates that the conflict played out in the media, resulting in different frames of the media democratization movement in different news organizations. The conflict is expected to have also influenced the media democratization movement's framing decisions.

The author takes a close look at the dominant view in the literature that the media tend to demobilize movements by de-emphasizing their causes and marginalizing their supporters. The literature explains this tendency with media's alliances with the elites against challengers, such as social movements, and journalists' reliance on certain narrative structures, emphasizing drama and conflict. However, the literature also seems to suggest that the media that are ideologically aligned with social movements tend to cover them with greater fairness and substance. Acknowledging the influence of power on the media, and journalists' tendency to rely on formulaic reporting and demobilizing framing of social movements, this study rejects the deterministic role of power in media's coverage of social movements. The study anticipates fair and substantive coverage of the media democratization movement in the media outside government-controlled segment. Following Ryan (1991), the author theorizes that active contestation of meaning in pluralistic and partially pluralistic political and media environments allow social movements some opportunity to attain fair coverage.

The section on mobilizing framing by social movements discusses framing strategies, which help secure media interest, subvert opponents, and mobilize supporters. The section focuses on the elaboration and diffusion of mobilizing movement-specific and generic master frames. The importance of framing for social movements' goals is stressed. The social movement framing studies reviewed in this section demonstrate the importance of effective, culturally-aligned master frames, and the need to adapt and align frames with the context (Markowitz, 2009; Noonan, 1995; Zuo & Benford, 1995). Based on these findings, the study theorizes that the Georgian media democratization movement' frames were intended to resonate with culturally powerful themes of free

speech and democracy. The movement frames were hypothetically resonant with multiple audiences, including members of the media, to whom free expression and transparency were deeply-held professional values.

Chapter 3

Method

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Qualitative analysis of movement statements and in-depth interviews. The first part of the study qualitatively analyzed materials produced by the Georgian media democratization movement to identify mobilizing and demobilizing frames. These materials were movement statements, produced between April, 2011 and October, 2012 (see Appendix C for the list of statements). The study also conducted in-depth interviews with the activists of the media democratization movement, most of whom were the members of the Coalition for Media Advocacy (SMO), to clarify the rationale behind the framing decisions. Activist journalists⁸ participating in the Coalition for Media Advocacy were asked about their understanding of the movement frames, and the movement's coverage in the media. A thematic analysis was used to identify common themes in interview responses. The study posed the following research questions:

RQ1: What mobilizing frames were advanced by the movement?

RQ2: What were the goals of the media democratization movement?

⁸ The term “activist journalist” refers to professional journalists, who joined the media democratization movement, and is different from “news producers” and “news reporters,” the terms reserved for professionals not engaged with the movement.

RQ3: What was the rationale behind framing choices?

RQ4: What were the experiences of activist journalists and news journalists while covering the movement?

Quantitative Media Content Analysis. The study theoretically argued that political factors, such as news organizations' ties with the government and the opposition (or lack thereof) would influence their application of mobilizing and demobilizing frames in the coverage of MDM. Pro-opposition media would be interested in change and willing to cover social movements positively. Pro-government media would be interested in the maintenance of status quo and either ignore or negatively cover social movements. The study posed a research question if the independent media, if and when they experienced government pressures and unfair competition from government-controlled media, would also be sympathetic towards the challengers of the system, such as social movements, and cover them positively.

Based on these theoretical conjunctions, this study hypothesized that:

H1: Pro-government media are more likely to use a negative tone (H1a), demobilizing frames (H1b), not use movement-advanced frames (H1c) and use government officials as sources (H1d) in the coverage of the media democratization movement. These media will cover the movement less frequently (H1e), more briefly (H1f), less prominently in terms of assigned page space or airtime (H1g) than pro-opposition media.

H2: Pro-opposition media are more likely to use a positive tone (H2a), mobilizing frames (H2b), activists as sources (H2d), in the coverage of the media democratization movement. These media will cover the movement in greater length (H2f), and more

prominently in terms of assigned page space or segment of airtime (H2g) than pro-government media.

The study posed the following research question:

RQ5: How do independent newspapers cover media democratization movement in terms of the tone (RQ5a), demobilizing versus mobilizing frames (RQ5b), using movement-advanced frames (RQ5c), sources (RQ5d), frequency (RQ5e), length (RQ5f) and prominence of page space and airtime assigned to the coverage (RQ5g)?

Methodology

To analyze the nature of media coverage of the media democratization movement, the study a) carried out the qualitative content analysis of mobilizing statements produced by the media democratization movement; b) conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with activists and activist journalists about their understanding of the goal, framing decisions and media coverage, and with news producers and reporters about their understanding of the movement and their experiences on the beat; c) conducted quantitative content analysis of news media framing of the media democratization movement.

Qualitative analysis of mobilizing and activist interviews

Analysis of movement statements. The study qualitatively analyzed statements produced by the Coalition for Media Advocacy, SMO⁹ of the media democratization movement. The purpose of this analysis was to identify mobilizing frames used by the movement, and assess their effectiveness in terms of their replication in the media coverage. The materials were all statements by the Coalition for Media Advocacy made

⁹ Social movement organization is abbreviated as SMO throughout the text.

from April 13, 2011 (the day of launch of the Coalition) to October 1, 2012 (Election Day 2012), and carried by www.media.ge, an industry publication, in full. The study analyzed 17 statements. The statements were downloaded from the website, www.media.ge.

The coding proceeded as follows: a coding frame was developed to comprise several mobilizing master frames described in the social movement literature, heeding on de Vreese's (2012) advice to use frames described in the literature in the interests of building generalizable knowledge. In the pilot phase (Schreier, 2012), part of the material was coded to test the coding frame. The text that did not correspond to any of the frames was coded as "other," and re-coded to identify other frames described in the literature or any new frames. The coding frame was then revised before the coding proceeded. The coding produced a list of frames used by the Georgian democratization movement in its statements (see Appendix D). QD Miner, a qualitative analysis software package, was used in the analysis.

In-depth interviews. The study conducted 17 in-depth, semi-structured qualitative interviews with coalition activists, including activist journalists, about their understanding of the goals of the media democratization movement (RQ2), its framing strategies (RQ3), and activist journalists' coverage of the movement (RQ4). The purpose of this exercise was to understand the rationale behind the framing decisions, perceived goals of the movement, and personal meanings attached to the media democratization movement and activism in general. The study also interviewed five producers and reporters in news organizations sampled for the content analysis of the Georgian media's coverage of MDM about their views about MDM and the activism, in general, and their experiences on the beat (RQ4).

Personal interviews were conducted in Tbilisi, Georgia, by an interviewer hired and trained by the study. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed thematically. The thematic analysis involved reducing data by assigning codes to paragraphs and grouping thematically related sections together to arrive at common themes. This process is described in Schierer (2012) as “reductive coding.” Filing data under various thematic codes is also described in Weiss (1994), and labeled as “local integration.” The analysis produced a rich description of activists’ meanings and interpretations. Further in the process of analysis, the researcher grouped themes into sections on the basis of mini explanatory theories -- the process labeled a “vertical integration” (Weiss, 1994). These mini-theories were derived based on logical theorizing and supported by evidence in interviews. Next, the material was categorized into bigger sections, based on mini-theories, supporting evidence and any dissenting evidence that was found in the interviews.

Quantitative content analysis of news media content. The study used quantitative content analysis as the method to look into the coverage of social movements in the content of news media.

Media Democratization Movement. The study operationalized the coverage of media democratization movement as the coverage of the Coalition for Media Advocacy (SMO), the It Concerns You (the movement’s campaign), the “must carry” regulation to ensure unlimited distribution of TV broadcasts by cable operators and the regulation to disclose media ownership structure and financial data (movement’s key proposals), and a special case upheld by the movement to lift the government’s ban on the distribution of

TV Maestro's antennas ahead of the Parliamentary Elections 2012. The coverage of these organizations, actions and issues was treated as a proxy of movement's coverage.

Selection of media organizations. The study analyzed the content of three newspapers, daily *24 Hours*, daily *Resonansi* and daily *Alia*, and their weekend editions, *Weekend*, *Mteli Kvira* and *Kronika*, respectively. These newspapers have had varying degrees of financial and ideological independence from the government or the opposition: *24 Hours* has received public funds for the publication of government decrees and other public information, and perceived to editorially support the government (TI-Georgia, 2011). *24 Saati* has publicly denounced the allegation of its links with the government (Tsiklauri, 2011, December 16). *Alia* has been radically critical of Saakashvili's government, and was less critical of the opposition during the Elections 2012 (Caucasus Resource and Research Centers, 2012). The Georgian Public Broadcaster and other government-controlled national television stations have accused *Alia* of accepting funds from the opposition -- the allegations *Alia* had vehemently denied (Tsiklauri, 2012, October 1). Newspaper *Resonansi* held a middle ground: it has been vocal about government's transgressions without leaning heavily towards the opposition. The study categorized these newspapers as pro-government (*24 Saati*), pro-opposition (*Alia*) and independent (*Resonansi*)¹⁰.

¹⁰ This categorization is based on newspapers' and TV stations' perceived editorial bias, documented by industry watchdogs (Freedom House, 2009-11) and on the monitoring of these newspapers' coverage of the 2012 elections (www.mediamonitoring.ge). None of

Alia appears on weekdays other than Monday, with weekly *Kviris Kronika* distributed on Mondays. *Alia* has 16 pages, and *Kronika* 40 pages (www.alia.ge). The circulation of newspapers was 10,300 issue for each newspaper (www.alia.ge). The two newspapers produced 258 issues per year. *Resonansi* prints five days a week, Tuesdays through Saturdays, with weekly edition *Mteli Kvira* published on Mondays (www.resonansdaily.ge), to the total of 310 issues per year (Matsne.ge). The circulation of newspapers was 6,000 copies each. *24 Saati* prints five days a week, with weekly edition *Weekend* published on Fridays and no print on Sundays. *24 Saati* and *Weekend* produce 310 issues per year (www.matsne.ge).

The study also analyzed TV coverage of the media democratization movement in three TV stations, pro-government Rustavi 2, pro-opposition 9th Channel, and independent Kavkasia. The ownership in Rustavi 2 has always been in the hands of government-linked businesses. The current general director of the company is the former minister of education. At different times, business partners of former ministers of defense and economy were at the helm of the company. The 9th Channel was launched in April 2012 by the key opposition figure, billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili, and closed shortly after the elections. TV Kavkasia was included in the sample as an independent TV station.

The content of these news sources was downloaded from the Terramedia database. The institutional search engine of the database was searched for all materials under “the Coalition for Media Advocacy,” “It Concerns You,” “media,” “television,”

the newspapers or TV stations have explicitly endorsed either the government or the opposition in the 2012 campaign or at any other times.

“radio” and “press” to identify news stories in the broad area of media issues. (A more precise keyword search would leave some materials unaccounted due to the limitations of Terramedia’s search engine.) The study identified these preliminary populations: 312 stories in daily *24 Saati* and weekly *Weekend*; 300 stories in daily *Alia* and weekly *Kviris Kronika*; 410 in daily *Resonansi* and weekly *Mteli Kvira*; 543 stories in Rustavi 2 (pulled from news program “Courier” at 08:00, 09:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 14:00, 15:00, 16:00, 17:00, 18:00, 20:00, 21:00, Business Courier at 13:00, and weekly Courier P.S.); 2031 stories in 9th Channel (news program “News” at 08.00, 09;00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 14:00, 15:00, 17:00, 18:00, 19:00, 20:00, 21:00); and 558 stories in Kavkasia TV (news program “Today” at 17:00, 19:99 and 20:30). Next, the study searched these preliminary populations by more focused keywords “Maestro TV,” “antenna ban,” “media ownership,” “ownership transparency,” “financial transparency,” “must carry” “must offer” “cable signal distribution” in the word software. The search resulted in 23 stories in *Alia*, 42 stories in *24 Saati*, 87 stories in *Resonansi*, 105 stories in Rustavi 2, 186 stories in 9th Channel, and 139 stories in Kavkasia. Due to the limited amount of newspaper stories, the study did not put any stories aside for the training, and used stories about the media democratization movement in another newspaper, *Akhali Taoba*, instead. The study set aside a training sample of ten stories from Rustavi 2, 9th Channel and Kavkasia. After the training sample was set aside, the final sample was identified as 23 stories in *Alia*, 42 stories in *24 Saati*, 87 stories in *Resonansi*, 95 stories in Rustavi 2, 176 stories in 9th Channel, and 129 stories in Kavkasia. The randomly selected sub-sample of 91 stories was set aside for the intercoder reliability test.

Timeline. The study analyzed materials produced between July 1, 2010, the approximate time first informal groups of the media democratization movement organized and started exerting pressure on the government (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014; Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014) and October 1, 2012, Election Day.

Analysis of content. The study analyzed media texts for the presence of master frames identified in social movement studies. The study looked for both mobilizing and demobilizing frames, and for the use of frames devised by the movement. The study also recorded the tone of articles and TV stories, their use of sources, genre, and frequency and prominence of coverage.

Mobilizing and demobilizing master frames. The study analyzed the text in order to identify mobilizing and demobilizing master frames. Mobilizing master frames were conceptualized as frames launched by the media democratization movement or its supporters to punctuate, attribute and articulate the problems in the media sector and mobilize supporters. The study drew from the typology of social movement master frames by Benford (1997). The *rights* master frame (Benford, 1997; Benford & Snow, 2000; Snow & Benford, 1992; Williams & Williams, 1995) referred to human rights and freedoms; The *injustice* master frame (Benford, 1997; Benford & Snow, 2000; Gamson et al, 1982) accentuated injustices that a movement intended to address; The *injustice* frame interpreted happenings as supportive of the conclusion that an authority system was “violating the shared moral principles of the participants” and provided “a reason for noncompliance” (Gamson et al, 1982, p.123); The *democratization* master frame has been generally applied in the context of democratic transformation (Mauersberger, 2012;

Nounah, 1995) to accentuate the right of a society to live in the system of rights, values and practices known as democracy; The *rule of law* frame shaped issues in legislative terms, and was often invoked in transitional contexts to press changes in the legal system as a proven tool against the authoritarian regimes (Fuchs, 2013); The *free speech* frame denoted commonly understood and universally held values of free speech, expression, and access to information (Postigo, 2012, p.1183); The *transparency* frame underlined the need for greater transparency and sincerity as opposed to conspiracy and manipulation in the conduct of public affairs. In this study, *transparency* was expected to frame the need to access information on private media ownership and other aspects of their business. The frame has been deployed in an earlier study about the protests in Georgia (Manning, 2007).

After the analysis of movement statements, the study replaced the *transparency* frame by *access to information – transparency* frame to account for the meaning attached to the frame by the activists, and added *fair elections* and *access to information – plurality* frames, frequently used by the activists in their statements. The study added these frames to the code book. The category *other* was for any other master frames (see the codebook in Appendix A).

The study looked for the presence of demobilizing frames. These frames were conceptualized as counter frames and marginalization frames deployed by movement opponents and the media to denigrate and demobilize movements. In general terms, demobilizing framing de-emphasize movement's cause, including the issues that legitimized a protest, and shifted the focus to the protesters, described as deviant, antisocial and marginal (Weaver & Scacco, 2013). The study used demobilizing frames

identified in the literature on social movements and media (Chan & Lee, 1984; Dardis, 2008; Di Cicco, 2010; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). The *Support for status quo* frame (Chan & Lee, 1988) referred to the expression of support for the status quo government's measures against social movements; The *hinders free business* frame was an adaptation of the *free market* master frame (Mooney, 1991), which referred to the free market forces; The *hinders country, unpatriotic* frame involved the argument that developmental goals of countries overrode other concerns, such as the respect for human rights, and that activism was unpatriotic (Di Cicco, 2010); The *immoral, goes against tradition* frame was an articulation of the *morality and tradition* frame (Chan & Lee, 1988). In this frame, protesters' actions and demands contradicted traditional moral, religious, cultural values; *Politicizing*, also called *dyadic conflict* and *strategic* frame (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) defined a protest in political or partisan terms, as an action motivated by the pursuit of power. The frame also ascribed a protest to external manipulations rather than spontaneous reaction to sociopolitical deficiencies; The *violence* frame described protests as lawless situations, anarchy (Dardis, 2008), vandalism, police confrontations and arrests; The *freak show* (McLeod & Hertog, 1999) was an appearance-based frame, which emphasizes physical oddities among the protesters; The *romper room/ idiots at large* frame focused on demonstrators' immaturity and childlike behavior, and their inability to tackle the complex issues they were advocating (McFarlane & Hay, 2003, p.223); The *carnival* referred to the coverage of movement's direct actions as carnivals, theatrical performances, shows, and celebrity events; The *unfavorable polls, statistics, generalizations, eye-witness accounts* referred to the use of public opinion polls, statistics, eyewitness accounts to show public opposition to a protest and to claim that

protesters did not speak for the majority of people; The *counter-demonstrations* showed counter-demonstrations against social movement, typically, street protests parallel to activists' protest; The *bothersome/disruptive* frame accentuated disruptions of traffic, upset commerce, and various other public costs of street protests (Di Cicco, 2010); The *impotent, ineffective, counterproductive* frame referred to the ineffectiveness of a protest (Dardis, 2008) (see codebook in Appendix A.)

Sourcing. The study analyzed the media's use of sources. The idea was to make a distinction between the coverage in which social movement activists and their supporters were given a voice from the reporting that relied on official sources and accounts. The coders were instructed to register the use of sources from among coalition activists and journalists participating in the coalition, other non-profit sector representatives, other journalists, government officials, opposition MPs, non-parliamentary opposition, international community representatives, ordinary citizens and other sources.

Tone. The study analyzed the tone of media content. The coders were asked to determine whether each paragraph in a newspaper or a TV story was negative, positive or neutral toward the media democratization movement. The story at hand was coded as positive or negative if two-thirds of paragraphs pointed in either direction. If not, the story was coded as balanced.

Coding. Two trained coders hired for the analysis coded the stories after three weeks of training and subsequent adjustment of the coding instrument. They double-coded 91 articles for the intercoder reliability test. The intercoder reliability was satisfactory. All variables except three had a Knipendorff's alpha above .80. Three

variables, “tone – positive,” “sources – activist journalist” and “mobilizing frame - free speech” had Knipendorff’s alpha above .70 (see Appendix E).

Chapter 4

Movement Statements and Interviews with Activists: Qualitative Analysis

The purpose of the qualitative study was to identify frames constructed by the media democratization movement and clarify the rationale behind framing choices and movement goals in interviews with the activists and activist journalists. The study carried out the qualitative content analysis of movement statements and the thematic analysis of in-depth qualitative interviews with activists and activist journalists. In addition, the study interviewed news producers and reporters who had covered MDM about their attitudes and experiences on the beat.

The chapter starts with the analysis of statements issued by the media democratization movement. This section is titled Part One: Movement Statements. Part One will identify dominant mobilizing frames and seek rationale behind framing choices. In Part Two: In-depth Interviews, we analyze in-depth interviews with activists, including activist journalists, to refine the analysis of activists' framing choices, which starts in Part One. In Part Two, we will also explore how activist journalists' involvement in the media democratization movement may have affected their coverage of the movement and whether and how news producers' and reporters' professional values of press freedom and access to information influenced their coverage of the movement. The study will link meanings attached to the media democratization movement by news professionals to the

tone and frames found in the quantitative content analysis of the coverage of media democratization movement, which is provided in the following Chapter Five.

Part One: Movement Statements

The study qualitatively analyzed the materials produced by the Coalition for Media Advocacy and other activist groups with which the Coalition joined forces. The purpose of the analysis was to identify mobilizing frames advanced by the activists, as per RQ1. The study analyzed statements released between April 13, 2011, the day the Coalition was launched, and October 1, 2012, Election Day. The statements documented activists' positions on issues and demands and were typically distributed among civil sector organizations, international watchdogs, diplomatic missions, government offices, and the press. These materials were downloaded from www.media.ge, an industry web publication. The study analyzed only the statements that were posted in full, ignoring the statements that were simply summarized. The study analyzed 17 statements: the memorandum of partnership and 11 statements by the Coalition for Media Advocacy; two statements by the It Concerns You, the Coalition's joint campaign with election activists; two statements by the Georgian Platform of European Union's Eastern Partnership Forum, with which the Coalition and other civil society organizations collaborated; and one petition by the group of media and civil sector organizations, which included the Coalition, to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to ensure that the "must carry" rule of mandatory distribution of broadcast signals by cable companies remained in force after the 2012 Parliamentary Elections.

The statements were published approximately once a month (see Appendix C) and covered priority items on the activist agenda. The purpose of the Coalition for Media

Advocacy was addressed in one statement; the “must carry/must offer” legislation was addressed in three statements and in the petition to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; the ban on distribution of Maestro TV’s antennas was addressed in two statements; the fairness of coverage and media access during the elections was addressed in three statements; the restrictions of video recording at the Parliament of Georgia, the beating and intimidation of journalists during the May 26 demonstrations, the arrest of four photographers on espionage charges, the blackmailing of journalist Tedo Jorbenadze, the removal of newspaper distribution kiosks, the financial audit of the Palitra Media House, and the proposed auction of the main TV broadcast tower in Tbilisi were covered in the remaining seven statements (see Appendix C, Table C.1).

Mobilizing frames found in MDM statements. The study analyzed these materials for the presence of mobilizing master frames described in the literature (Benford, 1997) and for any movement-specific frames. A mobilizing master frame has been defined as a broad, generic frame that punctuates, attributes, and articulates problems and has relevance across countries and contexts (Benford & Snow, 2000; Snow & Benford, 1992). The study drew from the typology of social movement master frames by Benford (1997) to create an initial coding scheme. This coding scheme contained *rights, injustice, justice, democratization, rule of law, free speech, and transparency* frames. As coding progressed iteratively, the coding scheme was further revised. The study dropped the *justice* frame, which refers to the restoring justice and dignity of the oppressed as irrelevant to the Georgian media context, re-conceptualized the *transparency* frame as *access to information –transparency* and *access to ownership information*, and incorporated six new frames: *fair elections, access to information –*

plurality, public interest, responsible government, it concerns you, and public engagement. At the final stage, the coding scheme was streamlined by merging the *public engagement* frame with the *public interest* frame and the *access to ownership information* frame with the *access to information – transparency* frame. A qualitative analysis software program, QDA Miner, was used for the analysis of data.

The analysis demonstrated that the most frequently used mobilizing frame—which was used in the largest share, or roughly one fifth, of the movement statements—was the *free speech* frame (RQ1) (see Appendix D for the list of frames and keywords). Combined usage of *access to information – plurality* and *access to information – transparency* frames also accounted for one fifth of the analyzed statements. *Fair elections* and *responsible government* frames were used less frequently, or in roughly one sixth of the material, and *injustice* and *rule of law* frames each appeared in approximately one tenth of the material. *Rights, it concerns you, public interest, and democratization* frames were used in less than one tenth of the material each. While quantitative characteristics of the sample lack statistical precision, which, of course, is unattainable in qualitative analysis, these quantitative data suggest that the key mobilizing frames launched by activists of the media democratization movement were *free speech, access to information – transparency, access to information – plurality, responsible government* and *fair elections* (RQ1).

Other analyses showed that some of the frames were used across the range of topics and issues explicitly addressed in the statements, while others were topically more restricted. The *free speech* frame, for instance, was present in most of the statements, regardless of topic. The *rule of law* frame was also applied to a range of topics. The

access to information - plurality and *fair elections* frames were used in the context of elections. The *injustice* frame was used mostly in statements about physical violence and intimidation of journalists.

The distribution of frames in time also revealed a pattern. The *free speech* and *rule of law* frames were evenly spread over the two-year period of this study. The *access to information – plurality* and *fair elections* frames were only used in 2012, the election year.

Rationale behind framing choices. Overall, the movement’s use of mobilizing frames in its published statements is in line with the social movement literature. According to Benford and Snow (2000), movements intend to achieve one or all of these key framing tasks: identifying the problem and articulating blame (a diagnostic task); articulating solutions (a prognostic task); and motivating supporters and recruits (a motivational task). Frames used by the Georgian activists pursue diagnostic and motivational tasks. Some of the frames, such as the *injustice* frame, identify problems in the Georgian media environment and pinpoint the responsible party—in the case of the *injustice* frame, the government of Georgia. Some other frames, such as *it concerns you*, pursue motivational tasks. *It concerns you* signals that issues in the Georgian media environment are relevant to journalists and non-journalists alike, motivating supporters and potential recruits. The *responsible government* frame serves a dual purpose: 1) as a diagnostic frame, it articulates the responsibility of the government for restricting the freedom of media; and 2) as a motivational frame, it attempts to make the government act towards the elimination of problems it has created. In the discourse framed as *responsible*

government, the government of Georgia is called upon, asked, pressed, and otherwise motivated to take action.

The Georgian activists interviewed in this study were clearly influenced by the strength and reach of master frames, which carry meanings across countries and contexts (Benford & Snow, 2000). Master frames link together events that appear not to be meaningfully connected, providing rationales for collective action (Snow & Benford, 1992). *Free speech*, *access to information - transparency*, and *access to information - plurality* frames linked issues in Georgia's media environment, such as the problematic distribution of broadcast signals around Georgia or the lack of information about media owners, with other sociopolitical issues, such as people's right to participate in politics and make informed choices in elections, forming a coherent argument about democratization in all spheres of public life. These frames linked the country's priorities - building a successful and democratic statehood, holding fair elections, forming responsible citizenry -- to the concept of freedom in the press. Georgian activists' use of frames is comparable with the framing practices of free speech movements in transitional contexts (Mauersberg, 2012; Postigo, 2012). These movements accentuate frames related to various aspects of freedom of speech: *free press*, *access to information – transparency*, *access to information – plurality*. The *free speech* frame in this study referred to the right of individuals and media to express, produce, and distribute information, while the *access to information – transparency* and *access to information – plurality* frames dealt with access to information, a more recently articulated component of the freedom of speech framework (Postigo, 2012). Typically, the Coalition statements featured all three elements of the *free speech* framework. Sometimes, two or all three of these frames were

used in a single paragraph, as in the August 2012 statement by the Georgian Platform of the Eastern Partnership below:

We are concerned with the decision to ban distribution of TV company Maestro's satellite antennas. This action is unacceptable as it limits constitutional rights and freedoms, including the freedom of speech and expression, the freedom to access and distribute information, and ownership rights, and is in conflict with the existing legal framework. (Mchedlidze, 2012, August 30)

The top five frames found in the studied statements—*free speech, access to information – transparency, access to information – plurality, fair elections, responsible government* – are interconnected and related to the concept of democracy. As mentioned above, three frames reflect different aspects of the freedom of speech concept, an essential element of democracy. The *fair elections* frame is conceptually linked to *access to information – transparency* and *access to information – plurality* as aspects of a fair electoral process, which is essential to democracy.

A careful reading of the statements in the context of Georgian politics helps us understand the use of frames in a more nuanced way. In response to criticism over its media policies, the government of Georgia crafted two arguments: a) freedom of expression in Georgia is legislatively guaranteed and exercised by all citizens (Mchedlidze, April 30) and b) plural and diverse sources of information exist in the country (Mchedlidze, 2010, February 18). Through the use of the *access to information – transparency* frame, the activists argued that the freedom of expression for news media made little sense without the media's free access to facts and public information. The activists also questioned the information plurality argument by stressing citizens' access to plural sources was uneven and unavailable in different regions of the country--hence, the use of the *access to information – plurality* frame. The presence of two justifications

for the unimpeded access to information – transparency and pluralism -- underscores the importance of the issue to activists. As is characteristic of master frames (Snow & Benford, 1992), the *access to information – transparency* and *access to information – plurality* frames easily aligned with the election context. The *access to information – transparency* frame shaped discourse about the need for the Georgian government to handle the elections in a transparent way, while *access to information – plurality* spoke of the need to facilitate voters' choices by providing plural sources of information.

The emergence of the *fair elections* frame in the activists' discourse is related to the 2012 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia. *Fair elections* was a powerful and culturally resonant frame in Georgia and the rest of the former Soviet Union. One of the oldest election monitoring organizations in Georgia is named International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy. The Coalition for Media Advocacy and the It Concerns You campaign relied on the *fair elections* frame to suggest that the media environment, if not improved, would create problems for the elections. For example, the Coalition stressed in the statement dated September 24, 2012, that “ensuring transparency of the *elections* is important, because only a transparent process can lead to public trust in the election results” (Tsiklauri, 2012, September 24). Similarly, the It Concerns You campaign also insisted in the statement dated September 30, 2012, that the “must carry/must offer” rule continue beyond Election Day on the grounds that “the disregard of these principles would negatively affect media and *election* environments” (Mchedlidze 2012, September 30).

The activists recognized the power of the *fair elections* frame and wanted to leverage the interest in fair elections into support of media reform. The government of

Georgia as the protest target, the Georgian people, international organizations, and the media – all were sensitive to the *fair elections* frame. The government of Georgia had declared on multiple occasions that it had a strong interest and intention in holding free and fair elections in 2012. President Saakashvili had vowed to hold “the best elections ever” (24 Saati, 2012, September 7). The fairness of the elections was closely monitored by foreign governments and international human rights watchdogs, to whom the elections were a proxy indicator of Georgia’s democratic progress. “Georgia is an important nation, which holds an important place in the Caucasus as a beacon of democracy and we are here to protect this beacon,” said the President of the Parliamentary Assembly for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Riccardo Migliori, ahead of the 2012 elections (*Resonansi*, 24 August).

The *responsible government* frame also shows the activists addressing key constituents in the framing process. The Coalition adopted the strategy of active engagement with the government. By using the *responsible government* frame, the Coalition suggested the government was responsible for the problems in the media and pushed it to take action. For example, the It Concerns You activists addressed the government to deal with the Maestro case in the statement dated July 12, 2012: “Once again, we call on the government of Georgia to take all available measures to ensure that the citizens have access to plurality of information, to produce without delay the evidence it holds to justify the ban on the distribution of satellite antennas imported by TV Maestro” (Mchedlidze, 2012, July 12).

One feature of the activists’ framing strategy was the use of multiple frames in a single document, sometimes in a single paragraph. At times, frames were simply

deployed one after the other. More often, multiple frames formed a coherent and multifaceted argument. Here's how the Coalition for Media Advocacy used *democratization, free speech, access to information – transparency, access to information – plurality, and rights* frames to argue against the government's decision to restrict video recording in the Parliament in the statement dated February 9, 2012:

The coalition believes that the decision will be a step backwards in protecting democracy, transparency and freedom of expression and will limit citizens' right to access objective information about elected members of the Parliament. (Tsiklauri, 2012, February 10)

There are several possible explanations for the Coalition's use of multiple frames in a single statement. One explanation is that the activists were aiming to reach all constituents through a single message. Another explanation is framing uncertainty. The Coalition for Media Advocacy was a young organization -- all statements analyzed here are produced in Coalition's first year and a half in operation – and it may have failed to rally member organizations behind one or two key frames. One activist told the interviewer to go find “old statements” to see “what words we used there,” failing to recall framing decisions in the early period of activism (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). Activist organizations typically spend time developing a common understanding of goals and key frames among members (Powel, 2011). A single, unifying frame – *it concerns you* – emerged towards the end of the timeframe of this study, supporting our view that the activists' framing was a work-in-progress.

Characteristically, the activists' key frame (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014), *it concerns you*, has not been sufficiently elaborated in the Coalition for Media Advocacy and the It Concerns You materials. This frame underlined the agency and purpose of citizen involvement in the media democratization movement, but the need for

citizens to get involved in public affairs was not stressed in statements. The frame was present just in the name of the campaign, but not all of its materials.

Part Two: In-Depth Interviews

The study thematically analyzed in-depth interviews with movement activists and participating journalists to clarify meanings, motivations and thought processes attached to the mobilizing frames and the media democratization movement. Activist journalists participating in the coalition were also asked whether they had covered the movement and, if yes, the nature of their experience. The study interviewed news producers and reporters outside the Coalition, who had covered the activism for the broadcast and print press. The interviews were semi-structured and built around three research questions: RQ2 about activists' vision of the goals and importance of the media democratization movement; RQ3 about activists' rationale for framing choices; and RQ4 about activist journalists' and news producers' and reporters' experiences covering the media democratization movement. The latter question was to be further explored in the context of the findings of the quantitative analysis of the news media coverage of the media democratization movement (these findings are discussed in the following chapter).

The study conducted seventeen interviews with activists and news journalists. One request for an interview was declined by a television producer. An interviewer, hired by the study, conducted all interviews in person, using an agreed-upon interview protocol. Twelve interviews were with activists and five with news producers and reporters on the beat. Of the 12 activists, 11 were the leaders and representatives of member organizations in the Coalition and one represented the Coalition's partner organization in the It Concerns You campaign. By professional background, eight

activists had experience as journalists, with five then working as journalists. Four activists were civil sector professionals: two headed media development programs at major foundations (one of the two also worked in academia), one coordinated democracy programs at a major foundation, and one was a media lawyer. For the sake of privacy, these individuals will be referred to as “magazine publisher,” “regional publisher,” “editor in chief,” “independent journalist,” “investigative journalist,” “head of association,” “media rights activist,” “election activist,” “media developer,” “media academic,” “democracy specialist,” and “media lawyer.”

News journalists were reporters and producers employed by the five news organizations sampled for the quantitative content analysis of the Georgian media. They were reporters in pro-government, pro-opposition, and ideologically independent newspapers¹¹ and producers at government-controlled stations.¹² The decision to interview TV producers instead of TV reporters was related to producers’ greater role in selecting topics and determining the angle of coverage.

¹¹ This categorization is based on newspapers’ editorial slant in the coverage of 2012 elections ([www. mediamonitoring.ge](http://www.mediamonitoring.ge)), published watchdog reports, newspapers’ acceptance of various forms of funding from the government or the opposition. The Georgian newspapers do not declare editorial support for political candidates or parties.

¹² This categorization of Georgian TV stations’ editorial slant in the coverage of the 2012 elections ([www. mediamonitoring.ge](http://www.mediamonitoring.ge)), watchdog reports, and the political positions and ties of owners: business partners of government officials in one station and a key opposition figure in another.

The activists, including activist journalists, and news producers and reporters seemed open and motivated to discuss the movement and its importance. They willingly provided details about goals, strategies, and tactical moves and gave a rich description of attitudes, experiences, emotions, and norms in response to the research questions posed by the study. These questions are addressed in some detail in the following four sections: “goals and importance of the media democratization movement,” “rationale behind framing choices,” “views of activist journalism and news reporters about MDM.” These sections correspond to RQ2-4, and draw heavily on the spoken words of activists, including activist journalists, and news reporters themselves (see Table 4.1)

Table 4.1: Research questions, themes and sub-themes in in-depth interviews

Goals and importance of the media democratization movement (RQ2)
Theme 1. Strengthening press freedom
<i>Sub-theme 1.1 Seeing media in distress</i>
<i>Sub-theme 1.2 Having professional and personal stake in MDM</i>
<i>Sub-theme 1.3: Engaging voluntarily, sincerely, and spontaneously in MDM</i>
Theme 2. Building stronger, more involved society
<i>Sub-theme 2.1. Perceiving problems in the governance and the society</i>
<i>Sub-theme 2.2. Movement to join forces with other activists and energize the public</i>
<i>Sub-theme 2.3. Facilitating fair elections</i>
Rationale behind framing choices (RQ3)
Theme 1. Frames to target the government
Theme 2. Frames to target the international community
Theme 3. Frames to target the people
Theme 4. Frames to target members of the media
Theme 5. Counter-frames and marginalization

Views and experiences of activist journalists and news reporters (RQ4)

Theme 1. Debate about the expression of activism in journalism

Theme 2. News producers and reporters about MDM and its media coverage

Theme 3. Special relationship between the independent media and the civil sector

Goals and importance of the media democratization movement (RQ2). The analysis of interviews showed differences and similarities in activists' understanding of the goals and importance of the media democratization movement. Two themes emerged from the analysis. The first theme, the improvement of the media environment, was a logical and understandable goal for the members in the media democratization movement. The second theme -- energizing publics and increasing their involvement and influence in public affairs -- was a natural extension of improvements in media's capacity to inform citizens. Together, these two goals -- improving media's capacity to inform citizens and strengthening citizens' involvement in public affairs -- were intended to advance the democratization of Georgian society. They closely tracked the movement's overall goal of the democratization of Georgia. In this discourse, the activists articulated the links between free media, free and participatory publics, and a stronger democratic society. The interviewees articulated the achievements of the activism -- the adoption of "must carry/must offer" rules of mandatory distribution of TV signal by cable operators, progressive changes in media ownership legislation, better distribution of media content in the regions -- as improvements in Georgia's media environment and society at large.

Theme 1: Strengthening press freedom. The freedom of the press was the highest order issue for the activists, the majority of whom were professional journalists. Activist journalists, who had experienced government oppression first hand, used their own and colleagues' experiences in the interviews as evidence. Most journalists said they had

never before been involved in activism and that problems the Georgian media faced made them mobilize. They said the restoration of a “healthier, less censored environment” (S.S., personal interview, March 12, 2014) in the media was their goal (RQ2), and that, first and foremost, they wanted to improve their own professional environment (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014; S.S., personal interview, March 12, 2014; Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). Non-journalists in the sample saw problems of the media as indicative of the lack of Georgian society’s overall health. All activists said their efforts were voluntary, unpaid, sincere, individualized, and unscripted.

Sub-theme 1.1: Seeing media in distress. The majority of activists said they became convinced -- sometime around 2007 and 2008 -- that the problems in the Georgian media were not diminishing but growing. “We realized that we were in very bad shape,” said an influential magazine publisher in Tbilisi.

We were losing freedom. Journalists were in trouble. We discovered the invisible mechanisms of censorship were at work. Nobody was slamming into newsrooms anymore, but we were still in trouble. Financially, the independent media were near collapse. In national televisions, journalists had no freedom and were not producing quality journalism, let alone investigative journalism. (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014).

A veteran independent journalist, who had been involved in the emergence of independent journalism in post-Soviet Georgia and actively involved in the democratization effort since then, said the level of monopolization and government control was so high that “the media were not a problem for the government anymore” (Z.K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). Among many specific issues, the interviewees identified four key areas of concern: transparency and access to public information, non-transparent ownership in the broadcast media, the lack of plural sources of information in various regions of the country, and the lack of independence of public

broadcasting. They believed these problems stifled the development of media and journalism in Georgia. The metaphors activists used -- *roadblock, cordon, closed doors*—reflected their perceived gravity of the situation.

An experienced investigative journalist, who had been in the profession for almost a decade, used the *roadblock* metaphor to describe her feelings in May 2007, when she realized she might no longer be able to practice investigative journalism. Her story of dealing with the ownership takeover at her employer's organization, the lack of access to public information, and distributional hurdles is a good illustration of problems in the Georgian media and journalism in that period.

The problems in this journalist's professional life started in 2004, when the ownership at her employer, a national broadcast TV station, changed abruptly. The new owners, who were business partners of the then-minister of defense, ordered all investigative documentaries produced by her unit to be taken off the air. The team continued receiving salaries and to be listed as official staff, but all production was stalled.

One day, ...[a new owner] came to the office, carrying a black suitcase ... [A colleague] introduced me. [The owner] said he knew me well. A few days later, we learned that [TV station] was no longer interested in investigative journalism, as this genre was not in demand with the audiences. (That is what they always say.) We were instead offered to produce a game show... Our sources were calling, demanding that we act upon stories they had told us. 'Help,' they were saying. 'We are robbed. We are sent to prison.' We were trying to hide from these pervasive phone calls. (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014)

Realizing she had no professional future at the station, the journalist left and started an independent documentary studio. But her problems did not end. She had a hard time accessing public information and getting government officials to talk. At one point,

her request for the government to release the names of TV station owners was refused on the grounds that the government restricted the release of ownership information to the public. Her subsequent attempts to investigate suspicious takeovers of businesses by individuals close to the government met with failure. Distributing independently-produced documentaries was another problem. At first, none of the TV stations would show the documentaries, so the journalist screened investigations to small groups of friends and supporters in rented cinema halls. Later, small, Tbilisi-based independent TV stations picked up the documentaries, but their signal could not reach beyond certain parts of Tbilisi. Cable operators did not include these outspoken media stations in their distribution packages. For the investigative journalist, it meant her work would not reach broad audiences.

The ownership takeovers such as the one described by the investigative journalist were changing the face of the industry. The professional cleansing of TV stations -- an effective, non-violent way of silencing journalists -- was happening across the country. The practice triggered polarization. Some TV stations were becoming more and more supportive of the government, and others increasingly critical. New owners in TV stations preferred to stay in the shade and had companies registered in off shore zones (Freedom House, 2009, IREX, 2009). While names of these owner companies were listed publicly, information on the ownership structure and beneficiary owners was unavailable. The lack of complete disclosure of ownership meant there was no way of knowing whether these beneficiary owners held more than one broadcast license, a practice banned on anti-monopoly grounds (T.K., personal interview, March 26, 2014; Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). The lack of financial transparency meant the owners could

easily subsidize TV stations instead of operating them for profit, which, if disclosed, would raise alarms about their non-commercial, political interests (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). The editor-in-chief of a Tbilisi-based daily and the veteran media activist said non-transparent TV ownership negatively influenced the industry. The anonymous owners were “setting the rules and information policies from behind the curtain” (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). These owners, a group associated with the government, were gradually taking over the broadcast media to influence the media content, “destroying the trace” of transactions in off shore zones, according to the independent journalist (Z. K., personal interview, April 4, 2014).

The lack of transparency in the government and access to public information was another major problem in the Georgian media (Freedom House, 2005, 2011). The lack of access to documents and sources meant journalists had to produce one-sided, factually incomplete reports and face criticism and distrust of the public (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014). Newspaper reporters in pro-government, pro-opposition and ideologically independent media, interviewed by the study, thought the lack of access to public information and officials was their biggest problem. They suffered from the capriciousness of politicians. “We asked, pleaded, stood at their doors, trying to get them to comment. This was a catastrophe,” said the reporter at independent *Resonansi* (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014). The reporter working for *24 Saati*, pro-government newspaper, said the officials privileged major television stations (D. G., personal interview, April 21, 2014). He said all public events were scripted. Officials would make statements in front of TV cameras and then withdraw without taking questions. The media, he said, were essentially given ready-made reports to air, and many went along

with this practice. (The interviewee put the most blame on editors and producers, who he thought were siding with the government. Reporters, he said, joked about the practice but were afraid to voice criticism.) The interviewee thought this practice went against the public interest and limited substantive coverage of public affairs (D. G., personal interview, April 21, 2014).

Problems in production were aggravated by distribution issues. The independent journalist used the *cordon* metaphor to describe problems small independent and oppositional TV stations faced in trying to reach audiences outside Tbilisi. Cable operations, especially in the region, were willing or pressured to exclude these outspoken TV stations from their distribution packages. The government had called these stations “hostile to the government” (Mchedlidze, 2010, February 18). Many Georgians who relied on cable to receive broadcast signals had no access to these critical stations. The experienced producer of pro-opposition 9th Channel said the lack of distribution outside the capital Tbilisi made her task of producing news extremely difficult. People in the regions were unwilling to talk to journalists whose work they could not see on their screens (T. R., personal interview, April 10, 2014). In the regions, small TV stations were experiencing similar distributional hurdles. The head of a media association interviewed by the study said a local station, if it dared to air serious criticism or exposure of the government, would be switched off by a local cable operator at the government’s request (N. K., personal interview, March 24, 2014).

The print media, too, faced distributional problems. The mayor’s office in Tbilisi put limitations on street sales, and successful newspapers had to deal with unexpected tax audits. “We were witnessing absolutely irrational orders, aimed against the media,” said

the reporter at pro-opposition newspaper *Alia* (T. O., personal interview, May 3, 2014). Independent newspapers and magazines experienced severe financial problems because businesses were unwillingness to advertise with critical media (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014).

The magazine publisher summed up the mood in the media by saying it was independent media's "common vital interest to have a healthy media environment," in which "all of us would survive" (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014) (RQ2). The key assumption of the study – that certain media in transitional systems occupied disadvantageous positions in relation to others and were therefore likely to question the status quo and strive for the change – appears to hold in these interviews.

Sub-theme 1.2: Having professional and personal stake in MDM. In their interviews, activists, including activist journalists, relied heavily on their professional and personal experiences and stressed familiarity with the problems they had set out to eliminate. Activist journalists said they turned to activism to be able to carry on with professional duties and careers in the future. Activists from other professional venues stressed activism was a natural extension of their support and involvement in the media. The strength of professional and personal investment in the movement's goals is one of its distinct features (RQ2). The regional publisher said the Coalition for Media Advocacy, the movement's organization, was a platform to deal with participants' real problems.

Usually, coalitions get together and start pondering over what issues to engage. In our case, it was different. We did not have to ask questions. The identification of issues came first, and the creation of the Coalition followed. (I. M, personal interview, April 18, 2014)

The following statement from the investigative journalist reflects dominant feelings among professional journalists involved in activism:

The media were losing their function. I could no longer be an investigative journalist. I was not providing people with information, how could I? I could not steal information, nor invent it. I needed information to analyze and inform the society. To solve the problem, I started investing much energy into activism. (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014)

The investigative journalist said she saw activism as “a way out” of her troubles, “the job” she had to do. Citing Lenin, who famously pledged to “follow a different path” to freedom, the investigative journalist said the activism was her path to unrestricted access to public information and freedom to pursue investigative journalism. After attending an advocacy seminar organized by the US Government for Georgian media professionals, the journalist used a leftover travel allowance to legally register a new advocacy organization¹³.

The strength of journalists’ personal motives did not mean they were on a personal crusade against the system. Most activist journalists said that the problems that affected them and the industry negatively influenced the Georgian society (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). Citizens needed free and independent media to get information about the government and public affairs. The independent journalist, who said he personally had as much stake in the media reforms as any other journalist, claimed that the problems in the media environment that the activist journalists were trying to resolve were important to the society at large.

¹³ Non-profit organizations in Georgia require legal registration with the Public Registry.

I am producing a talk show...which airs on TV Maestro...I of course want as many people as possible to watch my program. So, if Maestro gets distributed via cable under the “must carry” rule, it is very good for me, right? But is it only good for me? Isn't it good for the pluralism in general? (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014)

The independent journalist said he and his colleagues started getting together regularly sometime in 2010 to discuss the state of media. Their group designed a proposal for a comprehensive program of reforms. Another group of journalists gathered at the offices of the magazine publisher. “We were meeting regularly,” She said, “... some 10-20 people, different types, to discuss the events in the media and politics.” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). This group, which included the investigative journalist, formed an advocacy organization and began lobbying for changes in the Georgian Public Broadcaster. These professional interests and streams of activism matched with the interests of media developers in revitalizing stalled media reforms (RQ2). A media lawyer, who was responsible for organizational matters at the Coalition for Media Advocacy and later led one of its member organizations, said the civil sector organizations decided to join forces after seeing that huge resources they had been investing in the media environment were not leading to substantial improvements in the media sector. These organizations hoped the coalition work would improve the efficiency of media assistance programs (T. K., personal interview, March 26, 2014). The Open Society Georgia Foundation, also known as the Soros Foundation, chose media advocacy as its key area of engagement (H. J., personal interview, March 25). It proposed the idea of a coalition, which media professionals enthusiastically embraced. The activists saw the coalition as a “common platform for action” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). The Coalition for Media Advocacy, launched on April 13, 2011, declared it would support media freedom and access to information, protect media organizations, and

initiate media legislation, setting in motion sustained activism in these areas. It brought together a “hybrid expertise” (H.J., personal interview, Mach 25, 2014) of law, management, and journalism professionals, which helped widen its focus and the concept of reforms.

Sub-theme 1.3: Engaging voluntarily, sincerely, and spontaneously in MDM.

Most activists in the study repeatedly said they joined activism spontaneously, without a plan, and that their effort was unfunded and sincere. If, initially, decision making and planning in the movement were rather informal, in later months, closer to the elections, the activism became highly organized (T. K., personal interview, March 26, 2014). The picture that emerged from interviews was of the dynamic growth and professionalization of activism from its inception in 2010 to the formation of the Coalition for Media Advocacy in 2011 and the launch of the It Concerns You campaign in 2012. The Coalition’s key campaign, It Concerns You, was highly coordinated (T. B., personal interview, April 12, 2014). The organizational and decision-making procedures became formalized, and the framing work more elaborated towards the end of 2012.

The media academic said “the members of the coalition have invested their time, and this human investment, not funding, resulted in the crystallization of true interest... [Members were] genuinely concerned, emotional and personally affected by these problems” (T. Z., personal interview, April 2, 2014). The media lawyer said members were attracted by the organization’s lack of hierarchy and collegial, consensual decision-making process (T. K., personal interview, March 26, 2014). “The greatest attraction for me was the spontaneity, sincerity and intensity of the process,” said the magazine publisher, who was one of the first to join the Coalition for Media Advocacy (S. S.,

personal interview, March 12, 2014). She used the words *idealist*, *civic*, and *enthusiasm* to describe the media activism. She said activists were involved in practically all aspects of the collective action, from making videos to writing text and organizing events. She would start a day with updating followers about the day's events on Facebook, and end by providing an account of achievements at friendly media studios. "The actions were very spontaneous and need-based. Every day we were planning what to do tomorrow, [moving] from one event to another, from one action to another," she explained. The activism had a strategic line but individualized and "creative" tactics. "I was running around like a crazy person to go everywhere I was needed, to get posters and whistles, to attend Thursdays [meetings of the Coalition for Media Advocacy]... It took much energy away from me, and it took my time," said the investigative journalist (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014).

Others saw the movement as more organized program, with the strategic line but room for tactical maneuvering. The media developer and democracy specialist saw the process as organized but flexible and "lively" (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014). They said the Coalition for Media Advocacy, and especially the It Concerns You campaign, had a strategic line, with issues and actions arranged in priority order and responsibilities assigned to particular actors. Tactical maneuvering was important to respond to the evolving circumstances in politics and the society (T. B., personal interview, April, 12, 2014; Z.K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). The democracy specialist recalled how, after planning and executing street actions, the activists would receive phone calls from the government and invitations to negotiate, "to trade" (T. B., personal interview, April 12, 2014). If negotiations stalled, the activists would go back to

their street action or engage in some other form of pressure to get the government to talk again (T. B., personal interview, April 12, 2014). Other factors requiring tactical maneuvering were internal frictions between the Coalition members (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014). The newspaper editor in chief likened activism to the game of chess, in which theories and previous games matter, but very important decisions are often made on the spot. The independent journalist said there was nothing spontaneous in the activism: “To come up with the slogan, It Concerns You, we met three for about three to four hours, until the slogan was born. When this many journalists and civil sector organizations are engaged in extensive brainstorming over one slogan, how is that spontaneous?!” (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014).

Theme 2: Building stronger, more involved society. While media freedom, understandably, emerged as the leitmotiv in this study, the society and active publics became the second overarching theme. The activists, who mobilized over media problems, began seeing these specific problems in the wider context of societal problems. They realized problems in the media environment had two sources: unjust decisions in the government and citizens’ inability to watch the government and lead in public affairs. The media activists saw the need to consolidate with other issue groups and broaden the movement. The initial concern over building a healthier media environment developed into demands for a more vibrant, free, and participatory environment in the country. This focus on public participation is reflected in activists’ key slogan, *it concerns you*.

Sub-theme 2.1: Perceiving problems in governance and society. Some activist journalists went to great lengths in describing problems in Georgian politics, linking issues in the media and political environments. Asked about her personal motives to

become an activist, the publisher said she was concerned about her business and the overall situation in the country. While the failure of her business could have been tolerated, she could not tolerate the failure of her country (I. M., personal interview, April 18, 2014). The publisher of the Tbilisi-based magazine used the metaphors *monopolized* and *closed* to describe the Georgian politics and the society in the years 2007 and 2009:

There was no movement, and we were somehow reconciled with the idea that it was all over. The political space -- leverages and resources -- was fully monopolized [by the government]. We were “offsite”...because whomever was not with them [the government] was [considered to be] against them. We were facing this closed system...The opposition was weak, and the government very strong and vertically integrated. The government monopolized it all. We were in the standoff with this system, and what possibly could we do? Our civic spirit was awakening. We realized we needed to do something, or we would have to live in this system for many more years (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014)

She recalled her and colleagues’ rage and mobilization experienced over the government’s mishandling of massive political street protests in November, 2007. Another tipping point was the war with Russia in August 2008. By that time, the publisher’s “illusions” about “the young, overzealous government, making mistakes in the pursuit of fast reforms” were all gone. “The war was the last drop. We realized we were in trouble. The war rang the alarm,” she said (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). For others, the shocking injustice was the closure of TV Imedi amid accusations of instigating unrest in November, 2007. The media developer called the closure “an irreparable, unforgivable mistake” and “crossing of the line” in the eyes of democratically minded citizens (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014). The media academic was appalled by the arrest of photographers in 2010 (T. Z., personal interview, April 2, 2014). All activists placed the blame squarely on the government of Georgia (L.

T., personal interview, April 4, 2014; N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014; S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014; Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014).

Another source of trouble in Georgian society was an inactive citizenry and its lack of leadership in public affairs. People were passive and hard to mobilize (I. M., personal interview, April 18, 2014; T. Z., personal interview, April 2, 2014; Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). Even civil sector organizations and some media were inactive.

People were helpless. On one occasion, we organized a street protest... My journalist had been insulted by the police chief, and we stood in protest in front of the police building. We asked civil sector organizations and the media to join us... 'if you do not want to be beaten by the police, stand by us,' we told them ... The building was made of glass, and we saw how they [the police] were taking our pictures and registering our identities. I myself took a picture of our crowd. In these pictures, you can see that only a few people were facing the glass building. Others stood with their backs to the police, trying to avoid being recognized. These were people from civil sector organizations and the media! (I. M., personal interview, April 18, 2014)

The editor-in-chief echoed the idea. He said the Georgians did not have much experience of "positive involvement... in the country's affairs. They were taking part in the elections but were not involved in small, local problems" (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). There were many reasons for the lack of engagement. The activist journalists saw the link between the government's media and information policies and the passivity of citizens. The restrictions of media content distribution amounted to depriving viewers of choices and of a supply of plural information. People lived in the reality constructed by government-loyal TV stations. The regional publisher recalled how these television stations painted a picture of a thriving economy and development around the country, and how citizens in the regions would compare these pictures with their own

deteriorating conditions and think their problems were singular. Often, these citizens blamed local authorities for not keeping up with the pace in the rest of the country (I. M., personal interview, April 18, 2014). Not knowing who stood behind these TV stations made citizens vulnerable to propaganda and manipulation. The producer of pro-opposition 9th Channel said:

If I need to know what food I am eating --genetically modified, bio, natural – and the package tells me that, I also need to know what newspaper I am reading. Is it liberal? Left- or right-oriented? [I need to know] who is the owner and what interests he has. (T. R., personal interview, April 10, 2014)

Sub-theme 2.3: Facilitating fair elections. The media democratization movement mobilized at a decisive moment in Georgia’s history – the watershed elections of 2012, the first truly competitive and fair elections in which the sitting government peacefully ceded powers to the opposition. The movement, which energized the society, increased the level of fairness and public engagement in elections. While most activists agreed the movement played a role in the elections, not all thought facilitating fair elections was their goal (RQ2). At one extreme, the investigative journalist said the elections were entirely unrelated to the protest (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014). At the other, the election activist in the It Concerns You campaign said the elections were the end goal of activism and the reason behind the campaign and its “must carry” initiatives (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014). Other activists said they tried to leverage the attention to the election for the media causes, but they had mobilized for neither the fair elections (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014) nor the enforcement of the “must carry” rule in the context of the elections (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014; S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014; Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). Offering his take

on the issue, the editor-in-chief said facilitating fair elections was as much a goal as enforcing positive media reforms (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014) and that the “must carry” rule was as important during the elections as it was in other periods. Indeed, the activists pushed to extend “must carry/must offer” rules beyond the election period, and mandatory distribution of all broadcast signals is now a standard, year-round modality in the broadcast sector of Georgia.

The producer of pro-opposition 9th Channel said the media activism was inseparable from the election activism. These two efforts formed “extraordinary and tense pre-elections dynamics”. She said the society “was full of expectations” and eager to follow the elections, but the government was trying to limit information. The media were caught in the middle, and all its troubles came from government’s action to prevent voters from getting information. The producer likened the adoption of the “must carry” rule, which came as a “complete surprise,” to the cracking of an “old, thick layer of ice” in the Georgian society (T. R., personal interview, April 10, 2014).

Several activists went so far as to assert that the opposition would not have won the elections had it not been for the media activism and the “must carry” rule. The election activist recalled the 2008 presidential elections, which she believed were carried by the opposition but the victory was not sealed in the results (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014). She was referring to the extraordinarily close presidential elections of 2009, in which President Saakashvili won by a small margin. Because the success of a contender against an incumbent, suspected of vote rigging, depended on a massive turnout of voters and their use of ballots, the It Concerns You campaign played a role in the victory of the opposition by mobilizing voters (M. P., personal interview, April 7,

2014). “The citizens were very active, attentive and convinced that they were to change something in their life,” said the election activist (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014). Her views were echoed by other interviewees (L. B., personal interview, March 16, 2014; N. K., personal interview, March 24, 2014). Offering a view from the outside, the reporter at independent *Resonansi* said the “must carry” rule determined the outcome of the elections. She cited a moral shock and a major swing in voter attitudes prior to the elections, when the news of prisoner abuse broke on one of the opposition channels. The reporter said this news would not have reached the majority of Georgians had it not been for the unlimited signal distribution under the “must carry” rule, adopted into law on activists’ demands.

Without agreeing on the intent of activists, most activists and news producers and reporters agreed that the media democratization movement played a role in the outcome of the 2012 Parliamentary Elections. “Our activism has not directly influenced the elections. And it has not changed the system. What it did, importantly, was to provide a good lesson of active involvement in public affairs,” said the media developer (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014).

Sub-theme 2.2: Movement to join forces with other activists and energize the public. While the media democratization movement did not have any stated political goals, many activists saw their goal as strengthening civil society and enhancing the political involvement of citizens and greater practice of “direct democracy” (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014) (RQ2). The Coalition was to provide “a good lesson of activism” to the people (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014), “to strengthen civic skills and consolidate activists” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014), and, in

general, set “new rules of the game in Georgia” (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014) (RQ2).

It was first order task for activists to join forces with other activists. The problems in the Georgian media were “complex and interconnected” (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014), and inseparable from other issues in the governance and the society. Most activists interpreted problems in the media as “flaws in the system” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). These problems could not be aided in isolation from other issues. To attack the system and “snatch away” new rights in the media and other spheres (S.S., personal interview, March 12, 2014), it was necessary to join forces with other activists in environmental, urban, and student movements. The magazine publisher said activists who joined forces over media issues started adopting ownership of a wider range of problems and joined the wider stream of civic activism. Soon, “the protest events were happening at multiple locations,” she said. While, initially, no more than 50 people would show up, the movement was gaining strength like “a wave” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). The *wave* metaphor is very close to the description of a protest cycle (Tarrow, 1983) as “sequences of escalating collective action that are of greater frequency and intensity than normal, that spread around various sectors and regions of society” (Snow & Benford, 1992, p.141). The mobilization and consolidation of protest groups produced the It Concerns You campaign, a major mobilization of activists and citizens around the country, launched in February 2012, nine months after the launch of the Coalition for Media Advocacy.

In assessing the achievements of the Coalition, the publisher said it changed the political culture. Citizens developed a stronger sense of civic responsibility and became

more involved with politics, and more vigilant about the abuse of power (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). The magazine publisher said she started self-identifying as a member of the civil society, not as the “mass” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). The Coalition promoted cooperation and internal cohesion in civil society (T. K., personal interview, March 26, 2014) and overcame polarization and zero sum attitudes in Georgian politics (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). The civil sector also learned to work closely with the public and to value its trust and support (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014). A stronger, more involved society was the key long-term outcome of the media activism in 2010 - 2012, said the election activist, whose hopes for the further betterment of the country were pinned on the civil sector (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014).

The activism of the civil sector organizations strengthened the society. I can say that the civil sector has never been so united, energetic, active, and productive. I hope it will stay that way. I genuinely think that our movement and campaign helped the society mature. It may be a very bold thing to say, but we increased civic mindedness of people, who were either indifferent or thought their activism would lead nowhere, or were afraid to talk out loud. (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014)

Rationale behind framing choices (RQ3). Activists the study interviewed devoted much time to explaining their strategies and tactics but said very little about their framing choices. When asked what frames they used, most were unable to recall any framing decisions or rationale behind most slogans, metaphors, or other techniques of constructing issues in the public discourse, with a few notable exceptions. Some activists, especially professional journalists, appeared to deliberately shrug off frames as public relations work. Others may not have been familiar with the concept of “frames” and misunderstood the question. Activists’ lack of experience and message-level

coordination, the informality of the Coalition, and professional and ideational diversity among the Coalition's member organizations explain the lack of rationalization of framing work, especially, at the early stages of activism. Most of the analysis below came from indirect clues about the framing work in activists' interviews. The only detailed, focused account of a deliberate framing process was about the elaboration and rationale behind the key campaign, the It Concerns You. The It Concerns You campaign, which started when the activism strengthened and matured, demonstrated greater professionalism in the framing work.

The picture of the framing process that emerged from interviews is in line with the literature about social movements' framing work. Social movements are typically interacting with four constituencies: followers, the media, targets of protest and references groups of targets of protest (Lipsky, 1968). The Georgian media democratization movement has addressed the government of Georgia as the target of protest, active citizens and activists in other movements as followers, the international community as the government's reference group, and the media as colleagues and the party invested in the media reforms.

Theme 1: Frames to target the government. The activists said they were “working at all levels – with the civil sector, [national] media, regional media, international organizations, embassies, -- all” (T. K., personal interview, March 26, 2014). Still, the key target of their protest (Lipsky, 1968) was the government of Georgia. The government, said the media development specialist, was not tolerating opposition, was not listening to the civil sector concerns, and was avoiding dialogue (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014). The government's first reaction to activists' initiatives was

always “no,” and it felt that “the doors were closed” (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014). The government did not much care about the independent press or hold it in high regard (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014). The president of Georgia repeatedly said that the Georgian press was “ruthless” and “unprofessional” (Mchedlidze, 2010, February 18). Even after the government started negotiating with activists, the process developed slowly. The magazine publisher recalled dealing with a highly placed parliamentarian, whom the activists “chased everywhere,” waiting for him to log into his Facebook account well after midnight. The parties distrusted each other.

He was telling us he was on our side, and that [our proposal] would not work, would not make it through the Parliament. He wanted to be appear as a good fellow, but he was a typical party executive who would never make a step against his interests and against his party interests. (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014)

To reverse the process, the activists apparently started to adopt language their target would understand (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014). Their key message for the government was the country and its interests (RQ3). “We were telling the government that the issues [in the media] were important, and that it would be bad for the country if they [the government] took no action,” said the investigative journalist (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014). She also highlighted international standards, telling the government that transparency “was a standard and journalists’ basic right” (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014). The head of the media association said: “[we told the government] ‘if you deal with the problem, it will positively affect your image, while you will not lose much’” (N. K., personal interview, March 24, 2014). Other activists said they stressed “democracy” and “plurality” because these concepts reflected the

government's own declarative goals for the country (L. B., personal interview, March 16, 2014).

This strategy of deploying universally accepted master frames of democracy – whether rationalized or not -- was effective. The government was clearly sensitive to Georgia's image as a rights-based democracy. It wanted to position Georgia as an aspirant member in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union and was aware of the importance the international community attached to media rights and freedoms.

The activists also targeted the government with the *fair elections* frame (RQ3). By using the *fair elections* frame, the Coalition was again attempting to leverage the government's desire to appear democratic in the eyes of the world.

As is clear from the above excerpts, the Coalition for Media Advocacy chose to actively engage the government, which possessed the ultimate power to enact positive reforms in the media sector. Typically, social movements rely on extra-institutional tactics, such as street protests and strikes, to reach their goals (Goodwin, 2013). However, social movements also effectively employ institutional channels of pressure (Snow & Benford, 1992; Lofland, 1985), such as court cases (Fuchs, 2013) or lobbying (Mauersberger, 2012). Georgian' activists' strategy of directly engaging the government, parallel to street protests and public mobilization, proved effective. This strategy ties logically with activists' choice of *responsible government*, *fair elections*, *free speech*, and *access to information* frames.

Theme 2: Frames to target the international community. Lipsky (1968) wrote that movements, which lack bargaining power, typically try to activate third parties, or groups, that are referent groups for protesters' targets and possess sufficient bargaining power to exert influence over the target. The protesters often engage in actions aimed at eliciting sympathy and support among these referent groups of targets of protest. The target of the Georgian media democratization movement – the government of Georgia – was highly sensitive to Georgia's standing in the international community and susceptible to the opinion of the international community. The activists apparently tried to leverage this sensitivity. By pressing *free speech, access to information - transparency* and *access to information - plurality* frames -- internationally understood concepts of freedom and democracy -- the activists were trying to engage the international community. By employing the *fair elections* frame in the discourse about media reforms, the activists alerted the international community that “monopolized media would create problems at the upcoming elections, because the access to information would be lacking” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). They hoped that the international community would utilize its own channels of pressure on the government, which it did. Ambassadors of foreign countries, including the United States, made many statements in support of legislative proposals of activists (Tsiklauri, 2012, May 31). In 2009, the European Union started the human rights dialogue with the Georgian government, in which participating civil rights and media organizations produced more than a dozen recommendations to improve the media environment (EU Human Rights Dialogue, 2009). The EU forwarded these recommendations to the government of Georgia. Involving the international community was highly effective strategy, as stressed by many activists and news

producers (G. L., personal interview, May 5, 2014; S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014)

Theme 3: Frames to target people – It Concerns You. Members of the public were the important audience for the activists, as potential recruits, followers, supporters or, simply, sympathetic bystanders (Lipsky, 1968). Initially, activists' strategy had been to mobilize "active people" -- students, media, academic, diplomats, civil sector leaders -- instead of attempting mass mobilization (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014; T. Z., personal interview, April 2, 2014). Most activists recalled meetings and discussions with these socially active groups (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014; S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). The media academic said it was a clever strategy, as massive mobilization was unattainable, while recruiting mobilized publics seemed an easier task. The strategy of recruiting activists from other or former movements has been one of the frequently used tools in mobilizers' toolkit (Goodwin, 2013).

However, as the activism grew and the It Concerns You campaign decided to build awareness of media problems among mass publics, the activists re-aligned their frames. This pattern of frame re-alignment to respond to the changing context is well documented in the literature (Zuo & Benford, 1995). It was necessary to talk about the media issues "in a very clear language" (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). Problems in the media, obvious to professionals, were not fully understood by the public (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014)

The lack of access to public information is not only a journalist's problem. It is citizens' common problem. That he [citizen] does not know who owns televisions, and what interests these people have, and why they invest money and what money they invest [is bad]... The citizens should know. It was our principle when starting the campaign [It Concerns You].

It is one thing that I, as a journalist, am interested in, but, as a citizen, I want all other citizens to think [about these problems] too. (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014)

The election activist, who traveled around the country to meet people, said it was not as hard to explain the essence of issues in the media to the people as it was to demonstrate why and how these issues mattered to them.

These issues [proposed amendments to restrict the right of political gathering, must carry rule] were rather difficult to explain. If we stuck to the legal language, and dwelled on the details of amendments, nobody would understand a thing. The government would adopt the law, and nothing would change. Our purpose, the good work we did, was to get these key messages to the people: that their electoral choices could be ignored [in rigged elections], they could have been labeled as political activists and unjustly prosecuted. [We told them] anyone had the right to listen to alternative opinions. All of it was simple and tangible and relevant. Our slogan said just that -- It concerns any one of us...Crafting slogans, delivering messages, streamlining the campaign gave results. Every citizen we would meet at various places, from big cities to small villages, had a reaction. True, they were not standing with us in the streets, but they were aware, they understood and supported us. (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014)

Making issues relevant and understandable to the recruits in the context of their daily experiences, that is, increasing their experiential commensurability -- one of the key tasks in framing (Benford & Snow, 2000) – was clearly achieved by the movement. Still, the activists needed a potent motivational frame (Snow & Benford, 2000) that would stress the public's ownership of problems in the media. *It concerns you* was designed with that purpose. The frame shaped the media issues as relevant to most people in Georgia. The people were told they could not see many Georgian channels available elsewhere because the government wanted to keep them in the dark and that they ought to support the “must carry” proposal. The people were learning that they could not even watch their own, local stations, because the government disliked what these stations said and pressed local cable providers to block their distribution (N. K., personal interview,

March 24, 2014). “We were explaining to them [to people] that our common right [to information] was restricted, that we all needed information, which was withheld from us,” said the investigative journalist. “We were trying to build discontent, not artificially, but by making people aware of their problems, and they were getting angry” (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014). The magazine publisher said the people did not need much articulation of the problems. She said they were already unhappy. Instead, they needed to be told to take charge (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014): “Here, you need to sign a petition, then, you need to hold a meeting, and later, we need to change a legislation” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014).

The slogan *it concerns you* was created as the elections drew nearer. The independent journalist recalled the focus group work that went into the choice of the slogan. The activists tested several slogans (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). The winner, *it concerns you*, was authored by a popular Georgian poet (T.B., personal interview, April 12, 2014). The independent journalist said the slogan became the brand of activism. He thought it was a very well-chosen, innovative, elastic frame, which incorporated not only media but also election-related issues and had the potential to cover other concerns in the future:

We were telling [the people]: instead of blindly following us, we are telling you, *it concerns you!* If it does, you need to read this booklet, see that social ad, listen to our suggestions, and meet us. There were many discussions in Tbilisi and all over Georgia. We’ve been everywhere and met everyone. We were telling them, ‘start thinking. If *it concerns you*, then express your protest’. (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014)

Theme 4: Frames to target members of the Media. The activists spoke at great length about the media’s attitudes towards the activism and verbalized their strategies in dealing with various media groups. Again, they said very little about the choice of frames

to target members of the media. The media developer said the activists were counting on the support of the independent media in Tbilisi and the regions and disregarding the controlled media (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014). She said activists' media relations were well-conceived and planned. The assumption of this study that the activists would try to exploit tensions in the "media-state dynamics" (Mauersberger, 2012, p. 588) and differences in the media (Weaver & Scacco, 2013) was supported in the interviews. The comment below illustrates activists' solid understanding of the balance of forces in the Georgian media:

In our media campaigns, we were not counting on them [government-controlled media] as our allies. Our campaign relied on online and print media and social networks. These were little oases [of independent journalism], invested in our cause. Regional media too... I mean those media organizations in the regions that had not betrayed journalism and to whom values, which united us, were real and important, and who were ready to protect these values. They were our allies. (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014)

9th Channel producer's comments echo the idea about shared values between activists and journalism professionals.

We had a good relationship with the third sector. Generally speaking, the third sector is the media's ally, both because it has the rights agenda, which includes media rights, and because it shares the media's interest in the transparency of information. No other group has such a vested interest in transparency. (T. R., personal interview, April 10, 2014)

The important finding, reflected in this and other statements in this section, is about the shared ideational base between the media and the civil sector, acknowledged by both sectors. Activists' *free speech* and *access to information-transparency* frames were likely to resonate with journalists, for whom these concepts were an important part of the professional value system and who had experienced problems accessing and distributing

information. These frames undoubtedly helped activists communicate their concerns in a language understandable to the members of the media.

Theme 5: Counter frames and marginalization. Some activists spoke about counter frames deployed by the government in an attempt to marginalize their efforts. The publisher recalled the government's "sustained campaign" to politicize the protest by linking it to the oppositional parties and their leader, Bidzina Ivanishvili. According to the publisher, this strategy alienated many potential recruits, who were weary of being associated with partisanship and politics. Politicizing the protest, a tactic described by the publisher, is a proven marginalization technique (Chan & Lee, 1984). The government also marginalized people in the middle, who were not taking political sides. The publisher said these individuals were called a derogatory name of "shuashists" (people in the middle). The label implied conformism and self-serving positioning in the middle.

The United National Movement was trying everything in its power to make these labels stick... The system tried to marginalize and neutralize us and was doing it by various means – by influencing the public opinion on Facebook, by blowing our mistakes out of proportion. The system was working against the active people who opposed it. (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014)

The activists thought government-controlled media and the Georgian Public Broadcaster were complicit in the marginalization. Government-controlled televisions were siding with the government and not talking to the activists (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014). "All doors were closed. [Pro-governmental] televisions were filming us from behind our backs not to show our faces on the screen. News about us lasted seconds and were aired during the third block [towards the end of the newscast]. Meetings and demonstrations were not covered at all," said the magazine publisher (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). Invitations for pro-governmental stations to attend

activists' events "fell on deaf ears" (I. M., personal interview, April 18, 2014). In stories aired by the public broadcasting, "activists would appear out of nowhere, blow a whistle, and disappear. Nobody would understand [from the news] why these people blew whistles in the first place," said the head of media association (N. K., personal interview, March 24, 2014). This excerpt evidences the marginalization by framing a protest as a meaningless show, a spectacle (Dardis, 2006; McLeod & Hertog, 1999).

However, other activists said the pro-governmental media spared the activists and never really marginalized the Georgian media democratization movement. The democracy specialist said she had not encountered any resistance or any serious marginalization from pro-governmental stations (T. B., personal interview, April 12, 2014). "We have been spared terrible lies," she said. The media developer echoed her thought:

I would not say the national broadcasters managed to discredit the process. It did not happen. Perhaps they decided not to [go against us]. My colleagues may disagree, but based on what we've been hearing from these channels over the years, their rhetoric about our activism was relatively mild. They did hit Maestro [Tbilisi-based independent station] hard over its litigation with the government, though. (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014)

The head of a media association summed up the situation, saying that supportive media supported and followed activists' news agenda, whereas unfriendly media ignored activists' news and themes (N. K., personal interview, March 24, 2014). Pro-governmental media covered the Coalition and It Concerns You campaign "as any other news, in a superficial way," said the election activist (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014).

Views and experiences of activist journalists and news reporters (RQ4). The study spoke with activist journalists and news producers and reporters about journalists' involvement in activism, the ethical issues involved in covering activism while being involved in it, their personal level of involvement in activism, and their coverage of the media democratization movement and experiences on the beat.

Activist journalists interviewed by the study thought there was no conflict between practicing journalism and engaging in activism (RQ4). However, they admitted having given the subject much thought. Most were trying to draw a line between the expression of activism and bias. They said activism was to be expressed in blogs and editorials but not in news reporting. Activists were not to cross the line between activism and politics.

The opinions of news producers and reporters, who were not part of the media democratization movement and covered it as a beat, diverged along ideological lines. Producers and reporters at independent and pro-opposition newspapers and TV stations were supportive of the expression of activism in reporting. They said their own position on the issue had always emotionally colored their reporting. However, producers and reporters at pro-governmental media, while expressing support for professional journalists' right to activism and to holding strong position on issues, rejected the expression of activist positions in journalism as unprofessional. They said activist journalists could better serve their cause by covering issues objectively and substantively, incorporating both supporters' and opponents' issue positions.

Theme 1: Debate about the expression of activism in journalism. Most journalists who took part in activism said they had not experienced conflict over their two

roles as activist and journalist. One activist said her “trick” was to be aware of the role she was playing at a given moment, and stay within its boundaries (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014). During reporting, an activist journalist would have to abstain from advocacy, and, while advocating, abstain from reporting, she said. The magazine publisher said trying to remain neutral was as pointless as masking one’s interest in an issue with the pretense of neutral reporting. She thought it was acceptable and even important for activists to express positions (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). She said extraordinary circumstances, such as the abuse of rights and freedoms, warranted a diversion from journalistic standards. “When you are pressured, to try to stand aside, attempt to be an unbiased arbiter and not to express your opinion [is nuisance]. Of course you should express your position!” said the magazine publisher. She said she had been criticized for blending the line between activism and journalism by journalism purists, whom she despised, calling “sterile types in their comfort zones, on the Mount Olympus” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). (The metaphor *sterile* in activists’ discourse is contrasted to *activist* and *engaged*.) Most activist journalists stressed the duties of citizenship were of a higher order than professional standards of journalism.

Asked if he had expressed his activism in writing, the editor-in-chief said he “naturally” had (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). He said he wrote editorials and defended his position on issues. But his newspaper provided both activists’ and opponents’ view. The editor-in-chief said newspaper’s coverage was balanced, but not as much to meet the standard as to produce “interesting” journalism. The editor in chief said it was in the interests as activists to stimulate public discussion of their proposals, and to

invite opponents' criticism of potential flaws. Reflecting the range of views in journalism was also more democratic. "If you advocate democracy, you should stand by its rules yourself," said the editor in chief (L.T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). The independent journalist echoed these views. He too made his activist position clear when hosting a show or writing an opinion piece, but thought journalists had no right to be biased against and inattentive to opposite views. Representing all points of view and facilitating discussion on important issues was a journalist's role. He also said this was not always possible. "Georgia is not a *sterile* country, and the process [of activism in journalism] is not totally clean" (Z.K., personal interview, March 13, 2014).

People appreciate activism, said the magazine publisher (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). She thought the trust in her magazine was rising because of her strong position on issues. People would call from all over Georgia, and ask her reporters to take up their local issues. She called this practice "civic journalism in action." She said she valued close engagement with readers that her activism had led to.

While many activist journalists expressed the support for registering activist positions in their journalistic work, some said their issues would best be served by objective, comprehensive reporting and substantive journalism. The head of a media association, a former journalist, said journalists were not to express activism in their work (N. K., personal interview, March 24, 2014). The media rights activist, another former journalist, said journalists were tempted not to tolerate problems and engage in advocacy reporting, but her advice would be not to express activism in reporting (L. B., personal interview, March 16, 2014). Only through objective reporting could journalists earn trust and support from their viewers and readers. "Anyone can say blah-blah-blah. What

makes difference [in journalism] is [reporting of] facts,” (L. B., personal interview 4, March 16, 2014).

The study sought views of news producers and reporters regarding the expression of activism in journalism, and Georgian media’s activist coverage of the media democratization movement. The views of news professional diverged along ideological lines, with those in pro-opposition and independent press supporting activism expression in journalism, and those in pro-government media rejecting the practice. Producers and reporters at independent and pro-opposition newspapers, and the pro-opposition television, were under impression that the entire journalistic community supported the media activism, some more openly than others. The reporter at opposition-aligned *Alia* recalled the signing of petition to free photographers accused of espionage, organized by the Coalition for Media Advocacy. She said every reporter at the event signed the petition, including reporters in government-controlled televisions. To protect them from possible repercussions, the activists later deleted their names (T. O., personal interview, May 3, 2014). Contrary to these views, the reporter at pro-government *24 Saati* said he had not observed any “enthusiasm” for the media activism among his colleagues on the beat. He said the journalists were just doing their jobs and covering the actualities, without doing much beyond that. They were not advocating issues or supporting activists.

The producer at pro-opposition 9th Channel said her television and other pro-opposition independent stations were all involved in the advocacy to support “must carry/must offer” proposal, and “supported” the Coalition for Media Advocacy’s efforts “with providing coverage and otherwise” (T. R., personal interview, April 10, 2014). The activist journalists said in their interviews that they were frequent guests at opposition-

owned and pro-opposition stations. “Sometimes they’d “sweep all of us in,” said the investigative journalist (N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014). “We were sitting at their studios every day. They were like our home. At the end of the day, we’d go to one of these TV stations, or to some radio station, and discuss what we’d done during the day,” recalled the magazine publisher (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). The reporter at independent *Resonansi* said her newspaper did not encourage opinionating, but she made her position felt in the coverage anyway (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014). She said the activism to democratize media was “a different kind of issue” for news reporters, because it was about their own working environment. The reporter said she mostly wrote reports but also issue-based stories, in which she analyzed the reforms activists were proposing in legal or economic terms. She said her analysis was balanced, sometimes even negative, but admitted she could not cover these issues without emotion, because she had personally experienced governmental pressures and stood to benefit from improvements in the media environment.

Yes, I was advocating, naturally. How could I not? I have a problem. This work [activism] will solve my problem. In this circumstances, one advocates or else there will be no change. (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014)

The reporter who worked for pro-opposition *Alia* spoke about her involvement in activism in general terms. She said journalists’ position on issues would always shaped their stories, and her stories were no exception. A position “comes across in the way situations are summarized, in the use of words. Even if one tries to be disengaged, one’s sympathy or antipathy usually comes across in reporting,” she said (T. O., personal interview, May 3, 2014). The reporter fully supported activists’ agenda. She said the

media activism of 2010- 2012 was “one of her strongest experiences in the recent years” (T. O., personal interview, May 3, 2014).

By contrast, the reporter employed at pro-government *24 Saati* said he had never advocated while reporting, nor had he attended any street action. He said he did not see the point in activist journalists’ involvement in collective action, because all Georgian journalists were free to express their opinion in the press. He thought journalists could serve their causes by writing substantively about them, and that was how he saw his role (D. G., personal interview, April 21, 2014).

Asked to comment on his station’s coverage of the media activism, the producer at pro-government Rustavi 2 TV, said the coverage was factual but devoid of advocacy. “We recorded comments of participants of the [It Concerns You] campaign but also comments from sources on the other side. We were sharing their [activists’] information. But we were not involved in the campaign.” He said the station “tried to stay away from activism... because we think it is not our role” (G. L, personal interview, May 5, 2014). He acknowledged the perception of his station as supportive of the former government, but thought the television provided professional news, and followed news standards. He also acknowledged the station had an ideological position, which he called “a political taste.” “Let’s agree it is a matter of political taste if a station feels greater sympathy towards one political party than towards another,” he said, adding these sympathies were acceptable “as long as that station follows professional standards” (G. L., personal interview, May 5, 2014). He thought some other TV stations, perceived as independent, were neither independent nor unbiased. Speaking apparently of Tbilisi-based TV stations Maestro TV and Kavkasia, the producer said these stations were positioning themselves

as independents but were supporting the opposition and trying to influence voters. He admitted Rustavi 2 had itself engaged in similar politically-motivated activism in the past, and thought these stations were doing the same. Rustavi 2 has openly called on its audiences to engage in the Rose Revolution of 2003, and has greatly contributed to the rise to power of President Saakashvili's National Movement party in the 2003 parliamentary elections (Kandelaki, 2006).

Theme 2: News producers and reporters about MDM and its media coverage.

The views of news producers and reporters about the media democratization movement, activists' agenda and motives, and the activism in general again diverged along ideological lines. The reporter at pro-opposition *Alia* said the activism was “a universal tool” for people to demand that their long-held concerns be answered. She added she felt, while covering activists' street action, that their protest was real, and that protesters were not forcing supporters to show up, as in some other, “mock protests” (T. O., personal interview, May 3, 2014). The reporter was happy that the civil society was stronger, and capable of dealing with society's problems. “Our civil society is very strong, to the envy of all other countries. It has proven its worth during the attacks on the press”, she said (T.O., personal interview, May 3, 2014). The reporter in the independent newspaper enthused about the media democratization movement and the reforms it achieved, which, in her view, brought professionalization of the media and greater responsibility on the part of news media (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014). She said her enthusiasm was shared by the entire professional community:

I personally cannot recall a single journalist who would be against [proposed reforms.] Anyone knows for fact that if one group is trying to control [parts of media] today, someday they [other media] too will face

the same problem. Plus, it was in the interests of media that the public have access to information. Whether these attitudes were expressed openly or hidden is a different matter. Still, I do not remember any resistance. On the contrary, all my colleagues had positive emotions. (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014)

By contrast, the reporter in pro-government *24 Saati*, while acknowledging problems in the media environment and generally positive outcomes of the media democratization movement's latest activism, was skeptical about activists' motives. He thought one of activists' key demands -- the "must carry" regulation -- was politically motivated. He said the demand for mandatory distribution of broadcast signals by cable operators aimed at providing supporters of the political opposition with access to the oppositional stations based in Tbilisi. He lamented the public was not interested in an objective, unbiased journalism, or in supporting the freedom of the press. "The people just want to see activities of one [political] party, and the criticism of another party. They are not really concerned about the freedom in the media" (D. G., personal interview, April 21, 2014). On the brighter side, the reporter noted the "must carry" legislation "facilitated the reflection of political reality in the media," and produced a positive psychological effect of greater freedom in the society.

In his coded, imprecise language, the producer at pro-government Rustavi 2 said those media that engaged in activism were serving their owners' and managers' political and business interests rather than the cause of media democratization.

Any head of a station can sign petitions and take part in processes [of activism], but if he abuses the privilege of access to the nation-wide audience [by steering his station to engage in activism] in favor of his own interests, it is another matter. (G. L., personal interview, May 5, 2014)

The producer said his news staff, "generally neutral" while reporting on the media democratization movement, "had questions" in the case of Maestro TV's satellite

antennas. He said journalists had asked questions about the origins of these antennas, which the station intended to distribute free of charge to thousands of viewers. The question was how the television, which was not profitable, bought this much technology. The antennas, according to the Georgian government, were bought for the Maestro TV by the billionaire opposition figure, Bidzina Ivanishvili, to increase Maestro' reach around Georgia (Freedom House, 2013). The producer said his TV station served the public interest when asking these questions, but angered colleagues at the Maestro TV (G. L., personal interview, May 5, 2014).

However, the producer said he was fully behind activists' other demands, such as the "must carry" rule and the media ownership transparency. He said he could never understand why the government was restricting broadcast media distribution or making ownership in the media non-transparent, which led to speculations and distrust of his station. He said the government should have allowed all TV stations to distribute signals nationwide and that his station was not afraid of competition. Indeed, the station maintained its top ratings well after the competing stations reached nationwide audiences under the "must carry" rule. The market should have been allowed to regulate itself, he said (G. L., personal interview, May 5, 2014).

In general terms, the producer thought the recent media activism was "a very well planned and organized campaign and advocacy by very smart people," but it was not a social movement. He doubted the real goal of the It Concerns You campaign was to increase the freedom of speech and the level of information available to people in the regions "who were well informed already." Again, resorting to imprecise, convoluted

language, he expressed his doubts that the activists cared more about the political goals, such as helping the opposition win the elections, than the freedom of the press.

I do not know what their goal was. For me, the goal, at least in the short term, without doubt, was...I'll put it straight, [the goal of improving the freedom of press, as stated by activists] was a fake one. Could the goal have been to [serve] the interest of some political force, which wanted to win the elections? However, if we look at [activists' goals] in the long term, continued enforcement of the "must carry" principle after the elections positively affected the media environment. (G. L., personal interview, May 5, 2014)

The "must carry/must offer" rule, which discriminated private cable providers by regulating them to distribute the content that was commercially unattractive, benefited the media environment, concluded the producer. Greater competition in the broadcast sector forced his station to improve and innovate. Citizens had greater choice of information as a result.

Theme 2: Special relationship between the independent media and the civil sector. Some of the activists in the sample said they had been involved in collective action since their first steps in independent journalism. The editor-in-chief said his personal involvement in activism has been long-standing. The first legislative proposal he had co-authored in 1990 was on the freedom of political gathering. He and other journalists had promoted the freedom of information legislation, modeled after American Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), since 1995 (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). The independent journalist said he had been advocating for journalists' rights all his professional life (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014). These comments corroborate findings in the literature that there have been historical links between independent journalism and the civil sector in Georgia (Topuria, 2000).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have analyzed mobilizing materials produced by the activists involved in the Georgian media democratization movement in the years 2010 through 2012. I also conducted and analyzed in-depth interviews with twelve activists and five news producers and reporters. The activists were all leaders in the organizations united in the Coalition for Media Advocacy, a social movement organization (SMO) for the media democratization movement. News producers and reporters had written or produced materials about activism for five Georgian media organizations, sampled by the study.

The study found that activists' statements relied on master frames related to the concept of democracy, such as *free speech*, *access to information – transparency*, *access to information – plurality*, *responsible government*, and *fair elections*. The activists' innovative frame, *it concerns you*, also related to a particular aspect of democracy, responsible and participatory self-rule. Often, activists used several frames in one statement, which reflected both lack of coordination and frame alignment and Coalition members' desire to make all important points and reach all key constituents in a single communication.

In in-depth interviews, the study sought to answer the following research questions about goals and importance of the media democratization movement, as interpreted by activists (RQ2), activists' rationale for framing choices (RQ3), and activist journalists' and news professionals experiences covering the media democratization movement and their views about journalists' involvement in activism and the media democratization movement.

As evident from interviews, the activists were clearly motivated by two goals: improving the media environment in which their own professional practice was situated and strengthening the society in which the public would actively participate in policy- and decision-making (RQ2). These two goals were interconnected and formed the logic of democratization. The improvements in the media's capacity to inform citizens would lead to citizens' empowerment and greater participation, while greater participation of citizens would strengthen the society based on democratic deliberation and informed self-rule. Activists' goals were reflected in the frames they had used in statements (RQ3). Activists used frames stressing freedom of speech and media -- *free speech, access to information- transparency, access to information-plurality* – and frames stressing participatory governance -- *responsible government, it concerns you, fair elections*. While interviewees may not have articulated why they used these frames, they outlined their communication strategies and the context of activism in which these frames made perfect sense. They said they had reminded the government of its responsibility to uphold internationally accepted standards of free speech and democracy, which is analyzed as necessitating *responsible government, free speech, access to information - transparency* frames. The activists said they targeted the international community in hopes it would pressure the government into greater acceptance of the activists' demands. They said they reminded the international community, and, through them, the government of Georgia, that the free press providing plural information to the voters was essential to conducting free and fair elections; hence, the use of *fair elections* and *access to information - plurality* frames (RQ3).

The activists provided a good explanation of the key frame, *it concerns you*, as reflecting their emphasis on democratizing society and strengthening public participation (RQ3). While the Georgian public was generally supportive of the freedom of press, specific problems in the broadcast sector were initially irrelevant to the majority of people. By using the *it concerns you* frame, the activists sought to increase people's ownership of media issues.

The participants gave rich descriptions of experiences, emotions, attitudes, and norms in response to the question about the journalistic coverage of the media democratization and expressions of activism in journalism (RQ4). Their views ranged from total rejection of advocacy journalism to the acceptance of the decision for the entire media organizations to engage in activism. News producers and reporters were split along ideological lines in their attitudes towards activism, the media democratization movement and the activism in general, and towards the expression of activism in journalism. The news producers and reporters at independent and pro-opposition newspapers and pro-opposition television supported the media democratization movement and themselves engaged in activism. The pro-government media abstained from activism and advocacy reporting, and thought activists had political motives for pursuing the media democratization agenda. The pro-government media said the activists were supporting the political opposition in the elections. However, they acknowledged that the problems that existed in the media environment, and that, overall, reforms pushed by activists had improved the media environment.

Chapter 5

Movement Coverage in the Georgian Media: Quantitative Analysis

The purpose of the quantitative analysis of Georgian media's coverage of MDM was: 1) to identify the dominant tone and frames of coverage of MDM across the major news organizations in the country, and 2) to analyze whether political factors, such as news organizations ties with the government or the opposition (or lack thereof), and frames constructed by activists influenced the news coverage. The study theorized that political factors influence media's application of mobilizing and demobilizing frames such that pro-opposition media would cover social movements extensively and positively, and use mobilizing frames, while pro-government media would either ignore or negatively cover social movements, and apply demobilizing frames. The study posed a research question about the independent media's coverage of MDM. The study also theorized that movement actors stood a greater chance of pushing their frames into the pro-opposition media, and the independent media, than pro-government media.

Descriptive

The study analyzed 152 newspaper and 400 TV stories about MDM, produced from July 1, 2010, to October 1 2012. Pro-government *24 Saati* wrote 42 stories; Independent *Resonansi* wrote 87 stories; Pro-opposition *Alia* carried 23 stories; Rustavi 2 television aired 95 stories; 9th Channel aired 176 stories; and Kavkasia aired 129 stories. News coverage of the media democratization movement was operationalized as the

stories about the Coalition for Media Advocacy (SMO), the It Concerns You (the movement's key campaign), the "must carry/must offer" and media ownership and financial transparency regulations (the movement's key legislative proposals), and movement's key case to lift government's ban on the free-of-charge distribution of TV Maestro's antennas to the population.

The news organizations produced three types of stories: a) stories focused on MDM, b) stories that mentioned MDM in the discussion of the media environment, together with other media issues, and c) stories about various sociopolitical topics that mentioned MDM in connection with these issues. As shown in Table 5.1, independent *Resonansi* was most likely to devote an entire article to MDM (74.7%), followed by pro-government *24 Saati* (59.5%) and pro-opposition *Alia* (52.2%, $\chi^2=14.77$, $p=.02$). *Resonansi* and *Alia* were more likely to cover the movement as part of the general discussion about the media and its problems -- in 12.6% and 13% of articles, respectively -- than *24 Saati* (2.4%, $\chi^2=14.77$, $p=.02$). Pro-government *24 Saati* was most likely to mention the media democratization movement in passing, as part of the broader discussion about politics or the society (38.1%), than *Alia* (34.8%) or *Resonansi* (12.6%, $\chi^2=14.77$, $p=.02$). Pro-opposition 9th Channel was most likely to focus the story on MDM (83.5%), followed by pro-government Rustavi 2 (77.9%) and independent Kavkasia (69.8%, $\chi^2=18.65$, $p=.00$) (see Table 5.2). Kavkasia was most likely to mention the media democratization movement as part of the broader discussion about problems in the media (19.4%), followed by 9th Channel (4.5%) and Rustavi 2 (0.0%, $\chi^2=18.65$, $p=.00$). Pro-government Rustavi 2 was more likely to talk about MDM in

passing, as part of the discussion about other issues, such as politics or international affairs (22.1%) than Kavkasia (19.4%) or 9th Channel (11.9%, $\chi^2=18.65$, $p=.00$).

Table 5.1. Focus of coverage of MDM by newspapers

Focus of stories	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	Independent newspaper (n=87)
MDM	25 (59.5%)	12 (52.2%)	65 (74.7%)
Media, mentions MDM	1 (2.4%)	3 (13.0%)	11 (12.6%)
Other, mentions MDM	16 (38.1%)	8 (34.8%)	11 (12.6%)

$\chi^2=14.77$, $p<.05$

Table 5.2. Focus of coverage of MDM by TV stations

Focus of stories	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)
MDM	74 (77.9%)	147 (83.5%)	90 (69.8%)
Media, mentions MDM	0 (0.0%)	8 (4.5%)	14 (10.9%)
Other, mentions MDM	21 (22.1%)	21 (11.9%)	25 (19.4%)

$\chi^2=18.65$, $p<.001$

The media varied in terms of focus on the media democratization movement's organization, key campaign, key legislative proposals and the case. As shown in Table 5.3, the Coalition for Media Advocacy did not get much publicity in the media. Pro-government *24 Saati* and pro-opposition *Alia* named the Coalition in but two stories, or in 4.8% and 8.7% of materials, respectively, and independent *Resonansi* printed 10 stories about the Coalition (11.5%). The It Concerns You was covered more extensively, or in roughly one third of materials by *24 Saati* (31%), *Alia* (26.1%), and *Resonansi* (26.4%). The differences across newspapers' coverage of the Coalition for Media Advocacy and the It Concerns You campaign were not statistically significant. Issue-wise, pro-government *24 Saati* was most likely to cover the "must carry" rule (85.7%), followed by *Resonansi* (33.3%) and *Alia* (17.4%, $\chi^2=39.93$, $p=.00$), and least likely to cover

ownership and financial transparency in the media (7.1%), compared to *Resonansi* (29.9%) and *Alia* (17.4%, $\chi^2=8.91$, $p=.01$). The coverage of the Maestro TV case was spread more evenly -- *Alia* spoke about the Maestro in 31%, *24 Saati* in 39.1%, and *Resonansi* in 29.9% of materials -- such that the differences were not significant. As shown in Table 5.4, pro-government Rustavi 2 was least likely to talk about the Coalition for Media Advocacy (3.2%), with independent Kavkasia providing slightly more (3.9%) and pro-opposition 9th Channel five times more frequent coverage (19.2%, $\chi^2=7.23$, $p=.02$). The It Concerns You campaign received the most mention from pro-opposition 9th Channel (20.5%), with slightly less frequent coverage in independent Kavkasia (18.6%) and six times less frequent coverage in pro-government Rustavi 2 (3.2%, $\chi^2=15.08$, $p=.00$). Pro-opposition 9th Channel was most likely to cover the Maestro antennas case (47.2%), followed by independent Kavkasia (34.9%) and pro-government Rustavi 2 (11.6%, $\chi^2=34.44$, $p=.00$). Rustavi 2 led the coverage of the media ownership transparency proposal (29.5%), followed by Kavkasia (19.4) and 9th Channel (2.3%, $\chi^2=41.45$, $p=.00$). Note, pro-opposition 9th Channel provided little coverage of the transparency issue because the station was launched well after the media ownership legislation was adopted by the government in 2011. All three channels covered the “must carry” legislation extensively – Rustavi 2 in 66.3%, 9th Channel in 58.5%, and Kavkasia in 55% of materials – but the differences were not statistically significant.

Table 5.3. MDM organization, campaign and issues by newspapers

Topics	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	Independent newspaper (n=87)	chi ²	P
The Coalition for Media Advocacy	2 (4.8%)	2 (8.7%)	10 (11.5%)	1.54	.46
It Concerns You	13 (31.0%)	6 (26.1%)	23 (26.4%)	.32	.85

Must carry rule	36 (85.7%)	4 (17.4%)	29 (33.3%)	39.2	.00
Maestro TV antennas case	13 (31.0%)	9 (39.1%)	26 (29.9%)	.73	.69
Media ownership/financial transparency	3 (7.1%)	4 (17.4%)	26 (29.9%)	8.91	.05

Table 5.4 MDM organization, campaign and issues by TV stations

Topics	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)	chi ²	P
The Coalition for Media Advocacy	3 (3.2%)	18 (10.2%)	5 (3.9%)	7.23	.05
It Concerns You	3 (3.2%)	36 (20.5%)	24 (18.6%)	15.08	.01
Must carry rule	63 (66.3%)	103 (58.5%)	71 (55.0%)	2.95	.29
Maestro TV case	11 (11.6%)	83 (17.2%)	45 (34.9%)	34.44	.00
Media transparency	28 (29.5%)	4 (2.3%)	25 (19.4%)	41.45	.00

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Tone. This study analyzed the tone of coverage of the media democratization movement across types of news organizations. It proposed (H1a) that pro-government media would be more likely to use a negative tone about the media democratization movement than pro-opposition media. H2a suggested that pro-opposition media were more likely to use a positive tone about the media democratization movement than pro-government media. RQ5a asked about independent media's tone of coverage of the media democratization movement compared to other media types.

In general, a positive tone was prevalent in the coverage of the media democratization movement across all media (see Tables 5.5 and 5.6). Pro-opposition *Alia* used a positive tone in nearly all articles (91.3%), with independent *Resonansi* (78.2%) and pro-government *24 Saati* (64.3%) also mostly positive. Newspapers produced very few negative stories: *Alia* and *24 Saati* wrote one negative article (or 4.3% and 2.3%, respectively), and *Resonansi* none. Pro-government *24 Saati* wrote 33.3% of materials in

neutral tone, compared to independent *Resonansi* 21.8% and pro-opposition *Alia* 4.3% ($\chi^2 = 10.23, p < .05$) (see Table 5.5). As shown in Table 5.6, pro-government Rustavi 2 used a positive tone in the majority of stories (83.2%), as did pro-opposition 9th Channel (81.3%) and independent Kavkasia (82.3%). TV stations produced very few negative stories -- 5.3% for independent Rustavi 2, 3.4% for pro-opposition 9th Channel, and 1.6% for independent Kavkasia -- and about the same share of neutral materials -- 11.6% for Rustavi, 15.3% for 9th Channel and 15.5% for Kavkasia.

To test the hypotheses and answer research questions about the tone of coverage, the study used Pearson's chi square test. As per Table 5.5, the test showed significant differences in newspapers' tone of coverage of the media democratization movement: pro-government *24 Saati* used negative tone slightly less frequently (2.4%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (4.3%), even though both wrote no more than one negative articles. H1a was not supported. *Alia* used a positive tone more frequently (91.3%) than *24 Saati* (64.3%, $\chi^2 = 10.23, p = 0.03$). H2a was supported for the newspaper sample. As shown in Table 5.6, TV stations did not significantly differ by tone of coverage of the media democratization movement. H1a and H2a were not supported in the TV sample.

Answering RQ5a, independent *Resonansi*, which used a positive tone in 78.2% of stories and did not produce a negative article, was more likely than *24 Saati* (64.3%) but less likely than *Alia* (91.3%) to be positive regarding MDM and less likely than both newspapers to produce negative stories about MDM ($\chi^2 = 10.23, p = 0.03$) (see Table 5.5). The tone of coverage of MDM by independent Kavkasia -- 82.3% positive and 1.6% negative stories -- did not differ from the tone used by pro-government and pro-opposition stations in statistical terms (Table 5.6).

Table 5.5 Tone by newspapers

Tone	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	Independent newspaper (n=87)
Negative	1 (2.4%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Neutral	14 (33.3%)	1 (4.3%)	19 (21.8%)
Positive	27 (64.3%)	21 (91.3%)	68 (78.2%)

$\chi^2 = 10.23, p < .05$

Table 5.6. Tone by TV stations

Tone	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)
Negative	5 (5.3%)	6 (3.4%)	2 (1.6%)
Neutral	11 (11.6%)	27 (15.3%)	20 (15.5%)
Positive	79 (83.2%)	143 (81.3%)	107 (82.9%)

$\chi^2 = 3.11, p < .6$

Frames. This study analyzed dominant frames across news organizations, key mobilizing and demobilizing frames, and the usage of movement-advanced frames.

Dominant frames. H1b proposed that pro-government media would be more likely to use demobilizing frames about the media democratization movement than pro-opposition media. H2b proposed that pro-opposition media were more likely to use mobilizing frames about the media democratization movement than pro-government media. RQ5b asked about independent media's use of mobilizing and demobilizing frames as compared to other media.

One of the key findings of this study was the extensive use of mobilizing frames across dominant types of media in Georgia, which were used much more frequently than demobilizing frames (see Table 5.7 and Table 5.8). Pro-government *24 Saati* used mobilizing frames in 95.1% and demobilizing frames in 35.7% of materials ($\chi^2=21.33$,

p=00), based on McNemar's chi square test; Pro-opposition *Alia* used mobilizing frames in 95.6% and demobilizing frames in 13% of materials (p=00); Independent *Resonansi* used mobilizing frames in 91.1% and demobilizing frames in 34.4% of articles (chi²=47.17, p=.00); Pro-government Rustavi 2 used mobilizing frames significantly more frequently (96.8%) than demobilizing frames (13.7%, chi²=77.01, p=00); Pro-opposition 9th Channel used mobilizing frames in 93.8% and demobilizing frames in 19.9% of materials (chi²=126.00, p=00); Independent Kavkasia used mobilizing frames in 99.2% and demobilizing frames in 23.3% of materials (chi²=96.01, p=00). The analysis was based on McNemar's chi square test.

Table 5.7. Presence of mobilizing and demobilizing frames in newspapers

Media	Mobilizing	Demobilizing	chi ²	P
Pro-government newspaper	40 (95.1%)	15 (35.7%)	21.33	.00
Pro-opposition newspaper	22 (95.6%)	3 (13%)		.00
Independent newspaper	80 (91.1%)	29 (34.4%)	47.17	.00

Table 5.8. Presence of mobilizing and demobilizing frames in TV

Media	Mobilizing	Demobilizing	chi ²	P
Pro-government TV	92 (96.8%)	13 (13.7%)	77.01	.00
Pro-opposition TV	165 (93.8%)	35 (19.9%)	126.00	.00
Independent TV	128 (99.2%)	30 (23.3%)	96.01	.00

As per Table 5.9, Pearson's chi square test showed no significant differences between pro-government and pro-opposition newspapers' use of mobilizing frames. H1b and H2b were not supported in the newspaper sample. As to the TV sample, pro-government Rustavi 2 used more mobilizing frames (96.8%) than pro-opposition 9th

Channel (93.8%, $\chi^2=6.30$, $p=.04$), but the differences in TV stations' use of demobilizing frames were not significant. H1b and H2b were not supported in the TV sample (see Table 5.10).

Answering RQ5b, there were no significant differences between independent *Resonansi's* and other newspapers' use of mobilizing and demobilizing frames. Independent TV Kavkasia used mobilizing frames (99.2%) more often than pro-government Rustavi 2 (96.8%) and pro-opposition 9th Channel (93.8%) ($\chi^2=6.30$, $p=.04$) (see Table 5.10).

Table 5.9. Mobilizing and demobilizing frames by newspapers

Frames	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	Independent newspaper (n=87)	χ^2	p
Mobilizing	40 (95.2%)	22 (95.7%)	80 (92.2%)	.71	.70
Demobilizing	15 (35.7%)	3 (13%)	29 (33.3%)	4.13	.13

Table 5.10. Mobilizing and demobilizing frames by TV stations

Frames	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)	χ^2	p
mobilizing	92 (96.8%)	165 (93.8%)	128 (99.2%)	6.30	.04
Demobilizing	13 (13.7%)	39 (22.2%)	30 (23.3%)	3.60	.16

Key mobilizing frames. The media gave preference to some mobilizing frames, and neglected others. All newspapers used *free speech*, *rule of law*, *access to information* - *pluralism*, and *it concerns you* frames more often than others, however, each newspaper type emphasized one other frame (see Table 5.11). TV stations' top frames were the *free speech* and the *rule of law* frames.

Pro-government *24 Saati* used *free speech* frame (71.4%), *access to information – pluralism* (61.9%), *rule of law* (54.8%), *it concerns you* (31.1%), and *fair elections* (59.5%) frames more often than other frames, based on McNemar’s chi square test. Pro-opposition *Alia* used *free speech* frame (56.5%), *injustice* (39.1%), *rule of law* (39.1%), *access to information – pluralism* (30.4%), and *it concerns you* (26.1%), frames as its top frames. Independent *Resonansi* used the *free speech*, *rule of law* (51.7% each) and *access to information – pluralism* (44.2%) frames most frequently (see Table 5.11). pro-government *Rustavi 2* used *rule of law* (73.7%), *free speech* (60%) *access to information – plurality* (52.1%) *fair elections* (51.6%), *access to information – transparency* (25.3%) as its top frames (see Table 5.12). Pro-opposition 9th Channel used the *free speech* frame most often (80.6%), followed by the *access to information – plurality* (44.9%), *rule of law* (42.6%), *fair elections* (38.6%), *access to information – transparency* (25.3%), and *injustice* (25%) frames. Independent *Kavkasia*’s top frames were *free speech* (73.6%) and *rule of law* (64.3%), *access to information – plurality* frames (52.7%), *fair elections* (50.4%), and *injustice* (27.1%). Other frames were used by newspapers and TV stations in less than 20% of materials (see Table 5.12).

Table 5.11 shows the results of framing differences across newspapers, based on Pearson’s chi square test. Pro-government *24 Saati* used two frames more frequently than other newspapers: *access to information – plurality* (61.9%), which *24 Saati* used more frequently than independent *Resonansi* (44.2%) and pro-opposition *Alia* (33.3%, $\chi^2=6.55$, $p=.04$), and the *fair elections* frame (59.5%), which *24 Saati* again used more often than *Resonansi* (30.4%) or *Alia* (8.7%, $\chi^2=17.57$, $p=.00$). Pro-opposition *Alia* used *injustice* frame more frequently (39.1%), than independent *Resonansi* (18.4%) or

pro-government *24 Saati* (11.9%, $\chi^2=7.1$, $p=.02$). Independent *Resonansi* used the *access to information – transparency* (25.3%) frame more often than pro-opposition *Alia* (13%) or pro-government *24 Saati* (4.8%, $\chi^2=8.58$, $p=.01$).

Framing differences across TV stations, based on Pearson's chi square test, are shown Table 5.12. Pro-government Rustavi 2 used the *rule of law* frame (73.7%) more often than independent Kavkasia (64.3%) and pro-opposition 9th Channel (42.6%, $\chi^2=28.48$, $p=.00$). Rustavi 2 also used the *fair elections* frame (51.6%) more often than Kavkasia (50.4%) and 9th Channel (38.6%, $\chi^2=6.00$, $p=.05$), and the *access to information – transparency* (25.3%) frame, more frequently than Kavkasia (12.4%) and 9th Channel (1.7%, $\chi^2=36.23$, $p=.00$). Pro-opposition 9th Channel used the *free speech* frame (80.6%) more frequently than independent Kavkasia (73.6%) and pro-government Rustavi 2 (60%, $\chi^2=13.36$, $p=.00$), and movement-advanced *it concerns you* frame (20.5%) more frequently than Kavkasia (18.6%) and Rustavi 2 (3.2%, $\chi^2=15.08$, $p=.00$). Independent Kavkasia used the *injustice* frame (27.1%) most often, followed by 9th Channel (25%) and Rustavi 2 (2.1%, $\chi^2=25.60$, $p=.00$). Kavkasia also used the *rights* frame (14.8%) more often than 9th Channel (8.5%) and Rustavi 2 (1.1%, $\chi^2=12.98$, $p=.00$), as well as the *democratization* frame (14%) more often than Rustavi 2 (9.5%) and 9th Channel (4.5%, $\chi^2=8.33$, $p=.01$) (see Table 5.12).

Table 5.11. Mobilizing mater frames by newspapers

Frames	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	Independent newspaper (n=87)	χ^2	P
<i>Free speech</i>	30 (71.4%)	13 (56.4%)	45 (51.7%)	4.53	.1
<i>Access to info – plurality</i>	26 (61.9%)	7 (30.4%)	38 (44.2%)	6.55	.04

<i>Fair elections</i>	25 (59.5%)	2 (8.7%)	29 (33.3%)	17.57	.00
<i>Rule of law</i>	23 (54.8%)	9 (39.1%)	45 (51.7%)	1.54	.46
<i>It Concerns You</i>	13 (31.1%)	6 (26.1%)	23 (26.4%)	.32	.85
<i>Injustice</i>	5 (11.9%)	9 (39.1%)	16 (18.4%)	7.19	.03
<i>Democratization</i>	2 (4.8%)	3 (13%)	10 (11.5%)	1.75	.41
<i>Access to info – transparency</i>	2 (4.8%)	3 (13%)	22 (25.3%)	8.58	.01
<i>Rights</i>	0 (0.0%)	2 (8.7%)	5 (5.7%)	3.16	.20

Table 5.12 Mobilizing master frames by TV stations

Frames	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro- opposition TV (n=176)	independen t TV (n=129)	chi ²	p
<i>Rule of law</i>	70 (73.7%)	75 (42.6%)	83 (64.3%)	28.48	.00
<i>Free speech</i>	57 (60.0%)	141 (80.6%)	95 (73.6%)	13.36	.00
<i>Access to info – plurality</i>	49 (52.1%)	79 (44.9%)	68 (52.7%)	2.26	.32
<i>Fair elections</i>	49 (51.6%)	68 (38.6%)	65 (50.4%)	6.00	.05
<i>Access to info – transparency</i>	24 (25.3%)	3 (1.7%)	16 (12.4%)	36.23	.00
<i>Democratization</i>	9 (9.5%)	8 (4.5%)	18 (14.0%)	8.33	.05
<i>It Concerns You</i>	3 (3.2%)	36 (20.5%)	24 (18.6%)	15.08	.00
<i>Injustice</i>	2 (2.1%)	44 (25.0%)	35 (27.1%)	25.60	.00
<i>Rights</i>	1 (1.1%)	15 (8.5%)	19 (14.8%)	12.98	.00

Key demobilizing frames. Demobilizing frames were used in moderation by the Georgian newspapers' and TV stations' in their coverage of MDM, which was one of the significant findings of this study (see the section Dominant Frames). From the range of demobilizing frames and devices applied to social movements (Chan & Lee, 1984; Dardis, 2008; Di Cicco, 2010; McLeod & Hertog, 1999), the Georgian media used the *hinders free business, politicizing/scamming, hinders country, supports status quo* and *ineffective, impotent, counterproductive* frames most often, but in moderation. The news organizations have not used many marginalizing frames described in the literature. In several stories, the news media used new frames, referring to the lack of compliance

between activists' legislative proposals with the international practice (Gamisonia, 2012, June 15; 9th Channel, 2012, June 13) and with the existing legal framework in the country (Rustavi 2, 2012, June 22).

Based on McNemar's chi square test, pro-government *24 Saati* used the *hinders free business* (19%), *politicizing/scamming* (9.5%), *supports status quo* (7.1%), and *hinders country* (4.8%) frames most often. Pro-opposition *Alia* used the *hinders free business*, *politicizing/scamming*, *hinders country*, and *ineffective, impotent, counterproductive* frames evenly, in one article each. Independent *Resonansi* used the *hinders free business* (18.4%) and *politicizing/scamming* (14.9%) frames more often than others (see Table 5.13). Pro-government *Rustavi 2* used the *politicizing/scamming* and *hinders free business* (7.4% each) frames more often than others, while pro-opposition 9th Channel used the *politicizing /scamming* (10.2%) and *hinders free business* (8.5%) frames most often. Independent *Kavkasia* used *politicizing/scamming* (10.1%) and *hinders free business* (8.5%) as its top demobilizing frames (see Table 5.14).

The comparison of demobilizing frames across newspapers and TV stations, based on Pearson's chi square test, did not give statistically significant results. The pro-government, pro-opposition, and independent media used demobilizing frames in similar ways, without significant differences along the lines of political preference.

Table 5.13 Demobilizing frames by newspapers

Demobilizing frames	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	Independent newspaper (n=87)
<i>hinders free business</i>	8 (19%)	1 (4.3%)	16 (18.4%)
<i>politicizing / scam</i>	4 (9.5%)	1 (4.3%)	13 (14.9%)
<i>supports status quo</i>	3 (7.1%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.3%)

<i>hinders country</i>	2 (4.8%)	1 (4.3%)	1 (1.1%)
<i>ineffective, impotent, counterproductive</i>	1 (2.4%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)
<i>Other</i>	1 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

Table 5.14 Demobilizing frames by TV stations

Demobilizing frames	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)
<i>Politicizing / scamming</i>	7 (7.4%)	18 (10.2%)	13 (10.1%)
<i>Hinders free business</i>	7 (7.4%)	15 (8.5%)	11 (8.5%)
<i>Other</i>	4 (4.2%)	2 (1.1%)	3 (2.3%)
<i>Ineffective, impotent, counterproductive</i>	2 (2.1%)	5 (2.8%)	5 (3.9%)
<i>Hinders country</i>	0 (0.0%)	3 (1.7%)	0 (0.0%)
<i>Supports status quo</i>	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.1%)	1 (0.8%)
<i>Bothersome, disruptive</i>	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)

Movement-advanced frames. H1c proposed that pro-government media would be less likely to use movement-advanced frames than pro-opposition media. RQ5c inquired about independent media's use of movement-advanced frames.

Pearson's chi square test was used to test the hypotheses and answer the research question. As shown in Tables 5.11 and 5.12, all newspapers and TV stations used the key frame advanced by the movement – *it concerns you*. Newspapers devoted approximately the same share of materials, one fourth, to the frame such that the differences were not statistically significant. H1c was not supported for the newspaper sample. As per Table 5.12, pro-government Rustavi 2 used movement-advanced frame-- *it concerns you* --six times less frequently (3.2%) than pro-opposition 9th Channel (20.5%, $\chi^2=15.08$, $p=.00$). H1c was supported for the TV sample (see Table 5.12).

Independent *Resonansi*'s use of the *it concerns you* frame was not different from pro-government or pro-opposition newspapers use of the same frame. Independent

Kavkasia used movement-advanced frame less often (18.6%) than pro-opposition 9th Channel (20.5%), but more often than pro-government Rustavi 2 (3.2%, $\chi^2=15.08$, $p=.00$) (see Tables 5.11 and 5.12). RQ5c was answered.

Sources. This study identified and analyzed the media's use of ten categories of sources: a) the activists of MDM (involved in the Coalition for Media Advocacy and It Concerns You campaign), b) activist journalists of MDM (involved in the Coalition and It Concerns You), c) other activists, d) other journalists, e) government officials & MPs from ruling party, f) opposition MPs, g) non-parliamentary opposition, h) diplomats & internationals, i) ordinary people, j) others.

The study hypothesized (H1d) that pro-government media would be more likely to use government officials as sources about the media democratization movement than pro-opposition media. H2d proposed that pro-opposition media were more likely to use activists more often as sources than pro-government media. RQ5d asked about independent media's use of sources in comparison to other media types.

The media used most categories of sources, but some more often than others (see Tables 5.15 and 5.16). Based on McNemar's chi square test, pro-government *24 Saati* used "government officials & ruling party MPs" most frequently (59.5%), followed by "activists of MDM" (31%, $p=.01$), "journalists – others" (23.8%, $p=.00$), "activists – others" (19%, $p=.00$), "diplomats & internationals" (19%, $\chi^2=8.82$, $p=.00$), and "opposition MPs" (16.7%, $p=.00$), as its sources. Other sources were used in less than 10% of materials, and *24 Saati* did not speak to "ordinary people." Pro-opposition *Alia* used "activists – other" (34.8%), "journalists – other" (34.8%), "government officials & ruling party MPs" (21.7%), and "ordinary people" (13%) most frequently as sources,

while other categories of sources were used in less than 10% of materials. *Alia* did not speak to “activist journalists of MDM”. Independent *Resonansi* used source categories “government officials & MPs from ruling party” (35.6%), “journalists – others” (31%) and “activists – other” (29.9%) most frequently, followed by “activists of MDM” (23%, $\chi^2=2.70$, $p=.1$), while *Alia* used other categories of sources in less than 10% of materials. (see Table 5.15). As shown in Table 5.16, pro-government Rustavi 2 used “government officials & ruling party MPs” as source most frequently (73.7%), followed by “opposition MPs” (33.7%, $\chi^2=34.22$, $p=.00$), “diplomats & internationals” (20.2%, $\chi^2=32.44$, $p=.00$), “journalists – other” (12.8%, $\chi^2=54.15$, $p=.00$), and other categories in less than 10% of stories. Rustavi 2 has not spoken to “activist journalists of MDM.” Pro-opposition 9th Channel spoke to “journalists – other” (33.5%) and “activists of MDM” (25.6%). most often, followed by “government officials & MPs from ruling party” (29.5%), “activists – other” (17.1%), “diplomats & internationals” (10.3%, $\chi^2=20.77$, $p=.00$) and other sources. Independent Kavkasia spoke to “government officials & MPs from ruling party” (45.5%) most often, followed by “journalists – other” (31.8%, $\chi^2=3.41$, $p=.06$), “activists - other” (29.7%, $\chi^2=4.75$, $p=.02$), “activists – MDM” (21.7%. $\chi^2=17.52$, $p=.00$), “opposition MPs (16.3%. $\chi^2=47.17$, $p=.00$), “diplomats & internationals” (14.7%, $\chi^2=21.55$, $p=.00$), and other categories (see Table 5.16).

Table 5.15. Sources by newspapers

Sources	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	Independent newspaper (n=87)	χ^2	p
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Government officials & ruling party MPs	25 (59.5%)	5 (21.7%)	31 (35.6%)	10.54	.00
Activists - MDM	13 (31%)	3 (13%)	20 (23%)	2.69	.26
Journalists – other	10 (23.8%)	8 (34.8%)	27 (31%)	1.06	.58
Activists – other	8 (19%)	8 (34.8%)	26 (29.9%)	2.36	.30
internationals	8 (19.0%)	0 (0%)	8 (9.2%)	6.1	.05
Opposition MPs	7 (16.7%)	2 (8.7%)	15 (17.2%)	1.03	.59
Opposition non-parliament	2 (4.8%)	2 (8.7%)	7 (8.0%)	.54	.76
Activist journalists – MDM	1 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (13.8%)	7.25	.03
Other sources	1 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2.63	.26
Ordinary people	0 (0%)	3 (13%)	1 (1.1%)	11.61	.01

Table 5.16. Sources by TV stations

Sources	pro-government TV (n=95)	independent TV (n=129)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	chi ²	p
Government officials & ruling party MPs	70 (73.7%)	58 (45.0%)	52 (29.5%)	49.38	.00
Opposition MPs	32 (33.7%)	21 (16.3%)	13 (7.4%)	30.97	.00
Diplomats & internationals	19 (20.2%)	19 (14.7%)	18 (10.3%)	5.14	.1
Journalists – other	12 (12.8%)	41 (31.8%)	59 (33.5%)	14.37	.01
Activists – MDM	8 (8.4%)	28 (21.7%)	45 (25.6%)	11.48	.01
Opposition non-parliament	8 (8.4%)	7 (5.4%)	14 (8.0%)	.96	.62
Activists - other	7 (7.4%)	38 (29.7%)	30 (17.1%)	18.35	.00
Ordinary people	3 (3.2%)	2 (1.6%)	10 (5.7%)	3.64	.16
Activist journalists (MDM)	0 (0.0%)	4 (3.1%)	16 (9.1%)	12.18	.01
Other sources	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (2.3%)	5.20	.01

The study tested hypotheses and answered the research question based on Pearson's chi square test. As shown in Table 5.17, newspapers' use of two category of sources, "government officials & ruling party MPs" and a combined category of "activists (to include "activists of MDM", "activist journalists of MDM," and "activists-other") showed significant differences. Pro-government *24 Saati* was nearly three times

more likely to use government officials as sources (59.5%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (21.7%, $\chi^2=10.66$, $p=.00$). There were no differences in newspapers' use of combined "activist" category. H1d was supported, and H2d was not supported for the newspaper sample. In the TV sample, pro-government Rustavi 2 was twice more likely to use government officials as sources (73.7%) than pro-opposition 9th Channel (29.5%, $\chi^2=49.38$, $p=.00$), while pro-opposition 9th Channel was three times more likely to speak to activists than pro-government Rustavi 2 (15.8%, $\chi^2=24.12$, $p=.00$). H1d and H2d were supported for the TV sample (see Table 5.18).

As an answer to RQ5d, independent *Resonansi* used government sources more often (35.6%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (21.7%), but less frequently than *24 Saati* (59.5%, $\chi^2=10.66$, $p=.00$). The differences between *Resonansi*'s, *Alia*'s and *24 Saati*'s use of activists as sources were statistically not significant (see Table 5.17). Independent Kavkasia used government sources more often (45%) than pro-opposition 9th Channel (29.5%) but less frequently than pro-government Rustavi 2 (73.7%, $\chi^2=49.38$, $p=.00$); Independent Kavkasia spoke to activists more often (46.5%) than either 9th Channel (40%) or Rustavi 2 (15.8%, $\chi^2=24.12$, $p=.00$) (see Table 5.18).

Table 5.17. Government officials and activists as sources by newspapers

Sources	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	independent newspaper (n=87)	χ^2	p
Government officials & MPs from ruling party	25 (59.5%)	5 (21.7%)	31 (35.6%)	10.66	.01
Activists	20 (47.6%)	11(47.8%)	52 (59.8%)	2.19	.33

Table 18. Government officials and activists as sources by TV stations

Sources	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)	chi ²	p
Government officials & ruling party MPs	70 (73.7%)	52 (29.5%)	58 (45.0%)	49.38	.00
Activists	15 (15.8%)	70 (40.0%)	60 (46.5%)	24.12	.00

Frequency, briefness and placement of coverage. The study analyzed frequency, briefness, and placement of stories about MDM across types of news organizations.

Frequency. H1e proposed that pro-government media would cover the media democratization movement less frequently than pro-opposition media. RQ5e posed a question about the volume of independent media's coverage of the media democratization movement.

As shown in Table 5.19, pro-government *24 Saati*, and its weekly, *Weekend*, produced 42 stories about the media democratization movement during the timeframe of the study, from July, 2010, to October, 2012. In this period, a total of 814 issues of *24 Saati* and *Weekend* were published. Pro-opposition *Alia*, and its weekly, *Kronika*, produced 23 stories about MDM per 580 issues of *Alia* and *Kronika* published during the timeframe. Independent *Resonansi* and its weekly, *Mteli Kvira*, produced 87 stories per 814 issues published during the timeframe of the study. Story per issue ratio was .05 for *24 Saati*, .04 stories per issue for *Alia*, and .11 stories for *Resonansi*. H1e was not supported for the newspaper sample. As shown in Table 21, TV stations aired 400 stories about the media democratization movement during the timeframe of the study, from July, 2010, to October, 2012. Pro-government Rustavi 2 produced 95 stories per 10,793 news

programs aired during the timeframe of the study (to include 12 daily newscasts, a business edition, and a weekly analytical program). Pro-opposition 9th Channel aired 176 stories per 1825 programs (12 daily newscasts) aired between its launch on April 30, 2012 and Election Day of October 1, 2012. Independent Kavkasia aired 129 stories per 2,463 programs during the timeframe of the study (to include three daily newscasts). Story per newscast ratio was .008 for pro-government Rustavi 2, .09 stories per newscast for 9th Channel, and .05 stories per newscast for independent Kavkasia. Pro-opposition 9th Channel covered MDM more frequently (nearly one story per ten newscasts) than pro-government Rustavi 2. H1e was supported for the TV sample (see Table 5.19).

As per RQ5e, independent *Resonansi* wrote more frequently about the media democratization movement (1 article per ten issues published) than pro-opposition *Alia* (.04 per issue) or pro-government *24 Saati* (.05 per issue). Independent Kavkasia covered MDM more frequently (.05 stories per newscast) than pro-government station (.01 stories per newscast), but less frequently than pro-opposition 9th Channel (.09 stories per newscast) (see Table 5.19).

Table 5.19 Frequency of coverage of MDM by newspapers and TV

	pro- government newspaper (n=95)	pro- opposition newspaper (n=176)	independent newspaper (n=129)	pro- government TV (n=95)	pro- opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)
# of issues/ newscasts	814	580	814	10792	1825	2463
# of stories about MDM story to issue/ newscast ratio	.05	.04	.11	.008	.09	.05

Brief versus lengthy coverage. H1f proposed that pro-government media would be more likely to provide brief coverage of the media democratization movement than pro-opposition media. H2f proposed that pro-opposition media would be more likely to provide lengthier coverage of the media democratization movement than pro-government media. RQ5f inquired about the briefness versus depth of the coverage of the media democratization movement in the independent media.

The briefness (or length) of coverage was operationalized as genre-based treatment of the subject – MDM. The use of newspaper briefs and TV voice/overs, a shorter genre, indicated briefness of coverage, whereas the use of newspaper stories, interviews, opinions and editorials and TV packages, referred to lengthy coverage.

As shown in Table 5.20, newspapers used several genre to treat the subject. Pro-government *24 Saati* limited the coverage of the media democratization movement to news briefs in 35.7% of materials, while pro-opposition *Alia* wrote only one news brief, amounting to 4.3% of articles. Independent *Resonansi* used news briefs in 18.4% of materials. Pro-opposition *Alia* wrote more stories (69.8%) opinions (13%) and interviews (13%) than pro-government *24 Saati*, which wrote 64.3% stories, but did not write opinions or interviews. Independent *Resonansi* wrote slightly fewer stories (63.2%) than *Alia* or *24 Saati*, and less opinions (5.7%) and interviews (3.4%) than *Alia* ($\chi^2=25.14$, $p<.01$) However, *Resonansi* editorialized (6.9%) on the subject of media democratization, while other newspapers have not. In the TV sample, shown in Table 5.21, pro-government Rustavi 2 used voice over (V/O) in 60% of materials, pro-opposition 9th Channel in 57%, and independent Kavkasia in 55%. Rustavi 2 aired packages in 34.7%

cases, while 9th Channel used packages in 26.9% and Kavkasia in 38% of cases. 9th Channel had anchors read stories in 11.4% of cases, while Rustavi 2 and Kavkasia did so in 2.1% and 7% of cases, respectively. Rustavi 2 aired one interview (2.1%), 9th Channel five interviews (2.1%), and Kavkasia none (see Table 5.21).

Table 5.20 Genre by newspapers

Genre	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	independent newspaper (n=87)
News brief	15 (35.7%)	1 (4.3%)	16 (18.4%)
Story	27 (64.3%)	16 (69.6%)	55 (63.2%)
Opinion	0 (0.0%)	3 (13%)	5 (5.7%)
Interview	0 (0.0%)	3 (13%)	3 (3.4%)
Editorial	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (6.9%)
Other	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.3%)

$\chi^2=25.14, p<.01$

Table 5.21. Genre by TV

Genre	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)
V/O	57 (60.0%)	100 (57.0%)	71 (55.0%)
Package	33 (34.7%)	47 (26.9%)	49 (38.0%)
Anchor's text	2 (2.1%)	21 (11.4%)	9 (7.0%)
Interview	1 (2.1%)	5 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)
Other	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (6.9%)

$\chi^2=16.06, p<.05$

To test hypotheses and answer research questions, the study used Pearson's chi square test. The study grouped "stories", "opinions", "interviews", "editorials" and "other genre" into the category "stories" and compared it to the category "news briefs." As shown in Table 5.22, government-leaning 24 *Saati* produced news briefs more often

(36.7%) than opposition-leaning *Alia* (4.3%, $\chi^2=9.66$, $p=.01$). H1f was supported. Opposition-leaning *Alia* produced more “stories” (95.6%) than government-leaning *24 Saati* (64.3%, $\chi^2=9.66$, $p=.01$). H2f was supported for the newspaper sample. In the TV sample, regrouping TV packages and interviews into a new category “in-depth stories”, and comparing its use to the combined use of voiceovers (V/O) and anchors’ texts -- “brief news” genre -- did not produce significant differences across TV stations, based on Pearson’s chi square test. H1f was H2f were not supported for the TV sample (see Table 5.23).

Answering RQ5f, independent *Resonansi* was less likely to use news briefs (18.4%) than *24 Saati* (36.7%) but more likely than *Alia* (4.3%, $\chi^2=9.66$, $p=.01$). It was less likely than *Alia* (95.6%) and more likely than *24 Saati* (64.3%) to produce “stories” (81.7%, $\chi^2=9.66$, $p=.01$) (see Table 5.22). TV stations’ use of genre were no different in terms of statistical significance (see Table 5.23).

Table 5.22 Brief news and longer stories by newspapers

Genre	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	independent newspaper (n=87)
News brief	15 (35.7%)	1 (4.3%)	16 (18.4%)
Story	27 (64.3%)	22 (95.7%)	71 (81.6%)
$\chi^2=9.66$, $p<.01$			

Table 5.23 Brief news and longer stories by TV stations

Genre	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)
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News brief	59 (62.1%)	122 (69.3%)	80 (62.0%)
Stories	36 (37.9%)	54 (30.7%)	49 (38.0%)

chi²=2.29, p<.31

Placement. H1g proposed that pro-government media would place the coverage of MDM less prominently in terms of assigned newspaper space and airtime than pro-opposition media. H2g proposed that pro-opposition media would place the coverage of MDM more prominently in terms of assigned newspaper space and airtime than pro-government media. RQ5g inquired about independent media's placement of MDM coverage in terms of prominence of assigned page space or airtime.

As shown in Table 5.24, newspapers differed in terms of newspaper space assigned to the stories about media democratization movement. Pro-government *24 Saati* placed materials on the front page in 59.5% of cases, while pro-opposition *Alia* did not (0.0%, chi²=36.82, p=.00). H1g was not supported. Pro-government *24 Saati* was less likely to put materials about MDM on less prominent pages 6-16 (0.0%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (21.7%, chi²=36.82, p=.00). H2g was not supported in the newspaper sample. In the TV sample, pro-government Rustavi 2 aired 20% of stories during less prominent morning news segment, while pro-opposition 9th Channel did not air stories about MDM in the morning (chi²=71.44, p<.00). Pro-opposition 9th Channel aired 60.2% of stories during the primetime hours, compared to pro-government Rustavi 2 (49.5%, chi²=71.44, p=.00). H1g and H2g were supported for the TV sample. Independent Kavkasia did not air stories in the morning, and aired 74.4% of stories during the primetime segment, that is, more often than pro-government Rustavi 2 (49.5%) and pro-opposition 9th Channel (60.2%, chi²=71.44, p=.00) (see Table 5.25).

Table 5.24. Story placement by newspapers

Page	pro-government newspaper (n=42)	pro-opposition newspaper (n=23)	independent newspaper (n=87)
Front page	22 (59.5%)	0 (0.0%)	18 (20.9%)
Pages 2-5	15 (40.5%)	18 (78.3%)	42 (48.8%)
Other pages	0 (0.0%)	5 (21.7%)	26 (30.2%)

chi²=36.82, p<.00

Table 5.25. Story placement by TV stations

News program	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)
Morning	19 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Afternoon	29 (30.5%)	70 (39.8%)	33 (25.6%)
Evening	47 (49.5%)	106 (60.2%)	96 (74.4%)

chi²=71.44, p<.00

Discussion

This study analyzed the coverage of the media democratization movement, an emergent movement concerned with free speech and democratization in Georgia, across different types of news organizations to identify dominant tone, frames, sources, and other elements of the coverage and explain them in the context of news organizations' political ties (or lack thereof) with the government and the opposition.

A large amount of the literature posits that social movements receive demobilizing, marginalizing coverage in the media, because the media resist social change (Chan & Lee, 1984; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980; Olien et al, 1995). Other literature (Harlow & Johnston, 2011; Weaver & Scacco, 2013) maintains the recent

trend of media diversification and the diffusion of Internet media lead to more neutral and fair coverage of social movements in some media.

This study, in very broad terms, was based on theorizing that dynamic changes in emergent democracies, such as Georgia, led to great disparities among political elites and the media, and the emergence of a new type of independent media, open to change and sympathetic to social movements. Social movements in these environments have the independent media, but also opposition media, as their natural allies against the government and the system. Based on this theorizing, the study hypothesized more positive and supportive coverage of social movements in the media aligned with the opposition and in the independent media, and more negative coverage in government-aligned media. The hypothesized positive coverage of Georgia's media democratization movement was also based on the literature, which predicts more favorable treatment of emergent movements than of established movements (Gitlin, 1980).

The key finding of the study is largely positive coverage of the media democratization movement. Newspapers and TV stations across the political spectrum used mobilizing frames more often than demobilizing frames, and applied a positive tone in the majority of stories. Demobilizing, marginalizing frames -- powerful weapons against protest around the world -- were applied rarely, and often side-by-side with mobilizing frames. The study has explained this finding based on aspects of political and media environment in Georgia. In 2010-2012, the government was facing strong political opposition, and the media were split into pro-government, pro-opposition, and centrist, non-engaged groups. The opposition, and pro-opposition media, supported the media democratization movement as a strong challenge to the government they hoped to defeat.

The independent media had their own reasons to support the movement. Both independent and pro-opposition media experienced government pressures, were in a disadvantageous position compared to pro-government media, and stood to benefit from the reform of media environment proposed by activists. As to the positive tone and mobilizing frames in pro-government media, it appears to be the result of two factors: a) citizens of Georgia have shown strong respect for the freedom of speech and press -- every seventh citizen polled in 2013 said freedom of media was the most important issue facing the country (Navarro & Woodward, 2013) – making marginalization of activists demanding greater press freedom unacceptable to readers and viewers, and b) the government accepted and legitimized the media democratization movement demands for greater transparency in ownership and financing of media, and for mandatory distribution of broadcast signals by cable operators. (The government has not responded to the activists' demand to lift the ban on distribution of Maestro TV's antennas.) In April 2011, the government adopted new ownership transparency legislation, and, in June 2012, adopted into law the “must carry/must offer” principles of mandatory distribution of broadcast signals by cable operators. The coverage in pro-governmental media focused on the government's response to the activists' demands, and, in general, on government's media democratization reform; hence, the use of positive tone and mobilizing frames. This explanation is corroborated by more frequent use of government officials as sources by the pro-government media than by the pro-opposition or the independent media. Rustavi 2 used government sources in 73.7% of stories, and pro-government *24 Saati* in 59.5% of stories, more often than other news organizations.

Despite overall positive coverage, all news organizations used marginalizing frames. The government attempted to “change the conversation,” that is, reframe activists’ demands such that their argument would lose its intended meaning. For instance, the key demobilizing frame has been *hinders free business*, which reframed activists’ demands for transparency in the media ownership and financing, and for the “must carry” regulation, in terms of the free market. The discussion framed as *hinders free market* treated media as businesses, and labeled activists’ demands for disclosure of proprietary information, such as ownership and financial flows, as intrusive and unjustifiable burdens on free businesses. The media’s use of *politicizing/scamming* frame portrayed activists as politically motivated individuals, and their demands as a political game.

As theorized by the study, there were differences in the treatment of MDM across types of media. These differences -- some more obvious than others-- played out in the choice of specific frames, genre, sources, page space and airtime. In many cases, the news organizations used frames in line with their political alliances and tastes. In general, the media carry some and ignore other frames, advanced by social actors, and deploy their own frames (de Vreese, 2012; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Pro-opposition and independent media carried activists’ frames, and aligned more or less closely with their discourse. Pro-governmental media, which refrained from direct attacks and slandering of the movement, used frames preferred by the government, and reduced the movement’s importance by shaping stories in the brief genre of news briefs and airing TV stories during less-popular morning newscasts. Pro-government newspaper *24 Saati* shaped 35.7% of its stories as news briefs (two to three short paragraphs), compared to pro-

opposition *Alia* (4.3%) or independent *Resonansi* (18.4%). Pro-government *24 Saati* also wrote fewer stories about MDM (64.3%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (69.9%). While *24 Saati* placed stories about MDM on the front page significantly more often than two other newspapers, stories shaped as news briefs lacked prominence. *24 Saati* was also less likely to focus on the movement, and instead discussed MDM in connection with other issues. For instance, *24 Saati* discussed the movement's issues in terms of their importance for conducting fair elections, which was the government's preferred discourse. In the months prior to the 2012 parliamentary elections, the government adopted the "must carry" regulation, framing it as a major initiative to ensure the fairness of the election. Pro-government *24 Saati* used frames associated with the elections -- *fair elections* and *access to information – plurality* -- two and six times more often than independent *Resonansi* and pro-opposition *Alia*, respectively, and covered the "must carry" regulation twice more often than other MDM issues (85.7%) and more frequently than other newspapers. *24 Saati*, which used government officials as sources in 59.5% of articles, essentially covered the government's role in media democratization in Georgia.

Pro-government TV station Rustavi 2 also gave predominantly positive coverage of the media democratization movement. However, the coverage was limited to 8 stories per 1,000 newscasts (.008 stories per newscast), and was almost ten times less frequent than the coverage of MDM on pro-opposition 9th Channel (.09 stories per newscast, that is, 9 stories per 100 newscasts). 9th Channel, the station launched by the opposition on April 30, 2012, that is, five months ahead of the parliamentary elections, produced twice as many stories as Rustavi 2 during the period sampled in the study. The literature describes marginalization by not mentioning key players in a movement, aimed at

reducing their importance and disassociating them from issues (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). “Sealing off” (Gitlin, 1980) information about the movement, rather than openly slandering the protesters, appeared to have been Rustavi 2’s strategy. Rustavi 2 spoke to activists in only 15.8% of cases, compared to government officials featured in 73.7% of stories, and did not speak to a single activist journalist, a vocal and strong group in MDM. The station aired MDM stories in less-popular morning newscasts, which other two stations never did, and was least likely in the TV sample to air MDM stories in primetime. Rustavi 2 was most likely to mention MDM issues in stories focused on other issues, such as politics or the elections. Rustavi 2 covered the Coalition for Media Democracy and the It Concerns You campaign less often than two other stations. It covered the media ownership issue more frequently than other stations – Rustavi 2 was itself accused of non-transparent ownership, and responded to these allegations in the coverage – and was least likely to cover the issue of Maestro TV’s antennas. Rustavi 2’s preferred frames were *rule of law, fair elections*, – the frames used by the government in its own discourse on reforms -- and the *access to information - transparency* frame, related to the media ownership transparency coverage. Rustavi 2 was least likely to use activist-advanced *it concerns you* frame. Rustavi 2 abstained from demobilizing frames, airing them in no more than 13.7% of stories.

Pro-opposition media, consistent with theorizing in this study, supported the social movement. Not only did these media use predominantly positive tone and mobilizing frames, but they also supported the movement in their decisions about specific frames, tone, genre, frequency, space and airtime of coverage. Almost entire coverage in pro-opposition *Alia* (91.3%) was positive, exceeding the frequency of positive stories in

pro-government *24 Saati* (64.3%) and independent *Resonansi* (78.2%). *Alia* wrote most frequently in the longer genre -- stories, opinions and interviews -- among newspapers sampled. Pro-opposition 9th Channel's frequency of coverage -- nearly one story per ten newscasts aired -- was significantly higher than two other two stations' frequency of coverage (8 stories per 1,000 newscasts for Rustavi 2 and 5 stories per 100 newscasts for Kavkasia.). 9th Channel mentioned the Coalition for Media Advocacy (10.2%) and the It Concerns You (20.5%) much more often than other stations, aired stories in primetime and gave voice to activists more frequently than pro-government Rustavi 2 (but less frequently than independent Kavkasia). In its choice of frames, 9th Channel was closer to activists' discourse than Rustavi 2. 9th Channel accentuated *free speech*, the activists' top frame, more often than other stations. 9th Channel was also most likely in the TV sample to use activists' key frame, *it concerns you*. The producer at 9th Channel, interviewed by the study, was a member in one of the organizations of the Coalition for Media Advocacy, which have undoubtedly positively affected the coverage. 9th Channel used demobilizing frames from government's discourse, but in a small share of stories (10.2%).

Certain features of the coverage in pro-opposition media, especially *Alia*, hinted at the political motivation behind the support to the movement. *Alia* used *injustice* frame more often than two other newspapers, and covered MDM in the broader discussion of media problems. *Alia* was apparently painting a picture of injustices in Georgia in broad strokes, reflecting the oppositional political discourse. The strongest oppositional player, the "Coalition – Georgian Dream," was trying to entice the protest vote ahead of the 2012 parliamentary elections. Their meetings and demonstrations were taking place throughout

Georgia, with the “Coalition - Georgian Dream” employing collective action strategies more often than normal whistle-stop campaigning. According to the international observers, the campaign was “polarized, tense, and characterized by the use of harsh rhetoric and a few instances of violence” (Department of State, 2012). According to some observers, the fate of the elections was decided in favor of the opposition when pro-opposition 9th Channel aired the story about injustices and tortures in the Georgian prisons. The *injustice* frame used by *Alia* tapped into the oppositional rhetoric. Issue-wise, *Alia* focused on government’s seizure of thousands of Maestro TV’s antennas slated for free-of-charge distribution – the most flagrant and tangible injustice -- and wrote about it more often than about other two issues of MDM. Pro-opposition *Alia* and 9th Channel were least likely to talk to the government sources. *Alia* wrote about MDM no more frequently (4 per 100 issues) than pro-government *24 Saati* (5 per 100 issues), and most of its coverage occurred in 2012, that is, during the height of the political campaign. 9th Channel provided all its coverage in 2012, the year in which the station was launched. 9th Channel was closed shortly after the opposition won the elections.

Georgia’s independent media have had the closest connection to activists. Over the years, the civil sector provided assistance, advice and protection to the media, and voiced its concerns, while the media have dutifully covered the civil agenda. Both the editor in chief of *Resonansi* and news director of *Kavkasia* were members of organizations which formed the Coalition for Media Advocacy. The study found supportive and positive, if restrained, coverage of MDM in independent *Resonansi* and *Kavkasia*. While independent *Resonansi* covered MDM most frequently -- *Resonansi* published one story about MDM per ten issues and focused stories on MDM more

frequently than other two newspapers -- *Resonansi*'s treatment of the media democratization was not as enthusiastic and positive as pro-opposition *Alia*'s. *Resonansi* wrote fewer positive stories (78.2%) than *Alia* (91.3%), (but more than pro-government *24 Saati*, which was positive in 64.3% of articles). *Resonansi* wrote fewer stories of the longer genre than *Alia*, (but also fewer news briefs than *24 Saati*,) and placed the coverage of MDM less prominently – the stories were printed on *Resonansi*'s inside pages -- than two other newspapers. Independent *Resonansi* appeared interested in reflecting discourses around MDM more fully than other newspapers. *Resonansi* used government officials as sources many times more often than *Alia* (but less often than pro-government *24 Saati*), and has spoken to at least one category of activists (“activist journalists of MDM”) more often than other newspapers. *Resonansi* also covered all three issues of MDM evenly. The frame it used more often than other newspapers was *access to information – transparency*.

Independent *Kavkasia*, also covered the movement frequently and positively, but less frequently (5 stories per 100 newscasts) than 9th Channel (9 stories per 100 newscasts). *Kavkasia* was more likely than other TV stations to report about MDM in primetime. Two-thirds of *Kavkasia*'s stories about MDM were aired in its evening newscasts. Independent *Kavkasia* focused more often than other TV stations on MDM in the context of other problems in the media. Like *Resonansi*, *Kavkasia* gave voice to both the government and the activists. The station spoke to the government in about half of its stories, almost twice more often than pro-opposition 9th Channel (but less often than pro-government *Rustavi 2*), and spoke to activists more frequently than other TV stations. Like *Resonansi*, independent *Kavkasia* spread its coverage among all three issues of the

media democratization movement more or less evenly. Being under greater pressure than independent *Resonansi* – the pressures on the broadcast media were stronger than on the print press -- independent Kavkasia used the *injustice* frame more frequently (27.1%) than either pro-opposition 9th Channel (25%) or independent Rustavi 2 (2.1%). Kavkasia, as an outspoken critic of the government, was experiencing a host of problems, and, unlike rich 9th Channel, was less protected. Kavkasia's top demobilizing frame, the *ineffective, impotent, counterproductive* frame, was associated with perceived lack of progress in the media democratization movement.

Chapter summary

This chapter outlined the results of the quantitative content analysis of three Georgian newspapers and three TV stations. The study posed 12 hypotheses and 7 research questions about the tone, frames, frequency, genre and prominence of coverage. Some theoretical predictions in the study were corroborated by the findings, while other were not. In general, politically engaged media stood by their respective parties in selecting tone (*24 Saati, Alia*), movement-advanced frames (Rustavi 2, 9th Channel), genre (*24 Saati, Alia*), sources (*24 Saati, Rustavi 2, 9th Channel*), and prominence (Rustavi 2, 9th Channel) of coverage of the media democratization movement. The independent media were most likely to hold a centrist position, which appeared less influenced by political actors than editorial positions of pro-government and pro-opposition media.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

This study analyzed the construction of reality around the media democratization movement (MDM) in Georgia. The movement, which has engaged with free speech and press issues since the early years of Georgia's independence from the Soviet Union, made great progress in the areas of journalists' personal rights and legislative protections of the freedom and independence of press (Topuria, 2000, L.T., 2014, April, 4; Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014) but lacked sustainability and coordination. In April 2011, the MDM formed an organization, the Coalition for Media Advocacy, and launched a sustained activist program to improve access to information for journalists and regular citizens. The movement successfully lobbied for the adoption of stricter ownership and financial disclosure requirements in the broadcast sector. It also launched a formal campaign, It Concerns You, pushing the government to adopt into law the "must carry" principle, which requires cable operators to distribute all TV signals and thus breaks the government's effective stranglehold over nationwide news. In addition, the movement publicized the case of TV Maestro's 140,000 satellite antennas, intended for distribution to viewers by pro-opposition Maestro TV, but seized by the government months prior to the 2012 Parliamentary Elections on the grounds that distribution amounted to vote buying (Freedom House, 2013; IREX, 2013) The study pursued three goals: 1) to

identify the dominant tone and frames of coverage of the Georgian media democratization movement, operationalized as the coverage of the Coalition for Media Advocacy (MDM's SMO), the It Concerns You (MDM's campaign), the "must carry/must offer" and media transparency legislation, and the Maestro satellite antennas case (MDM's issues), across types of news organizations; 2) to identify frames constructed by the media democratization movement; and 3) to analyze whether political factors, such as news organizations' ties with the government or the opposition (or lack thereof), and frames constructed by activists influenced the news coverage. To enhance the analysis, the study interviewed activists and activist journalists about the goals of MDM and the rationale behind its framing choices. Finally, the study interviewed news producers and reporters who had covered MDM about their attitudes towards the movement and experiences on the beat. In sum, the study analyzed the construction of reality around the media democratization movements in two realms: the social movement and the news media.

To identify movement frames and clarify the rationale behind these frame choices, the study qualitatively analyzed 17 statements issued by MDM from April 13, 2011, to October 1, 2012. It conducted 12 in-depth interviews with activists and activist journalists, who were leaders in founder organizations in the Coalition for Media Advocacy. For media frames, the study content analyzed 152 newspaper and 400 TV stories about MDM produced by pro-government newspaper *24 Saati* and pro-government Rustavi 2 television, pro-opposition newspaper *Alia* and pro-opposition 9th

Channel, and independent newspaper *Resonansi* and independent TV Kavkasia¹⁴ between July 1, 2010, and October 1, 2012. The study also interviewed two news producers, employed by Rustavi 2 and 9th Channel (the producer at Kavkasia TV refused to be interviewed) and three reporters employed by *24 Saati*, *Alia* and *Resonansi*.

The literature on social movements and media, written from the social constructivist and conflict perspectives, posits that the news media's alliance with powerful elites leads to demobilizing coverage of social movements as challengers of these elites and the existing social order. Media propaganda (Herman and Chomsky, 1988), media hegemony (Gitlin, 1980), and media and conflict theories (Olien et al, 1995), developed in the 1970s and onwards, explain media's negative framing of social movements by media's entrenched ties with the elites and their interest in maintaining the status quo. According to Gitlin (1977, 1980), structural influences, emanating from elite ownership of the media, interact with aspects of journalists' professional codes and invariably lead to negative and marginalizing framing of social movements. The protest paradigm (Chan & Lee, 1984) builds on Gitlin's ideas and posits that journalists' coverage of protests is more diverse and determined by their ideologically-based "reporting paradigms." More recent scholarship has found greater diversity in the

¹⁴ This categorization is based on newspapers' and TV stations' perceived editorial bias, documented by industry watchdogs (Freedom House, 2009-11) and on the monitoring of their coverage of the 2012 elections (www.mediamonitoring.ge). None of the newspapers or TV stations have explicitly endorsed either the government or the opposition in the 2012 campaign or at any other times.

coverage of protests (Harlow & Johnston, 2011; Weaver & Scacco, 2013) and explained it by the recent trend of media diversification, the emergence of Internet-based media, and media's greater ideological posturing. In non-Western contexts (Mauersberger, 2012; McCarthy et al, 2008; Yuan, 2013), those outlets in the media landscape oriented towards social change are more sympathetic towards movement causes.

This literature led to theorizing in this study that political factors, such as news organizations' ties with the government or the opposition (or lack thereof) would influence the news media's use of mobilizing and demobilizing frames. Pro-government media would be interested in the maintenance of the status quo and therefore would ignore or negatively cover social movements, using demobilizing frames. By contrast, pro-opposition media would be interested in social change, willing to cover social movements extensively and positively, and use mobilizing frames more often than demobilizing frames. The study asked whether the independent media, when experiencing government pressures and unfair competition from pro-government media, would also cover social movements positively and rely on mobilizing frames. The study took into consideration the independent media's long-standing ties with the media democratization movement. The study hypothesized that movement actors stood a greater chance of pushing their frames into pro-opposition and independent media than pro-government media.

The key finding of the study was the prevalent use of positive tone and mobilizing frames in the coverage of the media democratization movement across all types of media. Newspapers and TV stations across the political spectrum used a predominantly positive tone and more mobilizing than demobilizing frames. While the study theorized about

positive coverage of the movement in pro-opposition and independent media, it did not predict positive coverage in pro-government media. The media democratization movement has been spared negative and marginalizing coverage, a proven weapon against social movements and social change around the world. Pro-opposition and independent media provided consistent, extensive, and enthusiastic coverage of MDM. Pro-government media focused predominantly on those MDM issues that were eventually endorsed by the government and covered them positively, relying on government sources. Pro-government TV simply remained silent most of the time, covering MDM ten times less frequently than pro-opposition station. This finding of predominantly positive coverage of the social movement is at odds with much of the early literature on social movements and media, which predicts consistently negative and marginalizing coverage of social movements (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980, Tichenor et al, 1970; Olien et al, 1989, 1994, 1995), and complies with more recent literature, which finds supportive coverage of social movements in some parts of media (Harlow & Johnston, 2011; Mauersberger, 2012; Weaver & Scacco, 2013; Yuan, 2013).

The study explains the patterns of news coverage of MDM in the context of the news and political environment in Georgia, drawing on the conflict perspective of social movements. In dynamically changing, emerging democracies, such as Georgia, the elites and the news media are split. Parts of the news media align themselves with the government, while other parts side with the political opposition. There is no agreement between the government and the opposition about the need to maintain the status quo, and the two are not joining forces against social movements, as in more developed countries. On the contrary, the opposition works to weaken the government in alliance

with social movements. News organizations aligned with the government or the opposition have different editorial policies towards social movements, consistent with their political ties.

The strongest political opposition of the Georgian government, the Coalition – Georgian Dream, and the media it owned or worked with, supported the media democratization movement. The opposition was interested in helping activists expose violations of press freedoms in Georgia, which negatively affected the government’s image as a progressive and democratic force among Georgian citizens and the international community. The news producer at the pro-opposition TV station and the reporter at the pro-opposition newspaper, sampled by the study, said their news organizations supported the media democratization movement. The producer said the pro-opposition station helped MDM by “positive coverage and otherwise” (T. R., personal interview, April 10, 2014). The reporter at the pro-opposition newspaper admitted to having written positive, “emotionally colored” (T. O., personal interview, May 3, 2014) stories, taking part in protests, and signing petitions on behalf of activists. She said the media activism “was one of her strongest experiences in years” (T. O., personal interview, May 3, 2014). Her newspaper, *Alia*, was most likely among the newspapers in the sample to use a positive tone in coverage of MDM. *Alia*, by some accounts (Tsiklauri, 2012, June 2), received financial backing from the opposition. Pro-opposition 9th Channel, a television launched by billionaire opposition leader Bidzina Ivanishvili, aired ten times as many stories in six months after its launch in April 2012 as pro-government Rustavi 2 during the timeframe of the study (July, 2010, to October, 2012). 9th Channel exceeded independent Kavkasia in frequency of coverage of MDM.

The station used the activists' top master frame, *free speech*, and the activists' new frame, *it concerns you*, more often than the other stations. The news producer at 9th Channel said in the interview that her channel, and two other critical TV stations, TV Maestro and Kavkasia, had engaged in advocacy journalism and supported MDM.

The other type of news media analyzed by the study – the independents – have had long-standing strong ties with the civil sector (Topuria, 2000) and the media democratization movement. These media were new forces in the society and developed and gained strength as a result of the process of transition (Spark, 2008). At the start of the latest wave of activism, which this study has analyzed, the media democratization movement established close ties with the independent media. Four influential media unions -- the Georgian Regional Media Association, the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters, the Regional Broadcasters' Network, and the Georgian Charter of Journalism Ethics--became formal founders of the movement's SMO, the Coalition for Media Advocacy. These unions, uniting hundreds of members from the independent media but also from the pro-opposition media, supported the movement and have undoubtedly positively influenced member journalists' attitudes towards MDM. The reporter of independent *Resonansi*, interviewed by the study, said she could not "recall a single journalist who was against" MDM proposals (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014). She said MDM was "a different kind of issue," and she "could not" but provide supportive coverage (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014). But she also said her organization was against advocacy in reporting. The independent media have drawn solid support to the movement. Independent Kavkasia used mobilizing frames more often than other TV stations. Independent newspaper *Resonansi* used a positive tone in covering

MDM. The editor-in-chief of *Resonansi* said the coverage in the newspaper was balanced and that it described both activists' and opponents' views (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). He said it was in the activists' interests to stimulate public discussion of their proposals and invite opponents' criticism of their potential flaws (L.T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). This and other features of coverage speak of more substantive discussion about MDM in the independent media, compared to the pro-opposition media. *Resonansi* and *Kavkasia* covered MDM both extensively and consistently during the period sampled by the study. *Resonansi's* coverage had greater focus on MDM and its issues, than *Alia's*, which covered MDM as one element of the generally problematic media environment in Georgia, or *24 Saati*, which covered MDM as part of its elections and political coverage. *Resonansi* and *Kavkasia* spoke to activists more often than other stations and covered all three issues of MDM evenly, compared to selective coverage in other newspapers and TV stations. The two independent news organizations also sourced government officials more often than the pro-opposition media (but much less than the pro-government media), to reflect both the government's and the activists' discourse about MDM.

The pro-government media abstained from harsh rhetoric and slander in its coverage of the movement. The marginalization of activists for demands of greater freedom of media and information could upset readers in Georgian society, which strongly supported freedom of expression and press. Every seventh citizen polled in 2013 said that the freedom and independence of media was the most important issue facing the country, ahead of jobs and lost territories (Navarro & Woodward, 2013). After two centuries of censorship under the Imperial and the Communist regimes, Georgians were

highly protective of their right to free expression and information. This may explain the lack of negative coverage in the pro-government media. “We have been spared terrible lies,” said an activist about the pro-government media (T. B., 2014, April 12, 2014). However, the pro-government media in the sample tried to belittle the movement actors and limit information about its activities. The activists complained that pro-government TV stations did not film their faces nor give them a voice in coverage (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). The content analysis of the news coverage of the movement corroborated this story. Pro-government Rustavi 2 television did not interview or otherwise use as a source a single activist journalist, and such journalists were a vocal and influential group within the movement. Rustavi 2 also used other activists as sources less often than other TV stations. It covered the movement during less popular morning newscasts more often than other TV stations. The producer at Rustavi 2 said the television covered protesters and their issues but did not provide supportive reporting. This producer was in general against advocacy journalism and expressed skepticism about activists’ motives. He thought pro-opposition and independent television stations were acting in alliance with the political opposition (G. L., personal interview, May 5, 2014).

Rustavi 2 used demobilizing frames less often than other TV stations, but limited coverage to some nine stories per hundred newscasts. This strategy of no mention, of “sealing off” news about a movement (Gitlin, 1980), has been described as one of the marginalization techniques in the literature. Pro-government *24 Saati*, which covered MDM quite extensively (*24 Saati*’s coverage was more frequent than pro-opposition *Alia*’s but less frequent than *Resonansi*’s), limited one-third of its coverage to news

briefs, that is, to two to three paragraphs. Both Rustavi 2 and *24 Saati* relied heavily on government sources compared to other types of media. Pro-government media was the least likely to talk about the Coalition for Media Advocacy, the social movement organization for MDM. Rustavi 2 was less likely than other TV stations to talk to activists in general. According to Gamson and Modigliani (1989), the media rarely covered key players in the movement, in attempts to disassociate them from issues.

From the social constructivist perspective, the media coverage is explained as a framing contest, in which frames deployed by a social movement compete with counter frames by the government or other social actors and news media's own frames. On the whole, MDM was successful in crafting its messages and pushing them into the media. The movement pursued two goals, as reported by the activists (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014; I. M., personal interview, April 18, 2014; N. Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014): a) improving the media environment in which their own professional practice was situated, and, b) strengthening the civil society in which energized citizens would participate and play a greater role in society (I. M., personal interview, April 18, 2014; M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014; S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). Two other important insights gained in interviews were that the activism grew out of the professional protest of journalists, who were unable to practice journalism freely, and that the activists coordinated closely with other socially active groups to jointly “snatch away” (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014) concessions in the media and other areas. Activists' actions, especially towards the end of the period sampled by this study, were goal-oriented, had clear strategies, and a measure of tactical flexibility and “creativity” (L. T., personal interview, April 4, 2014). The activists' strategy was to

mobilize supporters and third parties, subvert opponents, and attract positive media coverage, the routine strategy of social movements (Lipsky, 1968).

The media democratization movement's goals and strategies was reflected in the frames it deployed in movement statements. The MDM primarily used overarching master frames linked to the concept of democracy, such as *free speech*, *access to information – plurality*, *access to information – transparency*, *fair elections*, *rule of law*, and *responsible government* frames. These frames were highly resonant in Georgian society, in which the overwhelming majority of the population supported democratic transformation (Navarro & Woodward, 2013). The activists chose key frames with key audiences in mind. The activists directly addressed the government in an effort to make it shoulder responsibility for problems and solutions in the media environment and to reach the international community as a third party and reference group for the government. All frames linked with the concept of democracy spoke to the government and the international community. The government tried to project the image of Georgia as the fastest developing democracy in the post-Soviet world. It vowed to conduct the best and most competitive and fair elections in years. The international community, acting on the theoretical belief (Huntington, 1968) that several consecutive changes of government through fair elections were necessary to consolidate democracy in Georgia, was keenly watching the 2012 Parliamentary Elections. By deploying the *fair elections* frame, the movement leveraged interest in fair elections among the government and the international community (S.S., personal interview, March 12, 2014).

Fair elections and *rule of law* frames were picked up by the pro-government media. *Rule of law* was Rustavi 2's top frame, and the station used *rule of law* and *fair*

elections frames more often than other television stations. *24 Saati* also used these frames, and the related *access to information – pluralism* frame, as its top frames, and used them more frequently than other newspapers. The activists' interviews gave evidence of their targeting the government and the international community in framing work. They said they tried "talking the language" of the government (N.Z., personal interview, March 15, 2014) and deliberately linked media issues with the elections to build support among the international community (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). This strategy of targeting the government and its preferred discourse has been an effective framing strategy in previous protests (Zuo & Benford, 1995; Noonah, 2012).

Activists also targeted citizens as potential recruits and followers (Lipsky, 1968). In this task, the activists primarily relied on a new and innovative frames, *it concerns you*. *It concerns you* accentuated citizens' responsibility to deal with the problems in the media environment. According to activists, the problems in the media were easy to understand, but the population did not relate them to their daily lives (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014), nor did they know what to do about them (S. S., personal interview, March 12, 2014). *It concerns you*, an easy-to-understand, resonant, elastic motivational frame, told the citizens to mobilize and engage. It helped the activists reach and mobilize everyday citizens and connect them with the activist agenda (M. P., personal interview, April 7, 2014). 9th Channel, the pro-opposition television station, used the frame most frequently, closely followed by the independent Kavkasia, but the independent and pro-opposition newspapers were no different from the pro-government newspaper in the use of the *it concerns you* frame. The activists were proud of the frame (T. B., personal interview April 12, 2014) and believed it applied to other contexts

beyond the news media and could spur further mobilization (Z. K., personal interview, March 13, 2014).

Activists' frames also resonated with members of the news media across the political and ideological divide. The *free speech, access to information – transparency*, and *access to information – plurality* frames connected with journalists' professional values of free expression and access to information, transparency, and pluralism. All newspapers and TV stations used these frames. The news producer at the pro-opposition station said the media and social movements shared values, such as a high regard for rights and transparency (T. R., personal interview, April 10, 2014). She said “no other group [but activists had] such a vested interest in transparency.” The activist from the Open Society (Soros) foundation in the Coalition for Media Advocacy said the organization targeted the independent media in its media campaigns and counted on their support (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014).

Other than being elastic and wide in scope, the frames activists chose were timely and culturally resonant. The activists were willing to adapt frames to changes in the political and social context (Markowitz, 2009; Noonan, 1995; Zuo & Benford, 1995). The issues in the Georgian media environment identified and prioritized by activists – freedom of content production and distribution, access to public information and transparency of the government, access to plural sources of information in the regions -- were initially framed as *free speech, access to information – transparency* and *injustice* issues. As the elections approached, the movement dropped the “injustice” frame and adopted the *fair elections* frame, reframing the need for the freedom of media as essential to conducting fair elections and introduced the *access to information – plurality* frame,

accentuating the need to have free and plural sources of information for voters around Georgia.

The picture that emerged from interviews is that of a dynamic process of growth in the media democratization movement. The latest phase of activism, which started as the activity of a few informal groups in 2010, went on to become a formal coalition of media and civil sector organizations in 2011, and produced a highly organized and highly effective campaign, the It Concerns You campaign, in 2012. The framing work of the activists, too, became more elaborate. While at the beginning, framing choices were spontaneous and basic, as evident from activists' lack of recall of concrete frames or communicative devices employed by the Coalition for Media Advocacy, the framing decisions became formalized as the activism and campaigning grew. The key slogan, *it concerns you*, was born at the peak of activism in 2012.

The frames were advanced not only by MDM but also by the government and the media. These frames swayed the discourse in the media away from MDM's frames. The government, through the media it controlled or worked with, was trying to "change the conversation," that is, reframe activists' demands such that they would lose the intended meaning. The government, for instance, deployed the *hinders free business* frame, which treated the media as businesses, and discussed activists' demands – greater transparency of ownership and financial information in the broadcast media, mandatory distribution of all TV signals by cable operators – in market terms. In these terms, the disclosure of proprietary business information, such as ownership structure and finances, and the requirement for free cable businesses to distribute all broadcast content, were cast as intrusive and excessive regulations. The government's other demobilizing frame,

politicizing/scamming, described activists as political players and their demands as moves to gain advantage over the political opponents. These and other demobilizing frames were carried by all news media, but much less frequently than mobilizing frames.

The key theoretical argument in this study – that pro-opposition, pro-government and independent news media diverged in their attitudes and coverage of MDM – was corroborated by the analysis of journalists’ views about MDM, its issues, and the activism in general. Reporters at pro-opposition and independent newspapers, and a producer at opposition-controlled 9th Channel, approved of both the activists’ agenda and even took part in street protests. These journalists had personally experienced government oppression and had many reasons to desire reforms in the media democratization sector. The reporter at independent Resonansi said this: “one advocates, or else, there will be no change” (R. M., personal interview, April 20, 2014). By contrast, the producers and reporters at the pro-government news media said they backed many of the activists’ issues but were not taking part in protests, were not advocating while reporting, and questioned activists’ sincerity and political neutrality.

To sum up, most theoretical predictions in the study were corroborated by the findings. The key finding of the study was the prevalent use of a positive tone and mobilizing frames in the coverage of the media democratization movement across all types of media. The study corroborated the recent findings of supportive coverage of social movements in those parts of news media that were open and interested in social change (Harlow & Johnston, 2011; Mauersberger, 2012; Weaver & Scacco, 2013; Yuan, 2013). It also found that the pro-government media abstained from marginalizing coverage of the movement. This study explained the predominantly positive tone and

mobilizing frames in the news media's coverage of MDM by aspects of the social conflict in Georgia and activists' skill in constructing the movement through framing. However, the nature of the media democratization movement – its focus on the freedom of speech and press, which clearly overlapped with the interests of the professional journalistic corps in maintaining professional freedoms– may have been a factor leading to journalists' positive and mobilizing coverage of the movement. Yet the positioning of the movement as a special cause for journalists, and the framing of its goals as shared goals between activists and journalists, was a calculated and deliberate strategy of the movement, as is argued in this study.

On the whole, politically engaged media stood by their respective political parties in selecting nuances of tone, frames, genre, sourcing, frequency, and prominence of coverage of the media democratization movement. the study concluded that social movements that manage to exploit tensions in the “media-state dynamics” (Mauersberger, 2012, p. 588) and differences in the media (Weaver & Scacco, 2013) in framing decisions have a better chance of gaining good access to audiences and fair coverage. On the whole, the Georgian media democratization movement was successful in crafting its messages and pushing them into the news media. The media democratization movement achieved its key goal, verbalized by activists as the improvement of the news media environment, and made serious advances towards its second goal, the improvement of participatory civil society. The media democratization movement taught “a good lesson of activism” (H. J., personal interview, March 25, 2014) to Georgian society.

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H., J. (2014, March 25). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
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L., T. (2014, April 4). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
M., P. (2014, April 7). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
T., B. (2014, April 12). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
I., M. (2014, April 18). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
R., M. (2014, April 20). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
D., G. (2014, April 21). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
T., O. (2014, May 3). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
G., L. (2014, May 5). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze
T., R. (2014, April 10). Personal interview with Teona Kavtaradze

Appendix A

Codebook

1. Coder: Please, circle your name 1. Coder 1 2. Coder 2
2. Date. Please, write down the date of publication or appearance of a story. (It is usually indicated the file name for materials downloaded from the Terramedia database). Format date as this: 27012012 (stands for 27 January, 2012).
3. Source: Please, circle the newspaper or TV you are coding: .1 *Alia*, .2 *Resonansi* .3 *24 Hours*, .4 *Rustavi 2*, .5 9th Channel, .6 *Kavkasia*
4. General topic:
 - .1 *Media issues*: code here a story about one of the five issues of interest to this study. These issues are: the Coalition for Media Advocacy, the It Concerns You campaign, “must carry/must offer” rule about mandatory distribution of broadcast signals by cable companies and mandatory offer of signal by all TV stations to all cable companies, Maestro TV satellite Antennas about the problems experienced by TV company Maestro and associated cable companies when distributing satellite antennas around Georgia, and the transparency of media ownership and financial flows in the media.
 - .2 *General media*: code here materials that discuss broad media issues, general problems in the media environment, pressures on journalists, low professionalism, instead of being dedicated to one or few of the special media issues identified for this study (see 4.1 for the list of issues.) However, this article should mention these specific media issues briefly.
 - .3 *Other issues*: code here any materials that are about politics, elections, economics, a society but mentions one or all of the specific media issues listed in 4.1.
 - .4 *Unrelated*: please, check “yes” if an article or a story is unrelated, i.e. does not mention any of the issues mentioned in 4.1 Code “unrelated” if any of these issues are mentioned out of context of activism. e.g.: *The minister of Justice appointed Ana Kevkhishvili, a former coordinator of the Coalition for Media Advocacy, (or former activist of It Concerns You campaign) as her new deputy.* An article is unrelated if it mentions any of the issues in 4.1 but in the context unrelated to these specific media issues: e.g.: *Media ownership in newspaper x has been revised due to the sale of its stock* is unrelated, but *Rustavi 2 ownership was transferred to Karamanashvili brothers from the previous owner, offshore company xxx, after the law on transparency of ownership was adopted* is to be coded as 4.1, because it is related to the issue of transparency of ownership.

PLEASE STOP CODING IF AN ARTICLE OR A TV STORY IS UNRELATED.

5. Specific media issues: Code here which of the specific media issues of interest to the study are present in the material.

.1 *It Concerns You*: code here any material about the campaign, It Concerns You, or any materials that briefly mentions the campaign

.2 *Coalition for Media Advocacy*: code here any material about the Coalition for Media Advocacy, or the material that mentions this organization.

.3 *Must carry/Must offer rule*: code here materials that are about or briefly mention “must carry/must offer” rule, which requires mandatory distribution of all broadcast signals by cable companies in the same area and the mandatory offer of their content to all cable companies by TV stations covering the same area. In Georgia in 2012, this rule was adopted into the Election Law to be activated in the pre-election period.

.4 *Satellite antennas issue*: Code here materials that are about or briefly mention the arrest of satellite antennas distributed around Georgia by the cable Company Global, TV company Maestro and some other organizations so that Maestro’s signal would get distributed around Georgia. The antennas were arrested as an instance of voter bribery

.5 *Transparency of media ownership and financial flows*: Code here all materials that are about or briefly mention the issue of concealed ownership (offshore registration, unclear ownership structure) in TV companies or any other media or the related activism to change the Broadcast Law to allow for greater ownership transparency. Both requirements of ownership transparency and financial flow transparency were subsequently adopted into law.

6. Newspaper headline, TV story title: please, write a headline in full.

7. Type of newspaper story: please, circle the appropriate genre for a newspaper article you are coding:

.1 *News in brief*: typically a brief is one to three paragraph-long news item, printed on the margins of the front page (but can also appear on other pages) and usually included into a bordered section with similar, brief items. Most of news briefs do not have an author and are provided by the agency.

.2 *Story*: a longer piece, addressing a topic at a greater length than *brief news*. It usually contains discussion, context, one or two sources, or two or more quotes from one source, and, often, has a story line. Code here “lazy” stories, composed of brief introduction by a journalist, followed by a long, single direct quote from a source or two long direct quote from two sources. These stories are not formatted as questions and answers. Do not code these stories as interviews or opinions.

.3 *Opinion*: refers to opinions of sources rather than an editorial staff. Code here columns (SVETI) too. Do not code here “lazy” stories, composed of journalists’ introduction and directly quotes of expressed opinion or interview response by one or few sources.

.4 *Interview*: refers to a question and answer piece. It may or may not be preceded by an introduction, and usually has journalists’ questions in bold print, followed by answers.

Do not code here “lazy” stories, in which journalists’ introduction or a single question is followed by a single, long direct quote but not formatted as questions and answers.

.5 *Editorial*: is an unsigned piece by the editorial staff of newspaper, expressing a position or arguing a point. In some newspapers, the editorial has a byline, that is, the name of the author, but in some other cases, there is no byline.

.6 *Other*: please, circle here if none of the above applies, and describe, what it is.

.2 *N/A*: code non -applicable, if you are coding a TV story.

8. Newspaper story location

.1 *Page number*: please, write down a page number on which an article appears. If an article starts on page 2 and continues to page 6, put down “2”, that is, the page on which an article starts. A page number is usually included in the name of the file. **CODE ONLY THE FIRST PAGE.**

.2 *N/A*: code non -applicable, if you are coding a TV story.

9. Newspaper story length:

.1 *Length in paragraphs*: please, record the length of the story in paragraphs of a newspaper article: please, circle the appropriate category based on the length of newspaper material in paragraphs.

.2 *N/A*: code non –applicable, if you are coding a TV story.

10. TV program: please, code, whether a TV story appeared in the news program aired during the morning, afternoon, prime time, or late night airtime segment.

.1 Morning news (07:00 through 11:00)

.2 Afternoon news (12:00, 13:00, 14:00, 15:00, 16:00, 17:00)

.3 Prime time news (18:00, 19:00, 20:00, 21:00)

.4 Late night news (22:00, 23:00, 24:00, 01:00)

.2 *N/A*: code non –applicable, if it is a newspaper story.

11. TV story type: Please, circle the appropriate genre for a TV story you are coding:

.1 *Voiceover*: a sequences of images with a text read behind images. It may be that a text is read by the news anchor.

.2 *Package*: A TV story, which usually features one or two sources, a journalist, and a story line. Often, a package has reporter’s “stand-up” shot.

.3 *Anchor’s text*: code here if the story is simply read by the anchor, with no images, sounds or interviews.

.4 *Interview*: code here if an anchor interviewing somebody in the studio or via “live” distance call. Code here if an anchor is interviewing a journalist, who reported a story.

.5 *Other*: please, circle here if none of the above applies, and explain what it is.

.2 *N/A*: code non –applicable, if it is a newspaper article.

12. TV story length:

.1 *Length in minutes/seconds*: please, write down the length of the story.

.2 *N/A*: code non –applicable, if you are coding a newspaper story.

13. Produced by:

.1 Staff reporters: code here if a newspaper story or a TV story has been produced by staff reporters. Usually, such a newspaper story has a byline.

.2 News agency: code here if a story or TV report has been produced by a news agency. It is more typical of newspapers to carry agency stories.

.3 International media story: code here if a story has been reprinted from an international newspaper or if a TV story is a foreign TV story dubbed in Georgian. More typical of newspapers to carry these types of stories.

.4 Other: code if material is produced by other source than 13.1, 13.2, 13.3. It can be a social media post or blogpost reprint, or something similarly unordinary. Please, specify what it is.

14. Sources: Please check if an article or a TV story has a source or sources belonging to any one of these categories. A source is defined as any subject in a newspaper story or a TV story other than an author/anchor, who is directly quoted, paraphrased or mentioned or whose sound bite is provided.

.1 *Activists - MDM*: leaders of organizations participating in the It Concerns You or Coalition for Media Advocacy, or any member of these organizations, speaking on behalf of the coalition except for MDM activists who are professional journalists or heads of journalistic unions.

.2 *Activist journalists - MDM*: code here those professional journalists, who were activist members of It Concerns You or Coalition for Media Advocacy. These included members of Media Club, also heads of media associations (see attached list for some of the names).

.3 *Activists - other*: leaders or members of non-governmental organizations, who are not members of the Coalition or organizations in the Coalition. Code here public figures, such as writers, academics, artists, etc.

.4 *Journalists - other*: journalists, editors, publishers, owners of media who are not identified as members of the Coalition even as they may be members in journalists unions.

.5 *Government officials/ruling party MPs*: appointed officials, government servants, including those serving in quasi-governmental organizations, such as the Georgian Communications Regulatory Commission or the Ombudsman's office. Code here parliamentarians from the ruling, United National Movement party.

.6 *Opposition MPs*: members of parliament which represent political parties other than UNM.

.7 *Non-parliamentary party representatives*: representatives of those political parties, which were not represented in the Parliament.

.8 *International community representatives/diplomats*: foreign government officials, diplomats, representatives of international watchdog organizations, or international experts. Nationality-wise, these individuals can be foreigners but also Georgians, and need to be coded here as long as they work for and speak on behalf of an international organization or a government. Georgian chapters of international organizations are not to

be included here but under other civil society organizations (or coalition members, if an organization is the member).

.9 Ordinary citizens: The Georgian citizens who are not identified as associated with organizations, and are not publicly active individuals, who need to be coded as 14.3. Usually, these sources are not identified by their names in the media, but are called “citizens,” “passers-by” or “dwellers of Tbilisi, Kutaisi, etc.”

.10 Others: Anyone who does not belong to any of the above categories. Please, describe the source.

15: Dominant tone towards the organizations and issues of interest to the study, listed in 4.1 (It Concerns You campaign, Coalition for Media Advocacy, Must Carry, Antennas, Ownership Transparency). If a story or TV report is about any of the above organizations/issues, determine whether each paragraph is negative, neutral or positive towards them. Count negative and supportive paragraphs and calculate their ratio. If the ratio reaches 2:1 in either direction, code an article or a TV story as negative or positive. If 2:1 ratio is not met, code the material as neutral. Some stories may be entirely neutral in reporting. If an article or a story is not focused on these issues (which would be the case if you coded .4.2 or 4.3), but mentions them in passing, only look at the valance of those paragraphs that mention organizations/issues of interest to this study, and apply 2:1 rule to those specific paragraphs.

.1 negative: code here if at least 2/3 of paragraphs or more is negative.

.2 neutral: code here if all paragraphs are neutral or there is an even number of negative and positive paragraphs.

.3 positive: code here if 2/3 of paragraphs or more is positive.

16. Mobilizing frames: identify frames that are intended or have a potential to mobilize the support for the organizations/issues of interest to this study (listed in 4.1). These frames can be deployed by the It Concerns You and the Coalition, but also by other parties, or even by reporters or editorial authors themselves. Please, look up the frame definitions in the table below and check the ones that best fit the reporting in a newspaper article or a TV story. You can code more than one frame. If a story is not about the organizations/issues of interest but only mentions those, only identify those frames that are present in the paragraphs about organizations/issues listed in 4.1.

Mobilizing frames	Definition
<i>.1 Rights</i>	Refers to general human rights and freedoms and equal opportunities for all social groups. The master frame stresses respect for shared principles of participation in the society and empowerment of all social groups to incorporate themselves in the public life and enjoy equal opportunities. The frame accentuates the rights that constitute the civil society.
<i>.2 Injustice</i>	Accentuates the injustice that a movement intends to address. It articulates a problem such that the conclusion that an authority system is violating the shared principles of the participants and provides a reason for noncompliance with the authority, or that some established practice or mode of thought is wrong and ought to be replaced. In most generic

	sense, this master frame is about the conception of injustice, power and domination, be it inherent in people (race or gender) and identity politics, or in the system, or in conflicts between groups and denials of rights to some groups within otherwise just system.
.3 <i>Democratization</i>	Refers to the process of transition from totalitarian and authoritarian systems to the democratic system and attendant processes, requirements and benchmarks. The aspects of the <i>democratization</i> frame overlap with the aspects of the <i>rights</i> frame, but the <i>democratization</i> frame accentuates the transformation of the society, of which the protection of rights is but one element. The frame covers all aspects of democracy as a political system, including the principle of informed public deliberation and government accountability.
.4 <i>Rule of law</i>	Is used in framing movements' goals as the improvement of the legislative system and the practice. For example, MDM's legislative proposals can be judged in terms of their legal worth, clarity, fit with the constitution, their implementation in practice, etc.
.5 <i>Fair elections</i>	Refers to the aspects of fair elections and the need to hold fair elections.
.6 <i>Free speech</i>	Refers to commonly understood, important and universally held value of freedom of expression and speech. It is a subset of both the <i>rights</i> and <i>democratization</i> frames, but, for the purposes of this study, is assigned a separate code to refer to media's and communicators' rights. Any discussion of media free distribution of broadcast signal, newspaper content, licensing belong here.
.7 <i>Access to information – plurality</i>	This frame accentuates an access to information, which, together with free speech, is an element of the freedom of speech and expression framework. This frame discusses the same issues, as in <i>free speech</i> , but not from media's, that is, communicators' perspective, but from audience members,' that is, recipients' perspective.
.8 <i>Access to information – transparency</i>	This frame underlines the need for greater transparency and sincerity as opposed to conspiratorial and covert conduct in public affairs. The frame has been deployed in earlier studies of protests in Georgia (Manning, 2007). The discussion of media ownership and financial transparency belong here.
<i>It concerns you</i>	Refers to citizens' responsibility, ownership and agency to deal with problems in their sociopolitical environment.
<i>Other</i>	Code any other frame that is not listed above here, and specify its meaning.

17: Demobilizing frames: a demobilizing frame is a frame that is intended to or can potentially demobilize support for the Coalition for Media Advocacy, the It Concerns You campaign, and the specific issues they have been advocating (as listed in 4.1). These

frames can be deployed and voiced by the government, but also by other challenger parties. Please look up the frame definitions in the table and check the ones that best fit the reporting in an article or a TV story. You can code more than one frame. If a story is not about the organizations/issues of interest but only mentions those, look at the frames only in those paragraphs that mentions these issues.

Demobilizing frames	Definition
.1 <i>Supports status quo</i>	Refers to expressions of support for the maintenance of status quo versus changes proposed by activists; Supports any repressive measures against activists by a government, and, in general, government policies.
.2 <i>Hinders free business</i>	Refers to claims that protesters' demands interfere with free market rules. e.g: <i>The demands of legislative changes and more new regulations upset the free business of media.</i> Any discussion that accentuates the business aspect of media, profits, and economic consequences of proposed media regulations belongs here.
.3 <i>Hinders country development, unpatriotic</i>	Accentuates the importance of fast economic, infrastructural, administrative development and state building, in general. These concerns are cited as justification for the authoritarian rule and mistreatment of activists. The essence of the frame is that developmental concerns are superior to other concerns, such as human or media rights. In this frame, a protest is unpatriotic, harmful for a country, and even treasonous.
.4 <i>Politicizing, political scam</i>	Defines any protest, even one that focus on community concerns, in political terms. Protesters are accused of having manifest or hidden political agendas and seeking political benefits for themselves more than seeking benefits for the people. Often, parties and politicians are implicated in stirring a protest in this frame, or, activism is assigned to manipulation from other countries and their special services (KGB). This frame is assumed that all activism is basically part of the fight between the opposition and the government. This frame, in general terms, equates activism with the intrigue or scam.
.5 <i>Immoral, against tradition</i>	Defines protest as defying tradition and morality and religious values.
.6 <i>Violence, confrontation with police</i>	Refers to general lawlessness, anarchy, violence, vandalism, crime, clashes with the police, police attacking demonstrations, arrests, cases brought against people, any other conflict between protesters and the police.
.7 <i>Freak show/carnival</i>	Appearance and dramaturgy- based coverage, which emphasizes physical or mental oddities among the protesters, such as body piercing, long hair, funny clothes,

	bare feet, etc. The frame also emphasized protesters' odd behavior, such as staging street action as theatrical performances, shows, flash mobs, carnivals; Any mentions of celebrity supporters of protest and their appearance at protests belongs here.
<i>.8 Romper room/idiots at large</i>	Stresses mental, ideological oddities of participants, their idealism, naiveté, unprofessional judgment, lack of understanding of the problem they are dealing with, etc.
<i>.9 Public opinion polls, other statistics, bystander accounts</i>	Refers to the use of public opinion polls to show public opposition to the protest. Public opinion is invoked to marginalize the position of protesters by implying that they do not speak for the majority of people or that they represent only a small, deviant group of population. Also, the frame refers to unsubstantiated references to the public opinion on the issue, bystanders' and witness commentaries that amplify deviance of the protests compared to publicly held views or social norms. For example, the protests in Georgia in 2010 were marginalized through quoting residents in the protest area, who complained about the dirt and mess in the streets during the gatherings of protesters.
<i>.10 Counter demonstrations</i>	Describes counterdemonstrations against a protest event or against a cause of a social movement.
<i>.11 Bothersome, disruptive</i>	Refers to minor disruptions, such as traffic disruptions, garbage and sanitation problems, upset commerce, various other public costs related to demonstrations and other street action.
<i>.12 Ineffective, impotent, counterproductive</i>	Code here any references to ineffectiveness of a protest, it being ignored by its targets – the government, the public -- as well as comments that the activism will lead nowhere, and that is not effective.

18. Dominant frames: Calculate the ratio of mobilizing frames, and if one frame corresponds to more than 70 percent of the materials, code

- .1= Single dominant mobilizing frame.
- .2=Single dominant demobilizing frame
- .3=Mixed mobilizing frame: code mixed mobilizing frame if none of the frames corresponds to more than 70 percent of material, and all the frames are mobilizing frames.
- .4=Mixed demobilizing frame: code mixed demobilizing frame if none of the frames corresponds to more than 70 percent of material, and all the frames are demobilizing frames.
- .5=Mixed mobilizing & demobilizing frame: code mixed mobilizing & demobilizing frame if none of the frames corresponds to more than 70 percent of material, and there are both mobilizing and demobilizing frames in the material.

Appendix B

Coding Sheet

1. Coder _____	1. _____	2. _____
2. Date: _____		
3. Media: .1 <i>Alia</i> __ .2 <i>Resonansi</i> __ .3 <i>24 Hours</i> __ .4 <i>Rustavi 2</i> __ .5 9 th Channel__ .6 <i>Kavkasia TV</i>		
4. General topic: .1=media issues in item 5__ .2=other media issues (mentions item 5 media issues)__ .3 other issues (mentions item 5 issues) 4. Unrelated_____ PLEASE, STOP CODING IF UNRELATED!		
5. Media issues of interest to the study (you can check more than one)		
.1 It Concerns You _____	.4 Ban on antenna distribution _____	
.2 Coalition for Media Advocacy _____	.5 Media ownership & financial transparency _____	
.3 Must Carry /must offer _____		
6. Headline/ story title (please, write in full) _____		
7.Type of newspaper story	8. Newspaper story location	9. Newspaper story length
.1 news in brief__	.1 page number _____	.1 number of paragraphs _____
.2 story _____	.2=N/A__	.2=N/A _____
.3 opinion _____		
.4 interview _____		
.5 editorial _____		
.6 other _____		
.7 N/A _____		
10.TV program type	11.TV story type	12. TV story length
.1=morning news__	.1=voiceover__	.1=length in minutes/seconds__
.2=afternoon news__	.2=package__	.2=N/A
.3=primetime news__	.3=anchor's text__	
.4=late night news__	.4=interview__	
.5=unclear	.5=other__	
.6 N/A	.6=N/A__	
.13 Produced by: 1. Staff__ .2. Agency _____ .3 Int'l story _____ .4Other (please, specify)_____		
14. Sources (you can check more than one.)		
1= Activists - MDM _____	.6=Opposition MPs _____	
2=Activist journalists – MDM _____	.7=non-parliamentary political parties _____	
3=other activists (than .1) _____	.8= international community/diplomats _____	
4=other journalists/owners (than .2)_____	.9= ordinary citizens _____	
5=government officials, ruling party MPs _____	.10= other (specify) _____	
15. Dominant tone towards MDM (organization, campaign, or issues listed in item 11)		
.1=negative__	.2 neutral__	.3=positive__
16. Mobilizing frames (you can check more than one)		
.1= <i>rights</i> _____	.2= <i>inj</i> _____	.6= <i>free speech</i> _____
<i>ustice</i> _____		.7= <i>access to information - plurality</i> _____
.3= <i>democratization</i> _____		.8= <i>access to information - transparency</i> _____
.4= <i>rule of law</i> _____		.9= <i>other</i> (please, specify) _____
.5= <i>fair elections</i> _____		
17. Demobilizing frames (you can check more than one)		
.1= <i>support status quo</i> _____	.8 = <i>romper room/idiots at large</i> _____	
.2= <i>hinders free business</i> _____	.9= <i>unfavorable polls, eye-witness</i> _____	
.3= <i>hinders country development, unpatriotic</i> _____	.10= <i>counter-demonstrations</i> _____	
.4= <i>politicizing, scamming</i> _____	.11= <i>bothersome, disruptive</i> _____	
.5= <i>immoral, against tradition</i> _____	.12= <i>ineffective, impotent, counterproductive</i> _____	
.6= <i>violence, police confrontation</i> _____	.13= <i>other</i> (please, specify) _____	
.7= <i>freak show, weird show, carnival</i> _____		
18. Dominant frames		
.1=Single dominant mobilizing frame (specify) _____	.4=Mixed demobilizing frame _____	
.2=Single dominant demobilizing frame (specify) _____	.5=Mixed mobilizing & demobilizing frames _____	
.3=Mixed mobilizing frame _____		

Appendix C

Statements by MDM

Table C.1: List of MDM statements

Issued by	Title	Date	Topic
Coalition for Media Advocacy	Memorandum of partnership	04.13.2011	Statement of intent upon launch of the Coalition for Media Advocacy
Coalition for Media Advocacy	Coalition for Media Advocacy denounced violence against journalists	05.26.2011	Violence against journalists at May 26 protests
Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy Statement on actions of the tax service at "Mediapalitra"	06.10.2011	Tax audit of Media House Mediapalitra
Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy statement regarding the arrest of four photographers	07.10.2011	Arrest of photographers
Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy requests termination of Alpha Com auctioning.	08.01.2011	Auction sale of TV tower
Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy responds to information in web edition Netgazeti	11.21.2011	Blackmail campaign against journalist Tedo Jorbenadze
Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy expresses solidarity to the print media	11.28.2011	Newspaper stands removed by the government
Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy statement regarding the adoption of the election legislation	12.24.2011	Fair media coverage and transparency of the election process

Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy Statement on legislative amendments to the Election Code	01.12.2012	Fair media coverage and transparency of the election process
Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy addresses the Chairman of the Parliament	02.09.2012	Media access at the Parliament
Eastern Partnership	Special Statement on the enactment of “Must carry/must offer” regulation	06.08.201	mandatory broadcast signal distribution by cable operators
Coalition for Media Advocacy	The Coalition for Media Advocacy statement on the decision of the Tbilisi Court	06.16.2012	Maestro satellite antenna distribution
It Concerns You	It Concerns You protests seizure of Maestro TV satellite antennas	07.12.2012	Maestro satellite antenna distribution
Eastern Partnership	Statement on the pre-election media environment	08.30.2012	Must carry” rules of mandatory broadcast signal distribution by cable operators
Media Association	Petition regarding continued enforcement of “Must Carry” principle after the Elections	09.04.2012	Must carry” rules of mandatory broadcast signal distribution by cable operators
Coalition for Media Advocacy	Call to Ensure Transparency on Election Day	09.24.2012	Fair media coverage and transparency of the election process
It Concerns You	Special statement on continued enforcement of “Must carry / must offer” rules	09.30.2012	mandatory broadcast signal distribution by cable operators

Appendix D

Frames in MDM Statements

Table D.1: List of frames in MDM statements

Frames	Keywords
Free speech	Freedom of speech, freedom of media, free press, free distribution, unlimited distribution
Access to information – plurality	Access to information, plurality, access to news, access to TV channels, plural views, alternative views, oppositional views
access to information – transparency	Public information, publicly data, information about government, ownership information, transparency, transparent governance, ownership transparency, financial transparency, financial disclosure, public information requests
Law	rule of law, legislation, law, legal framework, the Constitution, parliamentary hearings
Democratization	democratization, democratic development, progress, democratic transformation, democratic image, democratic indicators
Fair elections	fair elections, free and participatory elections, competitive elections, voters' informed choice
Injustice	Pressure, violations, violence, arrests, seizure, ban, intimidation
Public interest	Public interest in the interests of the public, public needs, societal needs
Rights	Right to information, basic human rights, democratic rights, civic rights.
Government responsibility	Government responsibility, government to act, government to solve issues, government action, addressing government

Appendix E
Reliability Coefficients

Table E.1: Reliability coefficients

Variable	Krippendorff's Alpha
Topics-MDM	.98
Topics-General media	1.00
Topics – General sociopolitical	1.00
Topics – Unrelated	.97
Issues – It Concerns You	.98
Issues – Coalition	.95
Issues – Must Carry	.98
Issues – Maestro	.93
Issues – Transparency	.98
Story type/Newspaper – news in brief	.98
Story type/newspaper – stories	.95
Story type/newspaper – interview	1.00
Story type/newspaper – opinion	1.00
Story type/newspaper – editorial	1.00
Story types/newspaper – other	1.00
Location/newspaper – page number	1.00
Type TV program – morning	1.00
Type TV program –afternoon	1.00
Type TV program –primetime	.98
Type TV program – late night	.98

Type TV program – unclear	1.00
Type Story/TV –voiceover	.92
Type story/TV – package	.96
Type story/TV – anchor’s text	.97
Type story/TV – interview	.98
Type story/TV -	.98
Sources – activists MDM	.90
Sources – activist journalists	.78
Sources – activists other	.89
Sources – journalists other	.98
Sources – Government	.94
Sources – MPs opposition	.92
Sources – non-parliamentary opposition	.95
Sources – international community	1.00
Sources – ordinary people	.97
Sources – other	.97
Tone – negative	1.00
Tone – neutral	.81
Tone – positive	.72
Mobilizing frames – rights	.85
Mobilizing frames – injustice	.84
Mobilizing frames – democratization	.90
Mobilizing frames – rule of law	.93
Mobilizing frames – fair elections	.87
Mobilizing frames – free speech	.74
Mobilizing frames – access to information plurality	.91
Mobilizing frames – access to information – transparency	.89
Mobilizing frames – other	1.00
Demobilizing frame – supports status quo	1.00

Demobilizing frame –hinders free business	.98
Demobilizing frame – hinders country/unpatriotic	.97
Demobilizing frame –politicize, scamming	.94
Demobilizing frame – immoral	1.00
Demobilizing frame – violence	1.00
Demobilizing frame –freak show	1.00
Demobilizing frame – romper room, idiots	1.00
Demobilizing frame – polls, eyewitness	1.00
Demobilizing frame – counterdemonstration	1.00
Demobilizing frame –bothersome, disruptive	1.00
Demobilizing frame – impotent, ineffective	1.00
Demobilizing frame –other	.95
Dominant frame – single mobilizing	.93
Dominant frame – single demobilizing	1.00
Dominant frame – multi mobilizing	.90
Dominant frame – multi demobilizing	1.00
Dominant frame – mixed	.88
