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European Union Institutions, Democratic Discourse, and the Color Revolutions

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European Union Institutions, Democratic Discourse,

and the Color Revolutions

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Dedication

To our little baby girl. You waited patiently while I wrote, rewrote, edited, and defended. I hope I did not stress you out during the final stages of this dissertation, but thank you for being so patient and allowing me to be productive. I am so excited to meet you. I love you, and I hope you are proud of me.

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Abstract

Since the Treaty of the European Union in 1993, the EU has embraced institutional reforms with the stated purpose of achieving greater unity in foreign affairs. Despite the EU's leading role in the political and economic reforms of former Soviet satellites in Central and Eastern Europe, the EU has been less consistent and cohesive in former Soviet space further east—in regions fraught with undemocratic qualities and places where the EU enjoys fewer credible incentives and less leverage. While scholars point to divergent national interests as obstacles for unity abroad, few have unraveled how the institutions of the EU itself pose challenges as well. This research asks whether the institutions of the EU—particularly the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament—promote or hinder the EU's ability to act as a global unitary actor. It analyzes EU institutional democratic discourse in three cases of color revolutions in former Soviet space from 2003 to 2011: Georgia, Ukraine, and the Kyrgyz Republic. The research is based on a qualitative database of official institutional documents from the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, and the European Parliament to identify patterns of discourse in the construction of democracy. The study finds that, across the

institutions, democratic discourse is only consistent in the minimal requisites of democracy—particularly elections and rule of law—but the institutions diverge substantially on whether these elements are necessary and sufficient, versus necessary but insufficient. Even if member-states find common ground at the national level, the institutional dynamics of the EU continue to undermine its ability to assert itself as a unitary actor in foreign affairs. The findings of this study have implications for theories on international relations, democracy, and states. It demonstrates that there are limits to mainstream liberal institutionalist approaches best captured by constructivism, and that the EU as a whole, the institutions of the EU, and the constituent member-states can all become actors with competing interests in a given issue area. The study concludes with potential avenues of future research.

Chapter 1: The European Union on the World Stage

1.1   Introduction

Since the founding Treaty of the European Union came into effect in 1993, the European Union (EU) has gradually gained power as an actor on the world stage. Its influence is evident in the post-Soviet world where it negotiated the admission of ten former communist states and possibly several more in the foreseeable future. Despite the EU's leading role in the political and economic reforms of these new members, the EU's ability to act cohesively in the international community remains constrained and inconsistent. Yet the EU as a whole makes a concerted effort to do so: Each treaty since 1993 takes formal and legally binding steps toward a more coherent and consolidated foreign policy framework.

While scholars have pointed to divergent national interests as obstacles for unity and cohesion, few have unraveled how the institutional complexity of the EU itself poses challenges as well. That is, even if member-states find common ground at the national level, the institutional dynamics of the EU continue to undermine its power as a unitary actor abroad. The primary institutions of the EU fulfill very

different mandates and embody supranational, intergovernmental, and representative elements. The European Commission acts on behalf of EU interests, the Council of the EU acts on behalf of member-state interests, and the European Parliament acts on behalf of voter interests. These interests do not necessarily overlap and each one rests on different sources and degrees of legitimacy.

This research therefore focuses on the impact of EU institutions—particularly the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament—on the EU as a unitary actor in foreign affairs. Despite the EU's ability to successfully negotiate the admission of various new members undergoing transitions to democracy and free economy, the EU is characterized by an internal hodgepodge of competing interests. This institutional complexity challenges the notion of the EU as a unitary global actor.

The EU as a unitary actor is perhaps most indispensable in foreign affairs, where cohesiveness has been a goal of the EU for many years. The EU continues to struggle for coherence in sensitive foreign policy areas like security and immigration to little avail, but it has long preserved a normative commitment to democracy since its inception, even if in rhetoric only. Democratization issues are one of the few foreign policy areas where the EU has appeared to be a unitary actor. Over the course of five phases of integration that resulted in 27

members, the EU has played an important role in numerous democratic transitions, namely those of Southern Europe in the 1980s, and Central and Eastern Europe following the collapse of communism in the region. Indeed, the most fundamental and non-negotiable requirement for admission into the EU is democracy.

In societies with little to no firsthand experience with democracy, much of the defining was led by the EU, but the EU has no official definition of democracy; the standards are largely subjective. Likewise, there is no consensus on the meaning of democracy among the primary institutions of the EU, either. If there is a most-likely context in which the EU ought to be a unitary actor in foreign affairs, it is in democratization. This research therefore focuses on the sphere of democratic discourse in foreign affairs, a sector which appears to have some degree of cohesion regarding democratic rhetoric on the surface, but which this study contends is undermined by competing institutional interests (rather than solely national interests).

Of the regions across the globe, the EU espouses democratic values in the regions formerly under Soviet influence especially. While this may have been effective in Central Europe, the Baltics, and to some degree even the Balkans, it is less compatible in EU relationships further east, in regions fraught with undemocratic qualities and places where the EU seems to hold much less leverage, such as Eastern

Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. This research seeks to uncover how the leading institutions of the EU diverge and converge in their framing and formal discourses about non-member-states in former Soviet space by analyzing the institutional documents of the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament. Institutional documents can reveal public discursive patterns used, without the cloak afforded by private discourse.

In the sphere of democracy, these three regions—Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia—are united by a common historical thread: the 'color revolutions', which were popular electoral revolutions most associated with Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004 and the Kyrgyz Republic in 2005. In these three countries, democratic discourse was far more relevant than it had been ever before.

These regions are notably understudied in EU research as well, particularly Central Asia, yet they are places that have grown increasingly salient for the EU itself, especially in the post-9/11/2001 context. The limited research surrounding EU-Central Asian relations was understandable considering the limited engagement between the two regions throughout the 1990s (Yazdani 2008). After 9/11, however, the region's proximity to Afghanistan added geopolitical salience for the West; the US, for instance, established military bases in Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic (Melvin 2008, 3). The EU

renewed interest in the region as well, largely due to security, border, and energy concerns (Melvin 2008, 4; Yazdani 2008). In addition to Afghanistan, the region is geopolitically salient to major Western powers such as the EU due to the significance of Central Asia's other neighbors, including Russia, China, and Iran (Yazdani 2008).

EU ties to the Caucasus have also grown post-9/11, because of the region's periodic political and security volatility. Georgia's President Mikhail Saakashvili has maintained a close relationship with the EU, and he and his officials have openly declared EU membership as a long-term policy objective. Following the 2004 and 2007 rounds of enlargement, countries in Eastern Europe, particularly Ukraine, became geopolitically and strategically valuable as buffers between the West and Russia. Increased EU interest in former Soviet space was evident in the European Neighborhood Policy, a series of bilateral agreements established in 2004, and the Eastern Partnership, a multilateral framework centered on Eastern Europe, in 2009.

This research contributes to the fields of EU studies, international relations, comparative politics, institutions, foreign policy, and democracy. It primarily questions whether the inter-institutional dynamics of the EU undermine its ability to be a unitary actor abroad. Under consideration is an issue area within foreign affairs that should be most conducive to cohesive discourse, i.e. democracy, as well as

cases most likely to elicit such discourse, i.e. former Soviet space. Therefore, this research explores how the main institutions of the EU converge and diverge in foreign affairs as they address issues of democracy in non-member-states. The objective is to identify how the institutional dynamics of the EU promote or hinder it as a unitary global actor. The focus on foreign affairs and policy serves as a crucial instance of the level of EU institutional and political integration. It is a crucial test case, because it serves as an indicator of how far EU integration has advanced. Though the unit of analysis is not foreign policy but the institutions themselves, foreign policy is the crucial field in which the institutions act or fail to act as a unitary actor.

1.2 A Brief History of the EU, 1951-2003

Today's EU is the product of over half a century of cooperation in Western Europe. The European Union began as the European Coal and Steel Community, formally established by the Treaty of Paris of 1951, in which war-torn France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg addressed common concerns by establishing a supranational institution. The founding members sought the reconstruction of postwar economies, the prevention of conflict based on nationalism, and the need for security in a Cold War context

(McCormick 2005, 52). Coal and steel were the targeted industries due to their critical role during war, but also as a way to contain Germany, foster interdependence, and encourage industrial development (60).

Notably absent from the early negotiations of united Europe was Britain, which did not join the Community until 1973. Britain's reluctance to join was based in part on concerns about preserving influence in the international community vis-à-vis the United States, the Commonwealth, and Western Europe (Kaiser 1996, 5-8, 129). Until the successes of the then-renamed European Economic Community became apparent following the Treaties of Rome (1957) and until Britain's economic power abroad began to decline, there was little political and economic incentive for Britain to commit to the early European negotiations (116, 126). Britain did apply for membership in 1961 and 1967 after all, only to be vetoed twice by France's Charles de Gaulle, who perceived close British-US ties as a threat to the European (and French) vision of the Community (135). Britain renegotiated entry after De Gaulle's death, and joined the Community in 1973.

The first round of enlargement took place that year, with the accession of the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark. The next round of enlargement took place in 1981 when Greece joined; Spain and Portugal joined five years later. The 1970s and early 1980s were a

period of stagnation for European integration that came to be known as 'Eurosclerosis'. The pace of integration increased in the mid-1980s with the Single European Act (SEA) of 1986. The SEA changed institutional voting methods, developed social policies, and targeted regional inequalities within the EU (Dinan 2004, 209-227). Arguably most importantly, the SEA established the single market among the twelve member-states and laid the foundation for the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), which would later become the basis for the common currency (McCormick 2005, 69).

A few short years later, communism collapsed in Central and Eastern Europe, and it became evident in the 1990s that many former Soviet satellites would seek the West for security, growth, and stability. The Maastricht Treaty (1993) was a response to this political reality, and it introduced a set of criteria for membership, including stable institutions that can guarantee democracy, the rule of law, and human rights; a functioning market economy; and adherence to the EU's body of law. Amid the changing international environment, another enlargement took place in 1995, bringing the membership count to 15: Austria, Finland, and Sweden. The EU adopted and implemented major treaties in 1999 with the Treaty of Amsterdam, and 2003 with the Treaty of Nice. These treaties had ramifications for the institutions of the EU, which will be addressed in the next section.

1.3   The Institutions of the European Union

The binding treaties of the EU govern institutional powers. Notable among them, the Treaty of Maastricht, also known as the Treaty of the European Union or TEU (effective November 1993), is the foundational framework for the current institutional arrangement of the EU. It is also the treaty which gave the EU a formal supranational role in foreign affairs for the first time by introducing the concept of a common foreign and security policy, with the purpose of achieving a unified voice amid a cacophony of member-state policies (TEU 1993). Since then, the TEU has been amended on three occasions: Treaty of Amsterdam (effective May 1999), Treaty of Nice (effective February 2003), and Treaty of Lisbon (effective December 2009). Each amending treaty conferred greater foreign policy making power to the EU, but the basic tenets and authority of the TEU still stand.

The Treaty of Amsterdam ('Amsterdam'), which followed the crisis in former Yugoslavia, sought to improve coherence and effectiveness in foreign policy. In 1999, Amsterdam expanded and formalized the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP, discussed on the following page) and the position of High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (now defunct) (Amsterdam

1999). The Treaty of Nice was signed in 2001, but went into effect in 2003; it modified EU institutions to accommodate the upcoming enlargement. By 2009, the Treaty of Lisbon ('Lisbon') added further changes by merging the High Representative position from Amsterdam with the External Affairs Commissioner to create the post of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (Lisbon 2009). Lisbon also created the European External Action Service (EEAS), which acts as an EU diplomatic mission abroad.

Based on the founding and amending treaties, the institutions of the EU work together in foreign affairs. The European Council—which is different from the Council of Ministers and is not an institution I analyze in this research—convenes the heads of state to determine general foreign policy direction and goals; these are very strategic level determinations.

How the Commission, the Council of Ministers, and the Parliament interact in foreign affairs depends on whether or not the issue is considered part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The CFSP is limited to sensitive foreign policy areas and "high politics", such as military, defense, and security. Other issue areas often associated with foreign policy, such as international agreements, humanitarian aid, foreign assistance, and electoral oversight, are not part of the CFSP.

The TEU established and delineated the basic institutional process of the CFSP. Under the TEU, the presidency of the Council of Ministers, in charge of the CFSP, keeps the European Parliament informed, while the Parliament can ask questions, make recommendations, and debate CFSP matters (TEU Articles 13, 18, 21). The Council "ensure[s] the unity, consistency and effectiveness of action by the Union" (Article 13).

Foreign policy areas that fall outside the CFSP domain become part of the normal policy process of the EU; the Commission is the foreign representative in such affairs and proposes legislation to the Council, which must conclude and pass the legislation with the assent of the Parliament. More specifically, the Council of Ministers (also known as the Council or the Council of the EU, but should not be confused with European Council and the Council of Europe) convenes the foreign ministers of each member-state to define actionable specifics of foreign policy. This policy is proposed by the Commission, which negotiates international agreements on behalf of the EU. For simplicity, we can consider the Commission to be the representative, the Council to be the decision-maker, and the Parliament to be the consultant.

- The Commission, foreign representative of the EU: As the most supranational institution of the EU, the Commission

plays a very important role in foreign affairs: it negotiates

agreements on behalf of the EU in the international stage.

Before Lisbon, the Commission's most important role in

foreign policy was through the Directorate General for

External Relations and European Neighborhood Policy

(known as DG RELEX), which served as the EU

representative abroad (Popescu 2011, 28). This research

takes into account configurations before and after Lisbon,

because the Commission played the same essential role in

both as the EU representative abroad.

- The Council, decision-maker of foreign affairs: Foreign policy

    making resides here, in the most intergovernmental of EU

    institutions. Until Lisbon in 2009, foreign affairs topics were

    discussed in the "General Affairs and External Relations

    Council" configuration of the Council, which convened the

    Foreign Affairs ministers of each member-state. After Lisbon,

    this configuration split into two entities: the General Affairs

    Council (addressing issues that cut across policy areas) and

    the Foreign Affairs Council (addressing issues explicitly

    external), both of which convene the foreign ministers of

    member-states. In either case, the national ministers meet

    in these Council configurations to make policy. Several other

important roles fall under the Council, including that of the Secretariat General of the Council (which is the staff), the EU Special Representatives, the Political and Security Committee (PSC) of the Council, and the PSC's sub-committees (Popescu 2011, 27). This research considers the Council in its pre- and post-Lisbon configurations, since they all encompassed the same elements: the foreign affairs ministries, liaison representatives, support staff, and committees.

- <u>The Parliament, consultant on foreign matters</u>: Although the Parliament does not play a leading role in the foreign policy process, it does play an institutionalized consultative one, especially through its Committee on Foreign Affairs. For matters outside the CFSP, the Parliament must consent to issues ranging from the accession of new member-states to international agreements with non-member-states. For CFSP topics, the High Representative (which falls under the Council) regularly informs and consults with the Parliament. For instance, the High Representative submits a consultative document on the main substantive and technical points of foreign policy to the Parliament twice per year; the Parliament can then pose questions or recommendations to

the Council and the High Representative. The Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs includes two subcommittees as well: security and defense, and human rights. The latter assists with a parliamentary yearly report on human rights across the world, which the Parliament regularly includes in its agenda.

As the bullets above and Figure 1 demonstrate, the three institutions have different sources of legitimacy, types of membership representing different constituencies, and divergent interests.

Commission (The Representative)	• Supranational, represents interests of the EU • EU's international representative; negotiates international agreements (except for limited CFSP, which resides with the Council) • 1 Commissioner per member appointed for 5 yrs • Only institution that can propose legislation, which then goes to the Council and Parliament
Council of Ministers (The Decision-Maker)	• Intergovernmental, represents state interests • Decision-makers; for non-CFSP, makes EU foreign policy based on proposals by the Commission and in consultation with Parliament • For CFSP matters, retains primary authority • Each member-state sends its foreign minister to meetings on foreign affairs • Appoints the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who chairs the Foreign Affairs Council and leads CFSP
Parliament (The Consultant)	• Subnational, represents interests of the citizens • Must consent to legislation, approve Commission appointments, and is the only body that can dismiss the Commission • Ministers popularly elected for 5 yrs

Figure 1: Institutions of the EU

While the consultative role of the Parliament in the foreign policy process may not seem vital to the EU's ability to project itself abroad, this research contends that the Parliament is essential to this kind of research. First, the parliament is one of the major EU institutions, and as such requires attention. Second, the parliament is the only democratic voice in all EU institutions, and thus it is an important perspective to consider. Finally, the Parliament has gradually gained power throughout the years, which suggests that (should the trend continue) the Parliament will gain power in the foreign policy making process. In fact, parliamentarians have already expressed frustration at their seemingly relegated role in the process and may pressure for greater influence in the future.

This research focuses on three institutions of the EU: the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament. The institutional structure of the EU confers uneven powers among them in foreign affairs, which may lead scholars in the field to question the value of observing their inter-institutional dynamics. This research contends that this is precisely where scholars have failed to keep pace. The EU's evolving institutional powers suggest that these three institutions will continue to be the primary elements in foreign affairs. Because no single institution has or will have sole influence over EU foreign affairs,

it is critical to understand how the main players interact, and how they affect far-reaching policies. Furthermore, despite the evolution of sub-institutional entities (such as specific liaisons or committees), the major institutions themselves continue to represent a consistent set of interests: supranational, national, and subnational. The failure to observe inter-institutional dynamics and the assumption that the primary obstacle to the EU as a unitary actor abroad stems only from national-level divergences are important elements of EU studies that merit further attention.

1.4 Purpose of Research

This research project uses a constructivist foundation, which will be explained more fully in the next chapter, to explore the sphere of EU foreign affairs, a sector which appears to have some degree of cohesion regarding democratic rhetoric, but which this research contends is undermined by competing institutional interests (rather than solely national interests). This dissertation poses the following questions: What are the roles, powers, and interests of the EU's main institutions in foreign policy, and how do they portray democracy in the former Soviet non-member-states? To what extent do the institutions of the EU converge or diverge in approaches to foreign

policy, and do the institutions of the EU promote or hinder the EU's ability to assert itself as a global unitary actor? Why does the EU emphasize democratic discourse in some cases and not others, and what are the patterns of democratic discourse across EU institutions? And, finally, why do EU institutions vary in their approaches to foreign policy?

1.5   Chapter Overview

The research is divided into 7 chapters. The next chapter is a survey of the relevant literature in international relations theory, integration theory, studies on the EU as an international actor, and democracy to build a research agenda and theoretical foundation for this analysis. Chapter three outlines the research design, including the methodology, key concepts, and case and data selection. It will demonstrate how qualitative data analysis software facilitates qualitative content and primarily discourse analysis to identify relevant discursive patterns. Chapter four provides context for the EU internally and externally, and for the case studies. Chapter five is the empirical chapter, which presents the democratic discourse of the institutions based on the data compiled for this study. Chapter six analyzes the discursive findings to identify how the EU constructed democracy

through discourse in the case studies. The concluding chapter

addresses the theoretical implications and relevance of the findings, as

well as potential avenues of future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Foundations

2.1 Introduction

The European Union has generated a great deal of scholarly discussion across a wide range of issue areas. This chapter provides an overview of the theories that will be most useful for the questions and findings of this research. The first section addresses mainstream theories of international relations to identify the potential for and limits of interstate cooperation through institutions. These theories include variants of realism, liberalism, and constructivism as they relate to institutions. The first section also includes academic perspectives on the role of the state within the EU and the EU conceptualized as a state. The second section explores regionalism and integration theory to identify how and why the level of EU institutional integration has changed over time. The two main theories in this section are neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism. The third section delves into foreign policy and the literature on conditionality, as a form of EU foreign policy in former Soviet space, to consider EU use of incentives and disincentives along the eastern periphery. The fourth section

surveys the democracy literature, while the concluding section outlines an agenda for the research presented ahead.

The primary element of focus across these theories and sections is institutions, which are defined as rules that shape state cooperation and competition, behavior and norms, and the organizations that help manage the implementation of such rules (Mearsheimer 1994, 8). The theories in this chapter will be helpful for understanding theoretical debates on whether the notion of the EU as a unitary actor is possible or even desirable. They also illustrate the extent to which states retain or surrender power to growing institutions. Once the overarching institution enjoys powers beyond its constituent member states, such as conditionality, academic discourse describes the bounds of institutional power in foreign affairs. Taken together, these theories will set a solid foundation for exploring inter-institutional dynamics in the EU.

2.2   International Relations Theory and Institutions

2.2.1 Neorealism and Institutions

The theoretical tenets and assumptions of realists—such as the anarchic system, the security dilemma, and the primary role of the state as a unitary actor—prove problematic in cases like the EU, which

appeared to violate such basic premises. The EU was a seemingly successful instance of states pooling sovereignty and overcoming interstate competition and conflict through institutions.

Even after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the bipolar system, John Mearsheimer argued that international institutions would be unable to shape state behavior in ways conducive to peace. Like many other realists, he argued that institutions hold "minimal influence" over state behavior (Mearsheimer 1994, 7). Institutions in the realist world are simply an intervening variable (13), instead of a dependent or independent variable (Keohane and Martin 1995, 46).

Hedley Bull was the prominent "middle ground" in this theoretical debate, and he was closely associated with the "English School" of theorists (Linklater 2005, 85). Proponents of the English School argue that states can form an international society, but the system remains anarchic because they do not need to subordinate themselves to the overarching institution (84). Theorists from the English School are theoretically distinct from neorealists but retain the basic premise of the anarchic system and the pessimism associated with realism: Proponents of the English School are more likely to yield to claims of inherent conflict and violence between states rather than optimistic notions of mitigated conflict and long-term peace facilitated by institutions (85).

Thus Bull adopted a less rigid stance regarding how the anarchic system bodes for international institutions, arguing instead that states can overcome anarchy to form an international society (Bull 1977, 44-49). States achieve this by determining that it is in their interests to adhere to institutional rules and principles, instead of deeming such arrangement a "detriment of their interests" (134).

Although the anarchic system does not preclude the formation of common interstate interests, it does present some limitations. International arrangements can "function as an instrument of state interest and as a vehicle of transnational purposes… as maneuvers on the part of particular powers to gain ascendancy" (Bull 1977, 49). Bull (1982) also made the prominent argument that the European Community's civilian power abroad relied on the military power of its member-states, without which it would be too weak to act internationally.

These views persisted throughout the 1990s. Juan Medrano (2001, 156-157) identified the following leading explanations for the slow pace of foreign policy integration in the defense and security arenas: the existence of the NATO alliance alleviates the need to do so; state sovereignty in these topics is more sensitive than in other sectors; and member-state interests are simply too divergent to allow cooperation or even integration. Medrano, however, presented

critiques for each and ultimately argued that the EU's ineffective stance abroad stems from a lack of common vision and interests, as well as limited operational capabilities (173-174). For Medrano, "the role of the EU in international affairs will in all likelihood remain hostage to the differences of interest that exist between its major states" (174). Other scholars published works with cynical titles and claims, such as Philip Gordon's "Europe's Uncommon Foreign Policy" in 1997, in which he argued that divergent national priorities and the difficulty in perceived shared long-term interests fundamentally hindered the prospects for foreign policy unity.

From the neorealist literature on institutions, I will challenge the overemphasis on the role of the state as the central unitary actor, and the role of institutions as mere impediments or, at best, as vehicles for state security dilemmas. This research will demonstrate that institutions themselves can be agents of normative idea formation through discourse.

2.2.2 Neoliberalism and Institutions

The neoliberal perspectives on institutions are more optimistic than their neorealist counterparts. One of the most prominent neoliberal accounts for institutions is Robert Keohane's *After Hegemony* (1984), in which he proposes regime theory. Regime theory

argues that international regimes—which are arrangements made "as responses to the need for policy coordination created by the fact of interdependence" (8)—allow governments to realize objectives they could not reach on their own (97). Furthermore, international regimes promote international cooperation by raising the costs of violating agreements, reducing transaction costs and uncertainty, and facilitating information sharing (97-107). Regime theorists like Keohane view the world as "a complex web of international interdependencies between states, which has altered the traditional concept of national interests and state sovereignty" (Wunderlich 2007, 22).

For Liberals, the state does indeed play a role in shaping collective goals, such as those at the EU level: "rather than imposing themselves on states, international institutions should respond to the demands by states for cooperative ways to fulfill their own purposes" (Keohane 1998). Pevehouse and Russett (2006) argue that a particular type of institution—a densely democratic international governmental organization—reduces the potential for militarized interstate disputes. They attribute three causal mechanisms for promoting peace: credible commitments, means of dispute settlement, and socialization among actors (972-978).

Scholars who espouse optimistic prospects for the future of the

EU as a cohesive international actor base their arguments on the

growing potential for interstate cooperation. In his book *The Rise of*

European Security Cooperation, Seth Jones (2007) argues that

cooperation between member-states is indeed evident outside most

hot-button foreign policy issues and thus far from a failure. Ulrich

Krotz (2009, 559-563) presents additional reasons for interstate

cooperation: Europeans tend to favor further cooperation; high-level

EU politicians promote unity; and there have been recent, albeit

gradual, successes in policy and reform. In *The Quest for a European*

Strategic Culture, Christoph Meyer (2006) argues that national

divergences do exist, but they have lessened in ways that favor

normative convergence.

I will challenge the neoliberal perspective on institutions to argue

that institutions not only lower costs and facilitate interstate

cooperation, but they also compel and compete with constituent states

to form narratives and ideas of their own.

2.2.3 Constructivism and Institutions

The constructivist alternative responds to the inherent

rationalism in many of the mainstream theoretical approaches briefly

outlined above. In this case, the same objective event—such as war—

is produced by and generates very different meanings according to history, context, and norms; a war in one context may mean something completely different in another, and its advent may be due to or stem from a number of ideational factors. Thus agents, their decisions, and the social structures they generate (including institutions) must be put into context.

Alexander Wendt is one of the leading proponents of constructivism to challenge the rationalist tenets of realism and liberalism (1999, 2-3). His seminal work, *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999), argues that ideas matter much more than materialist theories are willing to concede. The social system is a single structure made up of material and ideational components (190). Wendt is emphatic in that he does not assign greater value to ideas over materialism and power (135). Instead, he emphasizes that ideas are not necessarily causal, but "they constitute the 'material base' [of power and interest] in the first place" (135).

Wendt's constructivism, however, included a "structural bias" that led to further refinement of the theoretical perspective by other scholars in the field (Widmaier and Park 2012, 126). This structural bias, which made identifying potential agents of change difficult, was his emphasis on "the role of 'exogenous shocks' in the evolution [and change] of system orders" (126). Critics of the structural bias argued

that agents themselves could shape their intersubjective structures through the use of rhetoric and persuasion (126). Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (1998, 895-896) unpacked the concept of norms to argue that norms develop along a three-part "life cycle": emergence, cascade, and internationalization. In the emergence stage, "norm entrepreneurs" draw attention to the norm based on a particular organizational platform, such as an NGO (896-900). In the cascade stage, a tipping point from the first stage allows for the norms to diffuse and become socialized internationally, whether via diplomatic or materialist means (902). Finally, the internationalization phase occurs when the norm is so widely accepted internationally that such norms appear isomorphic across societies (904-905). Thus scholars like Finnemore and Sikkink emphasized the strategic power of agents in promoting change (Widmaier and Park 2012, 124).

Other strands of constructivism looked to sources of change other than strategic agents. These scholars argued that emotional, affective, and sentimentalist influences could shape change and interstate commitments (Widmaier and Park 2012, 129). Andrew Ross (2006) uses the example of 9/11 to illustrate the power of affect and emotion, particularly when they are not coherent and obvious. He argues that micropolitical processes of emotion can shape social

practices beyond "strictly instrumental products of affective mobilization" (like revenge) (215).

In a study of the EU, Frierke and Wiener (1999, 725) adopt a constructivist approach to argue the following: "[W]e are not looking for a unidirectional relationship between preferences and outcomes, but rather at a changing context within which identities and interests are mutually constituted through a process of interaction. If the meaning of a speech act is dependent on a context, it follows logically that, if the context changes, so will the meaning of an act." In this regard Frierke and Wiener remain sensitive to context and diverge from the rationalist school of thought. Domestically in target countries, elite commitment to reform, such as pro-reform national governments, and the establishment of new political institutions conducive to democratic consolidations, such as higher electoral thresholds, matter as well (Bandelj and Radu 2006).

The constructivist perspective on institutions outlined here will serve as the foundation of this research, in which institutions are the source of identity formation and norms. The Commission, the Council, and the Parliament engender different narratives and ideas, which can subsequently become impetuses for action or inaction.

2.2.4 States and the EU as a State

The state is the primary unit in many of the mainstream theories outlined above, but its role continues to be contested in EU studies. The debate surrounds whether or not the EU can be conceptualized as a state, and what the role of the traditional state is within the EU. Scholars who study the EU sometimes have the tendency to attribute Westphalian elements of the state to the EU, especially when they discuss certain foreign policy issues like immigration, security, and borders. Jan Zielonka (2006) argues that the EU is more like a neo-medieval empire than a traditional state; scholars therefore travel down a misleading road of flawed statist expectations (141). Regional international organizations, specifically the EU, become a tool for member-states to pursue national interests, undermining the notion of the EU as a unitary state (140-163). Zielonka's argument is similar to the realist pessimism regarding the relationship between states and regional institutions: states capitalize on the institution as a vehicle for their own national interests rather than as a means of cooperation for the sake of shared interests.

For Zielonka, while the EU is indeed a viable actor in the international community, it is qualitatively different from traditional states in terms of governance (states traditionally have hierarchical governance), means (states traditionally have military means at their

disposal), and objectives (traditionally linked to concerns about foreign aggression), among others (140-163). "Finding the right balance between principles and prudence in foreign and security policy will be the key to Europe's future in the field," he argues (163).

Modern conceptualizations of the state—and whether the EU we know today is a "state in the making" (Zielonka 2006)—are rooted in the traditional Westphalian state. Indeed, as Hedley Bull argued in 1982, traditional powers of the state—particularly military power—enable the EU to act internationally as a civilian power. Prior to the modern state, authorities and identities overlapped and encompassed multiple horizontal and vertical orders. The monarchies that preceded the modern state were sometimes unable to exert power over local rivals, and would instead rely on indirect rule (Tilly 1985, 174). In his analogy of the state as a product of war and organized crime, Tilly (1985, 169, 181-182) argues that the state is the result of four interdependent dimensions: war making, state making, client protection, and extraction as a means for the first three. Therefore, the state has only come to assume monopoly of security and means to extract (namely taxation), or grantor of such to another entity, over time.

Other scholars built on Tilly's argument. Daniel Beland (2005) adds the responsibilities of state regulation and redistribution to Tilly's

dimensions. Venelin Ganev (2005), on the other hand, reverses Tilly's ideas on state-making to explain the decline of infrastructure in post-communist states immediately after the collapse of communism. He argues that, just as predatory elites can build a state in Tilly's original account, they can also destroy the infrastructure of a state against the will of its people (Ganev 2005). This predatory behavior is unique in that it targets "the public domain" (the object of the state's traditional monopoly over extraction) rather than the resources of a specific social group (439).

Other scholars admonish not to 'wish away' the role of the state and national interests. As Saskia Sassen (2003, 11-12) argues, the state remains relevant in the negotiations of supranational entities and some states even gain power. It is flawed to think of member-state and EU relations as a zero-sum game of dualities (Sassen 2003). In a more recent study, Sassen (2008) argued that basic values of the Westphalian state—such as rule of law—have enabled the very international institutions that we associate with globalization and denationalization.

States can also serve to filter global processes at the supranational level by offering citizens a means to hold supranational entities accountable for policy (Sassen 2003, 28). Individuals are no longer confined to the recourses afforded to them by the state, and

they can circumvent traditional state channels (Jacobson and Ruffer 2003; Moens and Trone, 2010). Nevertheless, as Gary Marks and Liesbet Hooghe (1996, 4, 89) argue, political authority and influence in the EU is shared and interconnected, not nested, and states no longer serve as the "sole interface" between the supranational and the subnational levels.

In this research, I respond to the debate over whether the EU can be conceptualized as a state, and what the role of the traditional state is within the EU. It may be misleading to apply characteristics of the state to the EU, which does not necessarily need to embody the features of a traditional Westphalian state. Instead, the EU may be a new arrangement in the making, one with a common policy in some sectors and multiple policies in others. Furthermore, the traditional (member-)state within the EU is neither the sole unitary actor nor the primary actor. Rather, the state pursues competing interests alongside the institutions of the EU. This research will demonstrate how these elements of the state develop in the EU.

2.3   Regionalism, Integration Theory, and Institutions

This research is also informed by regionalism and integration theories as they relate to institutions. These theories help explain how

and why institutions develop or fail to develop in the first place. The epitome of regionalism is the EU, the only one of its kind, embodying both supranational and intergovernmental institutions, and intertwined more closely than any other region of the world. Although no other regionalist project compares to the EU's level of integration and supranationalism, the EU serves as a model for a number of other organizations, therefore attracting significant theoretical attention (Duina, 2006, 268-269; Grugel, 2004, 613).

Because regionalist arrangements are institutions, theoretical perspectives in international relations differ regarding regionalism as they do institutions. For neorealists, regionalism is akin to the formation of alliances, and states remain self-interested as they seek to maximize gain and balance external economic pressures (Tassinari 2004, 20-22). It can also be a way to improve relative security for the sake of survival in the anarchical system (Wunderlich 2007, 19). Security, in this case, is relative to new threats, whatever form they may take. For the EU enlargement eastward, the new "threat" may have been economic competitiveness or the hegemonic ambitions of large neighboring states like Russia (20). Neoliberals, on the other hand, argue that regionalism is a way to "help reduce anarchy by constraining state behavior", but they go much further than

neorealists to say that regionalist institutions can facilitate long-term integration and cooperation (21).

As with institutions, constructivists diverge from the state-centric explanations of their theoretical rivals to argue that discourse, perceptions, identity, and subnational issues—not necessarily interstate conflict—can explain the reasons for regionalism (38). Using the constructivist lens, one potential explanation for regionalism in the EU would be a shared sense of regional identity and "Europeanness" (Tassinari 2007, 29). The 'big bang' enlargement of 2004 serves as an example of how shared identity is a compelling explanation for integration. Although uncertainty characterized the initial years of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, the transitional governments of these countries attempted to distance themselves from their communist pasts through accession to Western organizations (Jacoby 2004, 6). Perhaps of greatest political and economic importance was membership to the EU, which was a source of "European" (rather than "East European") identity.

Regionalism is referred to as either "old" or "new" in both the temporal and substantive sense. Old regionalism, which tended to focus on economic regional integration, figured most prominently in the 1950s and 1960s (Duina 2006, 248). Old regionalism prioritized "protectionism, [and] sealed internal markets or security communities"

(Grugel, 2004, 605). Geopolitics was a secondary though important concern, with security and stability as political priorities in the bipolar system (Hveem, 2000, 70).

New regionalism, on the other hand, looks to political legitimacy and identity in the context of globalization (including economically), and moves beyond traditional notions of the Westphalian state (Hveem, 2000, 71). Emerging towards the end of the Cold War, the phenomenon began with the European Community's move toward the single market (73). New regionalism opts for "openness to global capitalism" (Grugel, 2004, 605). It reflects a "collective action problem," whereby national governments are not able to effectively pursue their goals independently (Hveem, 2000, 71).

The most relevant debate within regionalism (Wunderlich 2007, 1) for this research, is integration theory. Two integration theory camps seek to explain how and why the institutions of the EU have grown through the years: neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism. Neofunctionalism was led by Ernst Haas (1961, 368, 372), who argued that early decisions would "spillover" to other more controversial functions in ways that promoted integration: "[P]olicies made pursuant to an initial task and grant of power can be made real only if the task itself is expanded." Neofunctionalism holds that elites seek to resolve issues at the supranational level, and a dynamic process then

develops, in which supranational institutions respond to increased social expectations, thereby gaining more authority and legitimacy (Sweet and Sandholtz 2003, 221). 'Spillover' occurs in the pursuit of policy goals, which stimulates further supranational integration (221).

Alec Stone Sweet and Wayne Sandholtz (1997, 307; 2003) refined the theory further in response to the period in the 1970s of stagnant integration. They conceded that certain junctures of integration are marked by intergovernmental interest or resistance, but the primary driving force remains neofunctionalist (1997, 306; 2003, 228, 237): "[States] can attempt to slow integration or push it in directions favorable to their perceived interests, but they do not drive the process or fully control it. In a fundamental sense, governments are reactive, constantly adjusting to the integration that is going on all around them." Thomas Risse (2005, 305) added a constructivist interpretation, and made the claim that "socialization into European identity works…on the national levels in a process whereby Europeanness…is gradually being embedded in understandings of national identities." For Risse, this means that member-states may be receptive to EU identity in varying degrees.

Critical of the view that states lose power in the integration process, an opposing and influential camp developed in integration theory. Andrew Moravcsik (1993, 474), a leading liberal

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intergovernmentalist, does not believe EU integration requires its own

unique theory (as neofunctionalists do), and rather draws from

existing international relations theories of liberalism. Moravcsik argues

that EU member-states act rationally according to domestic pressures

and international strategy, and that integration does not restrict the

domestic goals of member-states (474). Intergovernmentalism holds

that leaders pursue and respond to national economic interests

through policy coordination and cooperation (Moravcsik 2003, 242).

For Moravcsik, member self-interest and state bargaining explain

integration.

This study contributes to the theoretical discussion on

regionalism and integration. As constructivists have posited, interstate

conflict is not the sole reason for regionalism and integration. Instead,

a shared sense of identity—particularly of Western democracies—is

also a source of regional organization. Many of the post-communist

new member states sought closer ties to the West, particularly the EU,

as a way to identify with Western democracy, or as a way to counter

the Russian "other".

2.4 Foreign Policy, Conditionality, and Institutions

The academic literature regarding foreign policy and conditionality is important for this research, too. Perspectives on institutional foreign policy, and conditionality as an instance thereof, do not always adhere to mainstream international relations theories, other than they tend to move away from the heavy neorealist emphasis of the state (Hyde-Price 2004, 99-100). Foreign policy analysis traditionally employs micro, individual, and actor-centered approaches (Hudson and Vore 1995). Scholars like James Rosenau led the push for comparative foreign policy studies across nations by isolating key characteristics and variables, but comparative approaches in foreign policy analysis remain relatively uncommon.

Graham Allison's view of bureaucratic politics as a model for the role of institutions in foreign affairs argues that issues outside foreign policy affect decision-making in foreign policy (Allison and Halperin 1972; Hyde-Price 2004, 105). In this case, institutions base their decisions in foreign policy on their own organizational interests, such as resources and influence (Hyde-Price 2004, 105). Furthermore, a given institution can have many actors within it and may not necessarily be unitary (Allison and Halperin 1972, 43). In turn, these

players must aggregate their interests to produce policy at the institutional level (50).

One way institutions can exercise foreign policy is through conditionality, or leverage: "International institutions use conditionality… to direct policy in target states" (Epstein and Sedelmeier 2008, 795). Following the collapse of communism, EU decision-makers in the Commission and the Council began to devise standards for democracy along their periphery. Armed with the incentive of full membership, the EU exercised leverage to induce domestic changes in institutions, polities, and laws. During negotiations, requirements for accession were articulated by the Copenhagen Criteria of 1993, whereby the EU Commission set forth three sets of standards: stable institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule of law, and human rights; a functioning market economy; and adherence to the EU's body of law, known as the *acquis communitaire*. The EU then monitored each applicant for compliance.

As stated earlier, explanations of conditionality do not fit into distinct theories of international relations. In fact, many of the scholars who focus on conditionality are comparativists, not international relations theorists. Nevertheless, traces of international relations and the role of the state are evident in the literature on conditionality, especially in how conditionality works: through the power of

asymmetries (neorealism), the power of uncertainty (neoliberalism), or the power of norms (constructivism).

In the realist vein, conditionality is based on power asymmetries, whereby a stronger power imposes reforms on the weaker power (Agne 2009, 2). An example is when applicant countries adopt a law because it is mandated and coerced by the EU to do so for accession, not because the applicant wants to adopt the reform (2). In the liberal vein, conditionality is based on the uncertainty of domestic actors in the target states, their perceived status relative to the international institution, and the credibility of policy (Epstein 2008, 9). Realist and liberal views cite the carrot-and-stick measures of policy reform and financial stipulations. The 'carrots' were membership and aid incentives, while the 'sticks' were the threats of losing either or both, as well as possible sanctions or other repercussions. These conceptualizations of conditionality were thus materialist, rationalist, and incentive-based. Constructivists, on the other hand, questioned the underlying normative power of the EU instead (Epstein and Sedelmeier 2008, 802; Johnson 2008).

Most scholars who focus on conditionality do so in terms of power asymmetries *and* incentives. Milada Vachudova (2005, 63) refers to conditionality as either passive leverage ("the attraction of EU membership") or active leverage ("deliberate conditionality"). In

addition, conditionality can be positive or negative, based on

pragmatism or ideology, and consistent or inconsistent in application

(Grabbe 2002, 250). Geoffrey Pridham (2001, 69) adds that the EU

has symbolic influence as a club of Western liberal democracies, yet

applies direct pressure through policy commitments and financial aid.

Schimmelfennig et al. (2003, 497) argue that EU conditionality is

effective by positive reinforcements, i.e. rewards through material

bargaining. To induce compliance, the EU provides aid, market and

institutional access, and technical guidance. This is the causal

mechanism that Schimmelfennig et al. identify for hard leverage, but

they argue that it works under "the condition of low domestic political

costs" (514). It stands in contrast to soft leverage through the

mechanism of legitimacy and recognition, which they argue is

important, yet, not explanatory (515).

Scholars preserved a similar emphasis to power asymmetries

and incentives for the time period after the accession of new member

states, many of whom were still reforming their political, economic,

and social system. Even after a target state gains membership and the

EU as a whole loses its ultimate leverage incentive of membership, the

EU can compensate its influence through alternative mechanisms, such

as aid, trade, and socialization (Levitz and Pop-Eleches 2010). Ulrich

Sedelmeier (2008) suggests two additional reasons for continued

compliance that go beyond the classic threat of sanctions and punitive policies. First, the new members were able to increase legislative capacity during the pre-accession period, which may account for post-accession effectiveness (820). Second, the new members may have been socialized during the pre-accession period, which makes EU 'shaming strategies' effective. He argues that three possible explanations exist for post-accession compliance with the EU in Central Eastern Europe: the threat of sanctions, rationalist institutionalist focus on formal legislative capacity-building, and socialization stemming from the experience of conditionality, including 'shaming strategies'. Tim Haughton (2007) posits that the EU is more effective at certain points in time; the EU's influence, in other words, is uneven across time. Finally, Mungiu-Pippidi (2007) assesses the issue of 'backsliding' in the CEE region and concludes that the issue is actually one in which heightened expectations are now aligning with reality.

The EU as a normative unitary actor has gained traction in the literature as well. An example of how normative power is used to explain foreign policy in the EU is with the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), an EU framework comprising bilateral relationships spanning from Algeria to Ukraine to Georgia. The ENP has been described as promoting normative influence, especially in post-Soviet states with potential, though not immediate, aspirations to join the EU

(Michalski 2007, 126). Nygren (2008, 126-127) argues that EU democracy promotion efforts in the ENP were more effective in target countries of EU hopefuls and less effective in countries with little realistic prospect of membership: "This suggests not only that using the stick is not enough, but that a carrot may be more effective. It also confirms the view that whatever power the EU has, it is more of a magnet than a gun. […] the less likely an eventual EU membership, the more remote is the success of democracy norm dispersion."

The power of ideas inherent in constructivism is evident in John Meyer's (2001) perspective on the interactions between the EU and states. He argues that the EU serves as a democratizing force in other nation-states through 'otherhood'. Otherhood is "the constant elaboration of expectation for actors" through rules and regulations that delineate the responsibilities of said nation-states (348, 350). This constant elaboration is an example of constructivist emphasis on the affective influences that shape interstate change and the construction of norms (Widmaier and Park 2012, 129). Otherhood is a powerful network because of the institutionalized 'culture of rationalization' it entails (Meyer 2001, 350). A culture of rationalization is akin to natural law, promoting human rights and social development, among others (350-352). Decoupling—or the (significant) gaps between policy and practice—often results (346-347).

The role of the EU as norm exporter is not without criticism. Jan Zielonka (2008) adopts a critical stance of the EU as a global actor in the democratization process. He is critical of the EU resorting to assertive and imperialist means (e.g. economic leverage) to impose European norms and values regionally and globally. Zielonka views the EU as an empire that uses valuable power asymmetries to impose political and economic conditions on weaker countries. Even globally, the EU uses trade and trade regulation as leverage for its preferences. He is also skeptical of global relations that appear to benefit the recipient, because "they are at root designed to promote EU interests" (480). In a normative sense, Zielonka believes the EU's imperialist approach should be replaced with a benign one that upholds the EU as model and example.

I respond to the foreign policy and conditionality literature by offering a crucial test case for both. Institutional cohesiveness in foreign policy is a test for the level of integration in the EU. Furthermore, states less receptive to the traditional conditionality tactics of the EU, relative to the new member states of Central Europe, suggest that the EU enjoys less influence in states where the prospects of membership are low (Michalski 2007; Nygren 2008).

2.5   Democracy and Democratization

Lastly, because this research observes the discursive construction of democracy, theories on democracy and democratization inform this study. Most of the academic discourse on democracy stems from the comparativist literature and the rise of liberal Western democracies in the post-War context. Among the most influential traditional definitions of democracy are the minimalist and procedural ones. Joseph Schumpeter (1942, 269) proposed one such definition that described democracy as an "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote." In Schumpeter's democracy, minimal procedures and structures are in place for elite competition, and voters choose among the competing elites.

Other scholars built on Schumpeter's minimalist definition, namely Robert Dahl (1971), who adopted a procedural understanding of democracy. He used the term 'polyarchy' to describe advanced Western liberal political systems as incomplete democracies, characterized by various dimensions of rights and freedoms designed to allow citizens to develop and demonstrate their preferences, and to protect them from discrimination against those preferences (2-3).

Minimalist definitions inspired by Schumpeter and Dahl persist today. Adam Przeworski (1999, 23), who views democracy as simply a system in which rulers are elected, argues that additional criteria beyond this minimalist definition are important for the quality of democracy and its prospects for survival but not for the definition itself (50).

Many scholars, however, sought to move beyond minimalist conceptions of democracy toward structural arguments that focused on social and economic dimensions. This trend was evident among modernization theorists, like Seymour Lipset (1959, 82-82), who argued that economic development facilitates democracy through factors such as urbanization, literacy, media, and industrialization, which produce a diamond-shaped rather than pyramid-shaped social structure conducive to democracy. Samuel Huntington (1968) was influential in his caution that modernization would lead to instability without the proper institutions to absorb the social shock of modernization, and that political order would have to precede democracy instead. For Huntington, institutions were crucial to channel the shifts in values and expectations generated by modernization (32). In response to modernization theory, Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi (1997, 177) argued that, while economic development does

not cause democracy per se, greater economic development improves the likelihood of democracy's survival once it is established.

With the collapse of Portuguese and Spanish authoritarianism in the mid-1970s, a new era emerged which came to be known as the 'third wave of democratization' (Huntington 1991). The literature on democracy shifted to a greater focus on studies of the transition away from non-democracy (and many assumed toward democracy), oftentimes posing arguments that favored agency over structure. Perhaps the clearest distinction between transitions and democratization is provided by Guillermo O'Donnell and Phillippe Schmitter (1986, 6): A transition is the period between the fall of one regime and the rise of another in its place. The term democratization is more complex (8): "the processes whereby the rules and procedures of citizenship are either applied to political institutions previously governed by other principles… or expanded to include persons not previous enjoying such rights and obligations… or extended to cover issues and institutions not previously subject to citizenship participation." O'Donnell and Schmitter also stress that democratization and liberalization—that is, "the process of making effective certain rights that protect both individuals and social groups from arbitrary or illegal acts committed by the state or third parties"—

are not synonymous, since nondemocratic regimes can liberalize without democratizing (7-9).

One of the most important contributions to transitology was Dankwart Rustow's (1970) account of the transitions process. Rustow was critical of his contemporaries on democratization, whom he viewed as exploring the factors conducive to democracy rather than asking "the genetic questions of how democracy comes into being in the first place" (338-340). Thus he proposed a four-part model to transitions: national unity as a necessary precondition, a preparatory phase of political struggle, a decision phase of leadership deliberation over crucial features of democracy, and a Darwinian-like habituation phase in which democracy becomes increasingly 'palatable'. Rustow's redirection away from the social and economic structural arguments of his contemporaries served as a model for a generation of scholarship that valued agency and elites.

Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell, and J. Samuel Valenzuela (1992) unpacked the concept of "transitions" further. They argued that two transitions actually occur: one from liberalization of an authoritarian regime to the installation of a democratically elected government, and the second from democratically elected government to democratic consolidation (1-3). Democratic consolidation refers to the institutionalization of democratic rules, a definition that is

presented in more complex terms by other scholars (Mainwaring et al.

1992, 69; Schedler 1998). Democratic consolidation is also described

simply as when political actors accept democracy as "the only game in

town" (a phrase first attributed to Giuseppe di Palma but later used

widely in the literature). Samuel Huntington also sought to contribute

to the idea of democratic consolidation. In *The Third Wave* (1991), a

book that identifies historical patterns and waves of democratization,

he used a minimalist-procedural definition of democracy to identify a

test for democratic consolidation: the two turnover test of democracy,

in which a "peaceful transfer of power" occurs through elections twice

(266-67).

Overall, one of the more comprehensive and influential books on

transitions, democratization, and consolidation is *Problems of*

Democratic Transition and Consolidation by Juan Linz and Alfred

Stepan (1996). Their research identifies various factors central to

transitions, including macro-level (stateness, prior regime type), actor-

centered (leadership base of the prior regime, who initiates and

controls a transition), and contextual (political economy, constitution-

making environments, and international influences). Democratic

consolidation, furthermore, comprises five arenas (7-12): civil society,

political society, rule of law, a useable bureaucracy, and economic

society. They also contributed to the field with a classification scheme

of actors, leadership, and regime types that subsequently shape the transition path of a given case.

In recent decades, scholars began to adopt a more critical stance regarding the central assumption in the democratization literature that transitions are moving toward democracy. Avoiding the genetic questions that Rustow once proposed, Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way (2002) focus on functional questions and consider how transitions may lead to 'hybrid' nondemocratic regimes. Levitsky and Way worried about the "democratizating bias" in the transitions literature, adding that it was "overly optimistic" (51, 64). Their healthy skepticism was a central concern in the literature around the time of the initial color revolutions in the 'real world'.

I will base my methodological framework from the democratization literature. I discuss how concepts of democracy will relate to the research in the next chapter.

2.6 Research Agenda and Theoretical Framework

Contemporary scholars who have explicitly refuted or supported the notion of the EU as a unitary actor in foreign policy base their claim on their respective analyses of competing and divergent national interests among the member-states. For scholars who are optimistic of

the EU, this implies that common ground among member-states in a particular policy issue is sufficient for the EU to act as a unitary actor. This research contributes to the discussion by analyzing an additional layer to determine if the EU is a unitary actor: divergent institutional powers and interests within the EU itself. Thus inter-institutional common ground is necessary in addition to common ground between member-states in a given policy area.

Theories on international relations and integration reveal the tenuous balance between states and international institutions, and between structure and agency. And scholarly contributions to the topics of conditionality, leverage, and the role of the EU in Central and Eastern Europe suggest that the EU has very limited "soft" influence in regions further east, where states have little intent or possibility of joining the EU—the "magnet" and "carrot" of membership is virtually nonexistent. The EU can, however, exercise "hard" conditionality through more traditional disincentives, namely punitive policies such as withholding aid. The democratization literature provides a basis for understanding each institution's conceptualization of democracy, as revealed by the discourse.

This study builds a research agenda across different theoretical debates. The results of the study will impart a theoretical discussion regarding international relations, the role of the state, the

development of institutions and institutional authority, and the power

of foreign policy and conditionality. It contributes to mainstream

international relations theory by arguing that international institutions

need not be solely vehicles of state interest; instead states can find

common ground for cooperation. Also, there may be limits to how

liberal institutionalists explain the role of institutions relative to their

constituent states.

This research will treat the EU and its member-states as

potentially unitary actors in foreign affairs. Furthermore, institutions

develop identities and construct meanings through norms and

discourse. For the development of EU institutions, this means that

"spillover" is not inevitable, but instead is punctuated by the growing

pains of institutional change and adjustment. Such institutional

dynamics are evident in cases where states are less incentivized to

follow conditionality policies despite apparent power asymmetries. The

concluding chapter will return to these issues and address theoretical

implications.

The next chapter will discuss the methodological framework

behind this research. It will propose qualitative methods to uncover

the extent to which institutions promote or hinder the EU as an actor

in the international community and in foreign policy.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

3.1   Introduction

To determine whether the institutions of the EU have different stakes in foreign affairs and to determine when a particular institution employs democratic discourse, this research utilizes interpretive, qualitative content and discourse analysis of EU institutional documents from an extensive database built for this study. It explores how the EU produces and constructs democratic norms through formal discourse on post-Soviet states. The study relates to how EU institutions use discursive resources to publicly delineate their stance in foreign matters. Institutional documents reflect an official posturing of that stance, representative of the institution as a whole rather than representative of an actor within. In this chapter, I outline the research methods that will uncover essential inter-institutional dynamics in the EU. I address the following issues: first, the research questions; second, the hypothesized relationship between variables; third, the research design; fourth, the specific research steps involved; and, finally, concluding remarks on methodological trade-offs.

3.2 The Problem and the Questions

Despite the prominent role of the EU as a unitary global actor in the political, economic, and social transitions of the post-Soviet satellites in Central and Eastern Europe, the notion of the EU as a unitary global actor is far from settled. This study argues that divergent institutional interests undermine the EU on the world stage. To examine these dynamics, it observes democratic discourse in EU documents of three leading institutions across three case studies, and poses the following questions.

Q_1 How are EU relations with former Soviet non-member-states portrayed by each institution? What are the roles, powers, and interests of the institutions in such cases?

Q_2 To what extent do the institutions of the EU converge or diverge in approaches to foreign policy? Do the different institutions of the EU promote or hinder the EU's ability to act as a global unitary actor?

Q3   How do the institutions of the EU construct democratic

discourse in each case? What are the patterns of discourse

across EU institutions?

Q4   Why do EU institutions vary in their approaches to foreign

affairs? What explains points of divergence or

convergence?

3.3   Hypothesis

This research assesses the impact of institutional power levels

and stakes abroad (explanatory variables) as evident in democratic

discourse used in foreign policy (outcome variable). The outcome

variable seeks to capture EU institutional (dis)unity in policy.

The institutions of the EU have different stakes and vested

interests at risk in foreign policy commitments and outcomes; the

greater the stake, the less democratic rhetoric is used. That is, the

institutional actor with the lowest stakes in outcomes, the Parliament,

will be most likely to use democratic discourse in reference to the non-

member-state in question, because the limited impact of its discourse

on reform in target states and limited accountability allow it to make

bolder statements. Lower stakes in outcomes also allow the institution,

in this case the Parliament, to pursue its own interests within the EU itself. As the only democratically elected body in the EU, the Parliament can foster identity formation as the beacon of democratic discourse and thus reflect its internal origins and character. The Parliament forms and reinforces its identity as a democratic institution by constructing narratives and pursuing interests commensurate with democracy—particularly by way of democratic discourse. This study will demonstrate instances of such narratives in the case studies.

This inverse relationship is hypothesized to be the case, since greater institutional authority abroad based on the legally binding treaties of the EU leads to greater responsibility and accountability. Conversely, if an institution has less authority in foreign affairs, then it faces fewer repercussions when using democratic discourse, as it will likely not be held accountable for the fulfillment of such norms in relationships with target states. This contrast between greater and lesser authority reflects an inherent trade-off for realpolitik, whereby more powerful institutions consider the pragmatic ramifications of discourse. Pragmatic ramifications matter for the more powerful institutions, because their ability to exert pressure over a target state relies on power asymmetries (see earlier discussion in § 2.4 on conditionality).

Because the meaning of democracy is unsettled and even contested in the EU (to be discussed in §3.4.3 on the conceptualization of democracy), each institution can use democratic discourse at its discretion. If an institution has less authority in foreign affairs, however, the institution risks fewer repercussions when using democratic discourse, as it will likely not be held accountable for the fulfillment of democratic norms in EU relationships with nondemocratic states.

3.4   Research Design

This research seeks to uncover the construction of democracy across EU institutions through discourse. It looks to case studies outside the EU, because discursive meaning emerges from the focus on "others", which allows for the "development of intersubjective understandings [...] intersubjectivities occur in the context of communicative action involving processes of persuasion and advocacy that go beyond the utilitarian exchange of preferences..." (Rosamond 1999, 659). This research searches for intersubjectivity by identifying how democracy is conceptualized vis-à-vis Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan through an iterative process. Furthermore, if the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament display similar

discourses, then the prospects for institutional cohesion and the ability of the EU to act as a unitary actor abroad are more favorable. If the three institutions fail to display similar discourses and instead demonstrate very different priorities and concerns, then the reverse is likely.

This section of the chapter explains how documents were selected and analyzed in terms of the research questions. First, it outlines the overarching strategies that frame the research design. Second, it presents the specific methodological tools used in the research. Third, it presents the case selection over which the methodology was executed. Fourth, it outlines the specific data used, including parameters and selection.

3.4.1.Methodological Strategies

Before outlining specific methodological parameters, I will explain the overall strategies applied. This research was driven by the following overall strategies: diachronic and synchronic strategies to capture time and space; and exploratory research techniques. First, to test the hypothesis, this research used a dual approach—diachronic and synchronic strategies. Diachronic research observes democratic discourse across time and over the span of nine years (2003-2011). In this study, the purpose of the diachronic component is to capture the

impact of context on discourse, as well as the gradual nature of discursive constructions of meaning (Malmvig 2006, 30). Synchronic research, on the other hand, observes democratic discourse across space. In this study, the purpose of a synchronic component is to capture a particular moment that transpired across space and which ought to have been most ripe for democratic discourse: the color revolutions. The two strategies are complementary yet distinct; the former allows for observing the dynamic and gradual nature of democratic discourse, such as changes in what is included or excluded in discourse over time and patterns, while the latter allows for democratic discourse to be captured during a particularly receptive point in recent history.

Second, when researchers embark on the theoretical and empirical world, they construct research designs characterized by confirmatory or exploratory strategies (Gerring 2001, 155). As the labels suggest, confirmatory research "envisions empirical analysis as a process of confirming or disconfirming a previously stipulated hypothesis," while exploratory research is "a process of mutual adjustment" between concepts, theories, and evidence with the goal of discovery (231). Researchers tend to fall in between the two extremes (155, 230-232), though this research leans toward the latter. This is

because—more often than not—the puzzles of inquiry in social science are too complex to be reduced to standards of natural science.

Exploratory approaches value knowledge through understanding the complexities of the empirical world. Exploratory qualitative researchers point to the contributions of interpretivist Clifford Geertz (1973), who was known as a proponent of "thick description." He paid close attention to context, especially cultural, which he described as a "web of significance" (5). Another source of influence is the argument by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966, 39), who do not seek to eliminate subjectivity and instead offer the example of language as a source of both objectivity and subjectivity.

3.4.2 Specific Methodological Tools

Within the interpretivist paradigm outlined above, this research employed an iterative process of qualitative content and discourse analysis as methodological tools. Defined simply, content analysis is "organizing information into categories related to the central questions of the research" (Bowen 2009, 32), while discourse analysis is the study of written texts or spoken language (Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori 2011, 530). The purpose is to use iterative readings of institutional documents to uncover themes and meanings (531). The texts

therefore serve as "specimen" or data of the world the researcher is exploring (531).

Qualitative content analysis, as used in this research, is distinct from traditional *quantitative* content analysis. The latter uses random selection (for statistical validity) to count word usage and later tests it for statistical significance (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 2). The former, on the other hand, purposively selects texts to identify categories, patterns, and meanings (2). In this research, qualitative content analysis is part of the initial stages of research, particularly data selection.

Discourse analysis plays a predominant role in the empirical analysis phases of research. According to Stuart Hall (1997), meanings are produced and circulated through culture and language. Two ways of assessing such meanings, he argues, are through semiotic research (which systematically studies how signs and language serve as the 'vehicle' for meaning in culture) and through discursive research. Hall (1997, 6) defines discourses as "ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice," which "define what is and is not appropriate in our formulation of, and our practices in relation to, a particular subject." Thus, while semiotics contemplates the 'how' of language, discourse contemplates the 'effects' of it (Hall 1997).

Discourse analysis was executed systematically across the case studies by carefully examining the immediate and wider contexts of the document; by identifying which dimensions of democracy were emphasized and which were not emphasized; and by determining patterns, convergences, and divergences across institutions. The text was deconstructed to infer meaning and to reveal overarching themes beyond the document itself. The specific ways in which these methodologies were applied are elaborated in section IV of this chapter.

3.4.3 Key Concepts

The core concepts of this study are rooted in academic debates and literature. The following sections capture key concepts of this research.

Democracy, Democratic Discourse, and Democratic Norms

The EU's political criteria for membership require stable institutions that can guarantee democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. The EU, however, never defines democracy explicitly and instead relies on subjective assessments to monitor criteria fulfillment. The closest semblance to a definition of democracy is the EU Commission's 1999 description of democratization (Table 1). This

definition is neither authoritative nor representative of the EU position

as a whole, since there is no common position on the definition of

democracy.

Table 1: European Commission Regulation on Democratization
Processes, 1999

(a) promoting and strengthening the rule of law
(b) promoting the separation of powers
(c) promoting pluralism both at the political level and at the level of civil society by strengthening the institutions needed to maintain the pluralist nature of that society
(d) promoting good governance
(e) promoting the participation of the people in the decision-making process at national
(f) support for electoral processes
(g) supporting national efforts to separate civilian and military functions

Source: European Commission

The EU stance on what democracy means is a mostly procedural

notion with a few substantive elements, but this research questions

how democracy is constructed and conceptualized vis-à-vis cases in

post-Soviet space. Due to the lack of an operational definition by the

EU, the working definition for democracy in my research was rooted in

the academic literature.

Larry Diamond and Leonard Morlino (2004; also Przeworski

1999) identify four minimal requisites for democracy: "1) universal,

adult suffrage; 2) recurring, free, competitive, and fair elections; 3)

more than one serious political party; and 4) alternative sources of

information" (21). Beyond the minimal requisites, they add notions of democratic quality to their framework, such as substantive content and results. This research utilizes the insights of Diamond and Morlino as an operational basis for research. Their conceptualization of democracy is influenced by both institutional and procedural perspectives, and the dimensions and indicators they use stem from experiences following the third wave of democratization.

Although the EU neither defines nor commits to a specific definition, its stated conceptualization of democratization does indeed reveal a baseline adherence to procedural elements very similar to those of Diamond and Morlino. The Diamond and Morlino framework offers viable indicators and theoretical grounding for this analysis. Based on their framework, the following indicators will be useful during the review of empirical textual data (Diamond and Morlino 2004): rule of law can be identified through references to legal and judicial structures, and legal rights and clarity; political participation is evident through references to enfranchisement, political parties, civil society, and political discourse; political competition is linked to electoral references; and accountability may be described as inter-institutional or via free media and information.

To complement Diamond and Morlino, this study also draws indicators from a collaborative effort between various scholars in the

field (Coppedge et al. 2011). They disaggregate several

conceptualizations of democracy into component parts and into viable

indicators for research. The 33 indicators they present range from

procedural to substantive elements of democracy. Table 2 synthesizes

the indicators of democracy for this research based on the

contributions of Diamond and Morlino, and Coppedge et al. This table

serves as the operational framework and conceptual basis of

democracy in the research.

Table 2: Indicators of Democracy

Dimension of Democracy	Indicators (Where to look for the dimension)
Rule of Law and Sovereignty	• Legal system • State institutions • Courts • Basic rights • Equality under the Law • Legal clarity and predictability • Executive's adherence to law • Legal authority extends throughout the territory claimed as part of the polity • Polity is able to govern itself in domestic and foreign policies without external interference
Participation	• Enfranchisement • Participation in political parties • Political discourse • Political culture tolerates diversity • Access to basic education • Level of participation in elections

Table 2 (Continued): Indicators of Democracy

Dimension of Democracy	Indicators (Where to look for the dimension)
Competition (National and subnational levels)	• Regular, free, fair, on time elections • Independent electoral commission • Candidate access to the ballot • Competition without government interference • Votes counted and allocated fairly • Candidate access to media • Party institutionalism and centralized • Defined, consistent, and coherent party ideology • Lack of barriers for small party representation
Vertical Accountability (Leader is accountable to citizen)	• Major media outlets are free and independent
Horizontal Accountability (Inter-institutional monitoring and separation of powers)	• Checks and balances by independent authorities • Highest judicial bodies are independent of the outside influences • Highest judicial bodies can review governmental actions in light of constitutional provisions • Institutional decisions respected by the other institutions • Separation of civilian and military
Civil Society and Political Freedoms	• Freedoms are properly protected • Citizens enjoy freedom of speech and freedom from politically motivated persecution by government • Property rights are protected • Freedom of religion is guaranteed • Civil society is independent of the state and able to voice opinions critical of politics • Civil society is engaged in politics

Table 2 (Continued): Indicators of Democracy

Dimension of Democracy	Indicators (Where to look for the dimension)
Progressive Politics	• Addressing social inequalities • Access to income, education, and health resources • Women achieve equal representation in government • Underprivileged ethnic groups are granted formal rights and their representation • Citizens and permanent residents enjoy the protections of the law
Responsiveness	• Citizen satisfaction and democratic legitimacy

Sources: Diamond and Morlino (2004), Coppedge et al. (2011)

To summarize, the following definitions will hold for this research.

• Democratic Discourse: conceptualized as communication that addresses democracy, as defined above. It is operationalized as textual references to the EU's views on democratization, as outlined in Table 1, and as textual references to the operational terms outlined in Table 2.

• Democratic Norms: conceptualized as "rules for conduct that provide standards by which behavior is approved or disapproved" (Hechter 1987, 62). It is operationalized as textual references to the "indicators" listed in Table 2.

Institutional Authority and Power

Institutions are defined in this study as a set of rules and constraints that shape interaction and outcomes (North 1990, 3; Jones et al. 2003, 153-154). Institutional authority and power is an institution's ability to demand and enforce. One way authority and power is commonly exercised by the EU is conditionality, or external leverage. Conditionality is the "exercise of policy instruments by one party to secure compliance and shape the actions of another party," as described earlier in this study, and it can be formal or informal. The former can be identified when conditions or pre-conditions are publicly stated, whereas the latter manifests through recommendations or pressure rather than explicit prerequisites.

Institutional Stakes

Stakes are conceptualized as the vested interests of institutions regarding outcomes. References to 'institutional stakes' will mean the vested interests at risk in the outcome. Stakes will be identified according to what the institution perceives it stands to gain relative to what it stands to lose. The first measure of perceived loss will be competing issues on the institution's agenda (Levitsky and Way 2005, 21). In the Commission, a competing interest is the prospect of membership in a target state, since the Commission is the primary

institution that leads membership negotiations. In the Council, a competing interest is immigration or energy resources, since the member-states channel national concerns through the Council. In the Parliament, a competing interest is gaining more institutional power relative to the other institutions, since it remains the weakest of the three in decision-making. The second measure of perceived loss, or stakes, will be the level of linkage to the target state (case study). Linkages are observable in levels of economic (investments, assistance), geopolitical (ties to Western organizations), and social (tourism, migration) ties to the EU (Levitsky and Way 2005, 22).

3.4.4 Case Selection

To examine the research questions, this study selected three cases to observe how institutions (the units of analysis) construct democracy outside the EU. The following criteria for case selection applied.

First, the case had to be a non-member-state in post-Soviet space. This criterion is based on precedence that the EU acts most cohesively in democratization promotion efforts in Central Eastern Europe (the newest member-states of the EU). Second, the case had to have little immediate prospects for EU membership. "Immediate prospects" is defined as any formal indication or early sign of

membership negotiation, specifically whether the EU formally categorizes a country as a "candidate" (countries officially allowed to begin the long membership process) or "potential candidate" (countries that have been publicly promised the possibility of membership in the future). The membership process is very gradual and formalized, and only Croatia, Iceland, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Turkey are current candidates who have embarked on membership negotiations. In 2003, furthermore, the EU formally endorsed Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro as future members of the EU; the EU publicly classifies these countries as potential candidates. This second criterion is based on the premise that the EU enjoys more conditionality and leverage, due to the lure of membership, in cases designated as potential candidates.

Third, the country and the EU had to have active engagement with each other. Active engagement is defined as one with a relevant regional framework in effect (the European Neighborhood Policy for Ukraine and Georgia, and the Central Asia Strategy for Kyrgyzstan, as well as regular bilateral negotiations on domestic and international affairs). Active engagement reflects ongoing cooperation rather than sporadic and limited talks (an instance of the latter is Belarus, with which the EU restricts cooperation). It also indicates that there are costs and gains at stake in the relationship. Two sets of existing EU

regional policy fit the third criterion: the Central Asia Strategy (which covers Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), and the Eastern Partnership (which includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine). The remaining regional frameworks of the EU were excluded, because their scopes extended beyond the research and included numerous countries outside former Soviet space. This third criterion is based on data availability from which to draw discursive findings; if relations are limited such that discourse is limited, then identifying patterns of discourse may not be possible.

The final criterion was to identify crucial case studies based on a most-likely design (Gawrich et al. 2010; George and Bennett 2005)— that is, cases most likely to elicit democratic discourse from the EU. Three major cases of 'color revolutions', or large-scale movements espousing democratization, were selected: Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. The three cases provide variance on the explanatory variables—institutional power and stake abroad—as well. If institutional power is considered an institution's ability to demand and enforce (exemplified in EU conditionality), then EU institutional power would likely be higher in places where it is unrivaled. The primary rival for political influence in the region is Russia, and Russia enjoys the most diplomatic leverage in Kyrgyzstan, notable leverage in Ukraine,

and less diplomatic leverage in Georgia, relative to one another.

Conversely, the lure of EU membership and partnership is highest in

Georgia, notable in Ukraine, and least in Kyrgyzstan. For reasons

outlined in this section, the final case selection is Georgia, Ukraine,

and the Kyrgyz Republic. This final criterion is conducive to a most-

likely scenario, in which the color revolutions may present a potentially

rich context to explore patterns of democratic discourse, and in which

a lack thereof would similarly indicate important implications.

3.4.5 Data Selection

This research uses texts representative of the three EU

institutions: the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament.

Institutional documents are central data, because "discourses are

embodied in texts" and "discourse analysis involves the systematic

study of texts to find evidence of their meaning and how this meaning

translates into a social reality" (Hardy et al. 2004, 20). The

parameters of the text documents (data selection) include: release by

one of the three EU institutions; a focus on the selected case study

regions as a whole or the specific country; and addresses foreign

affairs from the perspective of one of the qualifying EU institutions

(rather than NGO perspectives on humanitarian issues, for instance).

Non-institutional document sources, such as media coverage, are

excluded because the research questions institutional and formal discourse. Text data from speech acts are only included if they present an official discourse on behalf of one of the three institutional entities, and if they were subsequently officially released as text documents. Therefore, texts from speech acts that do not officially represent an institution are excluded. The data must be authored and released by one of the following institutions.

1. EU Commission ('the Commission'): The Commission is the most supranational of the institutions.

2. Council of the European Union ('the Council', not to be confused with the 'European Council'): The Council is the most intergovernmental institution, because national ministers represent national interests and meet in a given policy area to make EU decisions.

3. European Parliament ('the Parliament'): The EP is the only directly-elected institution of the EU. There are 754 members that represent 500 million citizens across 27 member-states for 5 year terms.

The data selection is thus based on time (2003-2011), space (case study selection), and unit of analysis (institution). Based on these criteria, a database was created. The source of all textual data

included in the database is the electronic archives of the European

Union. This process is described in the next section.

3.5 Building the Database

For each of the three institutions in question, data were collected

and stored in the qualitative analysis software program, Atlas.ti, which

was used to manage all data for the research. Atlas.ti is Qualitative

Data Analysis software designed for unstructured data—that is, data

not amenable to statistical analysis. It allows the researcher to

organize, code, track, and visualize very large quantities of primary

data.

For the research, data were collected from official EU archival

sources via official web portals according to the following criteria: (1)

the document must be officially authored and released by the

Commission, the Council, or the Parliament; (2) the document must

relate to Georgia, the Caucasus, Ukraine, the European Neighborhood

Policy, the Kyrgyz Republic, or Central Asia; and (3) the document

must fit into the 2003-2011 time frame.

To summarize the complex process, thousands of documents

were collected and compiled into a raw database of data meeting the

three basic criteria. The raw database of 3,014 pieces of data was

coded with democracy-related codes, and then content analysis was used to filter out those documents lacking democracy-related codes. After using content analysis, the filtered database shrank to 2,410 pieces of data. The final step was to use qualitative analysis of the codes to select 230 documents for review from the raw database. Thus, content analysis allowed for filtering the database, while qualitative review allowed for the final data selection. The filtered database was used throughout the research as the reference database, although the 230 documents ultimately served as the data for qualitative discourse analysis.

3.5.1 From Raw Database to Filtered Database

The criteria yielded a total of 3,014 documents—1,243 for the Commission; 1,573 for the Council; and 198 for the Parliament. The numerical discrepancy between institutional sources—particularly the Parliament—should not be methodologically alarming for reasons described later in this chapter. The 3,014 documents comprised the initial database of raw data in Atlas.ti. This initial raw database would undergo further filters to eventually yield the final database for research.

Once the raw database was established with documents meeting the three criteria listed above, the next step was coding. Coding in

Atlas.ti is akin to highlighting textual references in hard copies. The

purpose of coding is to set the foundation for content analysis, which

relies on a qualitative review of word occurrences and frequencies. The

codes were based on the conceptualization of democracy from Table 2.

A list of codes and the corresponding keywords use to generate them

can be found in the codebook in Table 3.

Table 3: Atlas.ti Codes (Codebook)

Indicator	Code Name	Corresponding Atlas.ti Keywords for Coding
Georgia	CASE::GEORGIA	"georgi*", "caucas*"
Ukraine	CASE::UKRAINE	"ukrain*"
Kyrgyzstan	CASE::KYRGYZREP	"kyrgy*", "kirghiz*", "kirgiz*", "central asia*"
Democracy	00DEMOCRACY	"democra*"
Rule of Law and Sovereignty	01RULEOFLAWSOV	"rule of law", "sovereign*", "court" , "rights" , , "equal*", "territor*", "judicia*", "laws", "legal*"
Participation	02PARTICIPATION	"particip*", "political participation", "civic participation", "*franchis*", "suffrage", "diversity", "education", "elect*"
Competition (National and Subnational)	03COMPETITION	"elect*", "political competition", "party competition", "electoral commission", "ballot*", "vot*", "media", "party", "parties"
Vertical Accountability	04VERTACCOUNTAB	"media", "news", "internet", "accountab*"

Table 3 (Continued): Atlas.ti Codes (Codebook)

Indicator	Code Name	Corresponding Atlas.ti Keywords for Coding
Horizontal Accountability	05HORIZACCOUNTAB	"separation of powers", "accountab*", "independent institutions", "institutional independence", "institutions are independent", "institution is independent", "check*", "judicial review", "civilian*"
Civil Society and Political Freedoms	06CIVSOCPOLFREE	"civil society", "freedom*", "freedom of", "freedom from", "property rights", "plural*"
Progressive Politics	07PROGRESSIVEPOL	"progressive", "social", "income", "*employ*", "educat*", "health", "human", "women*", "female", "gender", "ethnic", "minority", "underprivileged", "underrepresented", "divers*", "plural*"
Responsiveness	08RESPONSIVENESS	"responsive*", "legitima*", "satisf*"

Sources: Codebook based on concepts from Diamond and Morlino (2004), and Coppedge et al. (2011)

Once the database of 3,014 documents was fully coded according to the codebook (Table 3), the next step was to utilize qualitative content analysis to eliminate documents without any of the democracy-related codes. Qualitative content analysis requires categories and a coding scheme to be developed (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, 4), in this case deductively from the theoretical framework on democracy. The codes were checked for consistency in a

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sample of text first, a "test run". The testing phase demonstrated that the European Union addresses democracy-related issues in an often direct manner, and it revealed that the codebook developed for this research project would be appropriate for generating an appropriate amount of data.

Once the sample text was tested, the codes were applied to the entire database. The codes were executed in Atlas.ti in a two-part process. First, the system was programmed to auto code the indicators of democracy from the codebook (numbers 01-08), a process which consisted of programming the software with each code and its constituent keywords, followed by a very time-consuming process of the software scanning each and every word across the 3,014 documents. Second, code "00DEMOCRACY", which is the explicit use of variants of the word 'democracy', was not autocoded. Instead, every single occurrence of the code was manually reviewed to omit irrelevant usage, such as a reference to the "Democratic Republic of the Congo". Relevance and irrelevance was judged according to one question alone: is the use of "democra*" pertaining to one of the case studies? If not, the phrase would not be coded "00DEMOCRACY"; if so, it would be labeled as such.

Once this two-step process was complete, the database was fully labeled with all codes from the codebook in Table 3. Keeping in mind

that all documents in the raw database already met the case study and

temporal scope parameters, the coding process revealed close to a

third of the documents did not contain any reference to the nine

democracy-related terms from the codebook, as well as their

indicators. These documents were removed from the database, which

yielded the filtered database [Table 4(B)]. A summary of how the

database developed is displayed in Table 4. Column one identifies the

stage of the database and data selection process; column two provides

the total number of data; column three provides a breakdown by

institution; and column four lists the quantity of codes in the database.

Table 4: Database and Data Selection

	Total Docs	Total Docs by Institution	Total Occurrences Across Data
(A) Raw database	3,014	Commission: 1,243 Council: 1,573 Parliament: 198	00DEMOCRACY: 450 01RULEOFLAWSOV: 17,853 02PARTICIPATION: 12,836
(B) Filtered Database After deleting data without coding	2,410	Commission: 953 Council: 1,321 Parliament: 136	03COMPETITION: 9,301 04VERTACCOUNTAB: 3,341 05HORIZACCOUNTAB: 2,886 06CIVSOCPOLFREE: 2,133
(C) Data with Coded Democratic Discourse & Case Study	230	Commission: 100 Council: 82 Parliament: 48	07PROGRESSIVEPOL: 22,676 08RESPONSIVENESS: 1,098

The filtered database, Section "B", was used as the dataset for this research, while data from Section "C" were those emphasized for discursive analysis. Data from Section "C" contain the code "00DEMOCRACY", which is the explicit reference to democracy ("democra*") and a case study as determined from a qualitative content review of the data.

This research questions the limits of the EU as a unitary actor in the world stage by examining convergences and divergences in institutional democratic discourse regarding non-member-states in post-Soviet space during the years 2003-2011. It expects a negative relationship between institutional authority abroad and levels of democratic discourse. The research design uses qualitative content and discourse analysis methodologies to examine three major institutions of the EU—the Commission, Council, and Parliament—as evident in three case studies—Georgia, Ukraine, and the Kyrgyz Republic. The analysis is based on deductive reasoning from theoretical frameworks on democracy. The data were compiled into a database. They were stored, organized, and analyzed using Atlas.ti Qualitative Data Analysis software.

3.6   Potential Limitations of Methodology

The main drawbacks in this research stem from the limited scope of EU relations with the cases relative to EU relations elsewhere in former Soviet space, such as the former republics of Yugoslavia. The EU, however, has substantially increased ties to the case studies. Also, the very different historical contexts of the Caucasus, Eastern European, and Central Asia make comparison difficult. Though close qualitative sensitivity to such differences helps mitigate the issue, this research does not compare the case studies to one another, but rather compares the institutions. This is precisely why the cases serve as vignettes or snapshots of EU institutional involvement. Another tradeoff stems from the selection of official institutional documents as data, as opposed to interviews, for instance. I argue that official documents are the public representation of how the EU interacts with non-member-states, and it is therefore an important place to explore how the EU addresses key themes.

Chapter 4: Context of the European Union and Case Studies

This chapter presents the domestic and international contexts of the European Union and case studies during the time period of this project. One of the crucial elements of discursive analysis is that it accepts "a dynamic relationship between text and the context in which the text is produced", and it "situates texts in their social, cultural, political, and historical context" (Cheek 2004, 1144-1145). This chapter is divided in three main parts: the context of the EU relative to the rest of the world, the context of the EU internally, and the context of the three case studies. The chapter concludes with the larger significance of context for this project before proceeding to the next chapter on data findings.

4.1   The European Union on the Global Stage

The years 2003 to 2011 were volatile around the world. Terrorism was a major issue of concern in the West following the attacks of September 11 especially, plus the Madrid bombings in 2004 and the London attacks in 2005. The decade culminated with the sudden and momentous upheavals of the Arab Awakening in late 2010

and 2011. From 2003 to 2011, the EU deferred sensitive defense and security policy issues to the member-states. Members could act through the Council of Ministers on behalf of state interests, or they could act individually as independent countries. Therefore, security and defense issues such as these were never part of the EU supranational agenda and they were prone to internal differences. Indeed, the controversy among EU members regarding the proper response to the world's most prominent security challenges suggests a deep reluctance to cede foreign policy authority outside traditional state channels.

The US-led multilateral intervention in Afghanistan in 2001 became a policy priority for many member-states. Though most member-states individually contributed troops to the International Security Assistance Force through NATO, the EU's primary involvement in Afghanistan as an institution followed the fall of the Taliban and consisted of political and economic assistance (Ross 2012, 109). The EU assisted with reconstruction funds, humanitarian aid, social services, and election support (109-110).

The US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, however, was more controversial for the EU and its constituent members. The EU's primary involvement in Iraq after 2003 was in a humanitarian capacity, such as active involvement in the UN oil-for-food program (Toje 2008, 118-119). The question of whether to support US use of force in Iraq was

highly divisive for EU members. European opposition was led by powerhouses France and Germany (Archick 2005, 6). Iraq exposed disunity within the EU that culminated with rancor in the open press between opponents and supporters of US use of force, the latter of which included Great Britain and many of the new member-states (124).

Though projecting security and military power is not a strong suit of the EU, it has on some occasions asserted a collective security role. In the 2000s, the EU sent peacekeeping, security, and border missions to various locations such as Africa and the Balkans, albeit to limited scales and intensities (Bickerton 2011, 4-5; Toje 2011, 51). The EU as an organization did not participate beyond assistance and humanitarian roles in many of the decade's most prominent security challenges, such as Kosovo and Darfur, and, as mentioned before, Iraq and Afghanistan (Toje 2011, 51). Instead, individual EU member-states acted independently through their respective foreign ministries.

Another major concern for the EU on the global stage was relations with Russia, especially when it came to EU affairs in former Soviet space. The EU had a "Russia first" policy at the time, in which relations with Russia took precedence over the former Soviet republics that comprised the Commonwealth of Independent States (Emerson et al. 2005, 16). The fear that EU involvement in the region would

undermine or offend relations with Russia was pronounced with Ukraine especially, but also elsewhere in Russia's backyard (Kuzio 2006, 95). Russia was also an alternative model to the stringent requirements of Western democracy, especially in contrast to the reforms required of the new member states in Central Europe. This was implicit in Russia's support for and endorsement of fraudulent and flawed elections in the post-Soviet world, and explicit in its material support for forces that undermined progress toward Western standards.

Iran was another major—and sensitive—element of EU foreign affairs during this time. Negotiations with Iran over illicit nuclear activity were led by Germany, France, and the United Kingdom outside EU channels, but the High Representative for the CFSP intermittently joined talks on behalf of the Council of the EU (Bergenäs 2010, 491).

Among the most notable and relevant issues going on in the world during this time frame were the democratic and economic transitions of the former Soviet satellites. The EU was responding to a great deal of geopolitical flux along its periphery following the collapse of communism that began in 1989. That year, the EU was pressured to respond to a new political era when communism collapsed in Central Eastern Europe, as it became evident that many former Soviet satellites would seek the West for security, growth, and stability.

In anticipation of the accession of new members as well as the reality of a post-Cold War era, the EU actively exercised carrot-and-stick leverage in the Baltics, Central Europe, and even the Balkans. By the late 1990s, it became evident that as many as ten former satellites would fulfill the membership requirements, known as the Copenhagen Criteria. These were states that had to face pervasive economic, political, and social transitions prior to joining. Aptly called the 'big bang', eight former communist countries officially joined the EU in 2004 and another two in 2007, resulting in the largest phase of enlargement in EU history.

4.2   Within the European Union

In 2003, on the eve of the "big bang" enlargement, the EU included 15 members; in 2004 it was 25, and by 2007 it was 27. The years preceding and following enlargement—including all the years in the scope of this study—required significant structural and procedural changes within the EU itself. As Europe grappled with the impending enlargement, EU members negotiated the Treaty of Nice in 2000 as an institutional response to enlargement, including adjusting the size, scope and voting structure of EU institutions (McCormick 2005, 74; Cameron 2003, 24).

New challenges became political obstacles as well, which would not bode well for the color revolutions many years later. Among these was the sociopolitical impact of the 2004 and 2007 enlargements. Immigration policy in a region that lacks internal borders proved especially controversial (Niblett 2005, 53): "Given the ease with which migrants can move across borders within the EU once they have gained entry, governments are being forced to respond to precipitate rise in immigration." These sociopolitical debates reflected cross-cutting concerns of cheap labor and the possibility of new members undermining the EU's economic performance, competitiveness and standards of living (43).

The failure of the proposed EU constitutional treaty in 2005 was also a major turning point for the EU as an institution. Finalized in 2004, the proposal made sweeping institutional changes in response to enlargement. However, the treaty required unanimous approval by all 25 members. Referenda on the matter were rejected by voters in France and the Netherlands in 2005, effectively putting an end to the proposed treaty. The negative reaction was seen as a response to the effects of the 2004 enlargement round and as a "preemptive vote against further EU enlargement, both to the east and, most of all, toward Turkey" (Niblett 2005, 43).

The aftermath of the 2004 and 2007 enlargements left little

appetite for further EU involvement in the post-Soviet world, especially

at the same scale as before. The implications of enlargement included

the practical worries of ordinary citizens, such as fears of job losses to

the proverbial Polish plumber. It also raised the question of the limits

of further and future expansion, an issue complicated by Turkey's

candidacy looming in the background (Kuzio 2006, 91).

Survey data from the Eurobarometer demonstrate that

disagreement over future enlargement figured prominently during the

years of the color revolutions. By mid-2005, support for further

enlargement declined among EU citizens (EB 2005). Still, the internal

split at the subnational level regarding EU enlargement was most

prominent between the old member-states and the new member-

states—differences consistently spanned close to 25 to 30 percentage

points (EB 2005). Almost all of the new member-states topped the list

in levels of support while almost all of the founding members filled the

bottom in opposition.

Finally, monetary integration and the Euro figured prominently

during this time period. During membership negotiations, the new

members of the EU formally agreed to eventual adherence to the

requirements of the Euro (Johnson 2008, 827). Integration into the

Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), or the Eurozone, entails a set of

stringent fiscal criteria. Of the new post-communist member-states, only Slovenia (2007), Slovakia (2009), and Estonia (2011) have achieved full integration and adoption of the Euro. According to the European Commission, the EU requires the following for integration into Eurozone: price stability, sound and sustainable public finances, stable long-term interest rates, and fiscal exchange stability.

Overall, the enthusiasm for the Euro waned through the years of this research, especially among the member-states who adopted the Euro between 1999, when the Euro was introduced—Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain (1999), and Greece (2001)—and 2004, when the new member-states joined the EU. The "open dissent among older members over the benefits and viability of the euro zone" was the greatest obstacle for EU decision-makers in the court of public opinion and in the quest for interstate policy coordination (Johnson 2008, 836).

4.3   The Case Studies in Context

4.3.1 Context in Georgia

Located in the ethnically diverse southern Caucasus region, Georgia is a post-Soviet republic of about four and half million people

(Hoe-Yeong 2011, 7). Georgia gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, and since then it has struggled to secure democratic reforms amid ethnic, civil, and political unrest and conflict. Georgia's first leader following independence was Soviet-era Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who was ousted in 1992. His opponents appointed Soviet-era politician Eduard Shevardnadze. During the early years of independence, tensions grew with separatist Abkhazia and South Ossetia, generally considered to be supported by Russia. By 1995, Abkhazia and South Ossetia became largely autonomous from Georgian central control (8). Shevardnadze normalized otherwise tense relations with Russia and matters improved with the breakaway regions in Georgia, mostly due to Shevardnadze's inability to exert control over the separatist regions (Davis 2008, 472-473; Lynch 2006, 20).

Georgia's rose revolution was triggered by contested parliamentary elections in November 2003. Shevardnadze was perceived to be corrupt and inept in the months leading up to the parliamentary elections, and the state was failing in basic sectors (Hoe-Yeong 2011, 8; Broers 2005, 334-335). Shevardnadze's former justice minister, Western-educated Mikhail Saakashvili, resigned and formed his own party (Hoe-Yeong 2011, 8). Saakashvili's party was popular and poised to win the November 2003 parliamentary elections,

but the results returned in favor of Shevardnadze's party (8). The outcome triggered a backlash and accusations of fraud; the mass protests and calls for Shevardnadze's resignation came to be known as the rose revolution (8).

The rose revolution consisted of tens of thousands of protesters in the streets, lasted twenty days, and was generally peaceful (Lynch 2006, 23; Broers 2005, 341). It was the first of the 'color revolutions' in the region, and it was soon followed by the orange revolution in Ukraine and the tulip revolution in the Kyrgyz Republic in subsequent years. Shevardnadze resigned, and Saakashvili won the presidential election to replace him in January 2004 (Davis 2008, 474).

Though sometimes fraught with controversy, Georgia's transition reforms following the rose revolution were lauded by the international community. Georgia was particularly successful in anti-corruption reform, which was reflected in the drastic change in world rankings following the rose revolution. For example, Transparency International, the world index of perceptions on corruption, ranked Georgia 124th place in 2003, and 67th place in 2008 (Kukhianidze 2009). The reforms of the post-rose revolution government targeted the resources of corrupt officials and a crackdown on criminal enterprises (228).

One of Saakashvili's many objectives upon assuming office was restoring the territorial integrity of Georgia relative to the separatist

regions (Hoe-Yeong 2011, 8). Tensions mounted with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and by 2008 Georgia and Russia were at war over the matter. Georgian and Russian accounts of the trigger for war differ on key points, but an independent EU inquiry was conducted. Georgia intervened militarily in separatist South Ossetia, but Russia also intervened militarily on behalf of South Ossetia. Though the EU inquiry deemed Georgia responsible for starting the war, it held Russia ultimately culpable for its provocative military buildup ahead of the conflict (Bowker 2011). The height of military conflict lasted less than a week, but the effects and tensions lingered long thereafter.

Georgia's tensions with Russia may stem partly from Saakashvili's unapologetic pro-Western policy. Saakashvili avidly assumed a pro-NATO stance, much to the chagrin of its Russian neighbor. He also pursued close cooperation with the EU, although membership prospects always remained in the very distant future. Over the years, the EU provided humanitarian assistance to Georgia, as well as assistance with infrastructure rehabilitation in the post-conflict zones (Hoe-Yeong 2011, 13; Lynch 2006, 64; Müller 2011, 66). Georgia plays a geo-strategic role for Europe as a transit corridor for energy traveling from the Caspian across Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey to Europe (Hoe-Yeong 2011, 14).

EU policy in Georgia has been based on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) of 1999, which created committees within the EU to address relations with Georgia in the economic and technical spheres primarily, but also some political dialogue toward reform and stability (Lynch 2006, 59; Müller 2011, 66). PCAs are a series of bilateral EU agreements covering cooperation in various sectors such as trade and energy. EU cooperation with Georgia deepened in similar sectors following the rose revolution (Müller 2011, 66).

4.3.2 Context in Ukraine

As the European Union responded to the important political changes taking place in Georgia, Ukraine's own politics began to destabilize as well. The color revolutions were taking hold in the region, and it appeared likely that the EU would have to respond to a domino effect. Instability in Ukraine, however, was arguably more disconcerting for the EU than anywhere else in its periphery. Of the non-member post-communist states, Ukraine is likely the most important geopolitically (Gawrich et al. 2010; Langbein and Wolczuk 2012).

When the Soviet Union collapsed and through the first presidential election, Ukraine was led by its Soviet-era leader, Leonid

Kravchuk. By 1994, Kravchuk lost the presidency to his former prime minister, Leonid Kuchma, who would successfully introduce new and broad presidential powers to the constitution (Hesli 2006, 168). Under Kuchma, Ukraine was largely deemed by the international community to be an authoritarian state. Kuchma won reelection in 1999, but not without criticism for his illiberal tactics (169). By the time of the next presidential election in 2004, popular sentiment against the increasingly unpopular leader would culminate in the orange revolution.

The political upheaval in Ukraine, like the others, began with blatant election fraud in a regularly scheduled, yet far from free and fair, runoff election. The runoff was between President Kuchma's handpicked candidate and current Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych, and the leading opposition candidate, Viktor Yushchenko, himself a former prime minister. Yanukovych leaned toward Russia in foreign policy and stood against EU membership aspirations, while Yushchenko vowed to look Westward (Hesli 20-6, 170). Despite Yushchenko's clear lead in the polls, Yanukovych won the runoff in an election widely deemed by NGOs, IGOs, and citizens to be rigged. Approximately 200,000 Ukrainians peacefully demonstrated against the fraudulent outcome across cities in Ukraine (175). Following the mass protests, rerun elections were finally held in December 2004 and finalized in

January, in which Yushchenko was triumphant. Thus, as can be argued about the other color revolutions, Ukraine's orange revolution was an electoral revolution—that is, rigged elections successfully contested by protesters (Bunce and Wolchik 2006; Kalandadze and Orenstein 2009).

The euphoria of the orange revolution quickly dissipated domestically, with scandals plaguing the new government, and externally, once it became clear that the orange revolution would be insufficient to place Ukraine on the path to EU membership (Kubicek 2009, 324). The EU remained conspicuously mum about Ukrainian membership as well (337).

In the EU, the debate surrounding how to respond to the orange revolution quickly became couched in terms of enlargement, particularly because Ukrainian leaders emphasized accession as a priority. The notion of Ukrainian enlargement existed in the context of the recent "big bang" of ten new members the year before, including eight former Soviet satellites. In addition to the big bang, the accession of Bulgaria and Romania was imminent, while talks of Turkey and several other Balkan states like Croatia and Serbia were looming in the background. The disagreement at the EU level was indicative of strong popular cleavages brewing below.

Regarding Ukraine, the divide manifested most starkly between two groups. On one side were members who were more supportive of Ukraine during this time; they included the new member-states plus Britain and sometimes Germany. On the other side were members who were much less amenable, including the western and southern major European states, like France. Poland and Lithuania led efforts to resolve the political crisis in Ukraine despite lacking official EU representation (Kuzio 2006, 95). Indeed, records from the Lithuanian foreign ministry show a commitment to Ukrainian integration as an institutional advocate and active partner before and especially after the orange revolution (Lithuania MFA 2004). Polish, along with German and Lithuanian, efforts to expand ties with Ukraine beyond existing frameworks encountered staunch resistance from members who opposed expanding cooperation frameworks and unequivocally opposed extending the possibility of membership (Stoltyk 2005).

The role of Russia figured prominently in the response to the orange revolution. Qualitative survey data from the Institute for European Politics, a German-based nonprofit organization dedicated to the study of European integration, reveals significant variance in how member-states of the EU viewed relations with Russia in the months preceding the orange revolution. Not surprisingly, the newest EU

members across Central Eastern Europe were the most critical of relations with Russia (IEP 2004).

EU-Ukrainian relations extend back to the early 1990s, when the EU was cultivating ties with most of the post-Soviet satellites and republics shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Like Georgia, Ukraine was never part of the Central and Eastern European bloc— which ranges from Estonia to Hungary—to participate in various major financial aid programs for infrastructure and development (Solonenko 2009, 713). Instead, it was grouped separately as part of the Newly Independent States—a category that included Russia and the Central Asian republics. Whereas eventual EU membership seemed promising for the Central and Eastern European bloc, the same did not hold for Ukraine (713). Unlike the experiences of the Central and Eastern European countries, EU conditionality in Ukraine was weak, monitoring was lax, and benchmarks were vague (717).

The first major agreement between the EU and Ukraine, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, was signed in 1994 and went into effect after EU member-state ratification in 1998. The next major milestone for EU-Ukraine relations was the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), which was an overarching framework for EU relations with its neighbors in Eastern Europe and the Middle East North Africa region. The ENP comprises a set of bilateral agreements known as

Action Plans (AP). In these ways, the EU anticipated and acknowledged the new borders it would inherit following the accession of the former Soviet satellite states.

The tenets of the ENP regarding Ukraine were negotiated under outgoing President Leonid Kuchma, widely regarded as complicit in the corrupt and fraudulent runoff elections that would trigger the orange revolution in 2005. The ENP was devised before any of the political upheaval occurred. It was designed to address the post-enlargement landscape, not to respond to democratization efforts central to the color revolutions (Kuzio 2006, 90). Although the ENP had been a post-enlargement response to Kuchma's Ukraine, the ENP, in virtually the same form, became the response to the orange revolution. In other words, there was no strategically unique EU response to the dramatic political turn of events; the EU response to the orange revolution was essentially a failure to revamp existing policies in light of the revolutions and to table the highly controversial issues which it deliberately avoided in the ENP. The most notable among them was the conspicuous absence of the possibility for membership. Ukraine (and Georgia, for that matter) made no secret of its desire to join the EU, and it has expressed interest in joining the EU off-and-on throughout the years (Langbein and Wolczuk 2012, 868).

The EU did make minor concessions in other sectors. The EU as an institution was the top donor in aid to Ukraine the year following the revolution (AidFlows, 2011). The EU granted Ukraine market-economy status within a year of the revolution, a move that paved the way for Ukrainian accession to the World Trade Organization and for upgraded economic ties between the two. It also eased visa restrictions, something it did not do with Georgia, for example (Larrabee 2006, 97; Tocci 2006, 77).

Besides extensive aid in the technical, nuclear safety, and humanitarian sectors throughout the 1990s and 2000s (Kubicek 2005, 277-278), the EU had limited physical presence in Ukraine. Shortly after the orange revolution, the EU established a delegation of advisors on border security in late 2005. The group, known as the EU Border Assistance Mission to Ukraine and Moldova, sought to mitigate smuggling and trafficking, and to facilitate the orderly transfer of goods, people, and trade through capacity-building, especially at a time when the EU's own borders expanded eastward after the 2004-2007 big bang (Dura 2009, 276; Kurowska and Tallis 2009, 53). The Border Mission was managed by the European Commission with intermittent input from member-states (Dura 2009, 278-279). The Mission conducts its work—primarily technical in nature—by providing training, limited oversight, and risk analysis along the Ukrainian-

Moldovan border, particularly in the conflicted Transnistrian region.

(280). EU program officials claim credit for facilitating a new customs

regime in the area, and contributing to major operations against illicit

border activities (282-283), though the extent of the local benefit is

debatable due to difficulties in measuring such successes (Kurowska

and Tallis 2009, 56-59).

4.3.3 Context in the Kyrgyz Republic

Like Georgia and Ukraine, the Kyrgyz Republic was a Soviet

Socialist Republic since the interwar period. Since the independence of

Kyrgyzstan and the collapse of the Soviet Union, it has been

considered exceptional in the region, as it is the only republic in

Central Asia to experience periods of competitive politics and

liberalization (Hiro 2009, 289; Huskey and Hill 2011, 876), and the

only republic in the region to undergo a 'color revolution'.

Kyrgyzstan's first president, Askar Akayev, assumed the

leadership role shortly before independence in 1990, and then was

popularly reelected after independence in 1991, 1995, and 2000.

Akayev was perceived to be a pro-democracy reformer, but by 2000 to

2005, he was accused of rampant corruption and clientelism (Aydıngün

and Aydıngün 2012, 2). After the 2005 parliamentary elections, the

people of Kyrgyzstan revolted in mass protest in what came to be

known as the tulip revolution. Akayev was ousted, and Kurmanbek Bakiyev took his place.

Bakiyev, who promised to deliver the democratic reforms championed by the tulip revolution, was president from 2005 to 2010. He not only failed to deliver on his promises, but instead moved toward authoritarianism quickly upon assuming office, which only added to the continued rampant corruption and clientelism (Aydıngün and Aydıngün 2012, 2; Collins 2011, 153). Basic freedoms worsened under Bakiyev relative to his predecessor (Collins 2011, 153). As protests and clashes filled the streets, Bakiyev, too, was popularly ousted in 2010. His place was assumed by Rosa Otunbayeva, who was a pro-Western supporter of democratization and an active participant of the tulip revolution (154), as interim president until December 2011. She oversaw a transition to free and fair elections, but also oversaw major ethnic violence. One of the significant reforms of this interim period was Kyrgyzstan's shift from a presidential system to parliamentary system, the first of its kind in the region.

Due in large part to Soviet ethnic engineering policies and Soviet-era migration patterns, Kyrgyzstan is a multi-ethnic society. Kyrgyzstan has a history of ethnic tension and violence, notably 1990 and 2010. The clashes were waged between ethnic Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks, primarily in the south of the country but also in the capital

along the north. The clashes in 1990 happened during the Gorbachev reforms, and they began as protests over land reform (Aydıngün and Aydıngün 2012, 12). The clashes of 2010 occurred shortly after Bakiyev fled the country and while Otunbayeva led the transition. The son of ousted leader Bakiyev was accused of stirring ethnic mistrust and instigating the 2010 violence amid a bleak economic atmosphere (13).

Until the post-9/11 era, EU relations with Kyrgyzstan were limited to economic and energy ties, but the focus on Afghanistan and the Middle East renewed attention to Central Asia as a strategic region (Hoffman 2010, 94). Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan would become logistical hubs for the war in Afghanistan. Kyrgyzstan's civilian airport in the country's capital served as the US military base and transit hub for personnel bound to Afghanistan. Furthermore, Central Asia gained strategic relevance as an alternative source of gas for Europe, especially following energy shortages in 2009 (95). EU security concerns in the region translated into EU-sponsored training and material support for counternarcotic and counterterrorism programs (Hoffman 2010, 100; Yazdani 2008, 251).

EU physical presence in Kyrgyzstan has been very limited as well. The Council sent a Brussels-based Special Representative to the Central Asian region, a position it established in July 2005. The

primary mission was to promote good relations with the region. The Commission has a Central Asia delegation based in Kazakhstan, with a small local office in Kyrgyzstan. The Commission also ramped up human rights dialogue in the region in 2007 by establishing annual meetings between Commission and Central Asian counterparts regarding bilateral human rights and civil society.

4.4 Conclusion

Democratic discourse in this research must be understood relative to its environment. The texts examined in this research become constitutive of these larger events surrounding them (Blommaert 2005, 39).

This chapter described the context of the EU relative to the international community as one dominated by large-scale conflict, such as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and relations with resurgent world powers, like Russia. It also described the internal context of the EU itself as one plagued by a "big bang" hangover, institutional reforms, and member-state divisions. The three case studies—Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan—were all former Soviet republics experiencing color revolutions, in which mass protests successfully challenged fraudulent elections.

Each context is replete with asymmetric power relations: the EU as a normative power relative to members of the international community as militarized powers, including its own members; within the EU, larger and economically more robust states who have been members for longer relative to smaller, weaker, and newer member-states; and the EU relative to the non-member post-Soviet states in question. Also, power asymmetries exist across the institutions of focus, whereby one may have greater authority in foreign affairs than another. These power asymmetries affect discourse when they restrict or loosen the bounds of official textual discourse. For democratic discourse, such power structures affect the hypothesized negative relationship between institutional authority abroad and the level of democratic discourse used.

This research does not measure the impact or effectiveness of EU action or inaction in the target states, but the context does illustrate the limited presence of the EU despite the dramatic political changes occurring throughout the years under study.

The contexts of the three case studies in particular demonstrate that Georgia, Ukraine, and the Kyrgyz Republic each are, for their own reasons, of crucial importance to the EU. As such, one would expect a well-defined, mature, and coherent foreign policy approach, reflective of EU interests, to be a precondition for favorable future prospects of

the EU. Because these interests are not always consistent across the different institutions, this research will show that opinions on what precisely constitutes EU interests vary among the Commission, the Council, and the Parliament, which define foreign policy objectives differently.

Chapter 5: Constructing Democracy through Discourse

This chapter explores the data collected, coded, and analyzed using Atlas.ti software. The chapter is divided into five parts. The first three of the five parts present the data by EU institution (the unit of analysis), starting with the Commission first, followed by the Council and then the Parliament. Each institution will begin with the institution's role in the international affairs of the EU (see Figure 2), followed by a description of the data and the discursive findings. These sections are subdivided by case studies, and they identify patterns of democratic discourse regarding Georgia, Ukraine, and the Kyrgyz Republic. The data is presented in that order based on the sequence in which the color revolutions unfolded—first Georgia, then Ukraine, and finally the Kyrgyz Republic. The fourth section of this chapter summarizes the findings by case study, and the fifth section concludes the chapter.

The data in this chapter will demonstrate that the three institutions of the EU under study demonstrate distinct patterns of democratic discourse. The Commission focuses on rule of law, elections, and basic rights and freedoms. It is also most prone to react

to political crises in the case studies. The Council focuses heavily on

critical elections as benchmarks of democracy; otherwise it tends

toward intangible qualities and democratic norms and ideals. The

Council has the most basic definition of democracy, most like that of

scholar Joseph Schumpeter (1942).

Commission
(The Representative)
N=100

- Supranational, represents the interests of the EU as a whole
- EU's international representative; negotiates international agreements (except for limited policy areas of CFSP, which remains intergovernmental)
- One Commissioner per member-state appointed for five years
- Only institution that can propose draft legislation, which then goes to the Council and Parliament

Council of Ministers
(The Decision-Maker)
N=82

- Intergovernmental, represents the interests of the member-state
- Decision-makers, makes EU foreign policy based on proposals by the Commission and in consultation with the Parliament in policy outside of CFSP
- For CFSP matters, retains primary authority
- Each member-state sends its foreign minister to meetings on foreign affairs
- Appoints the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who chairs the Foreign Affairs Council and leads CFSP

Parliament
(The Consultant)
N=48

- Subnational, represents the interests of the citizens
- Must consent to legislation, approve Commission appointments, and is the only body that can dismiss the Commission
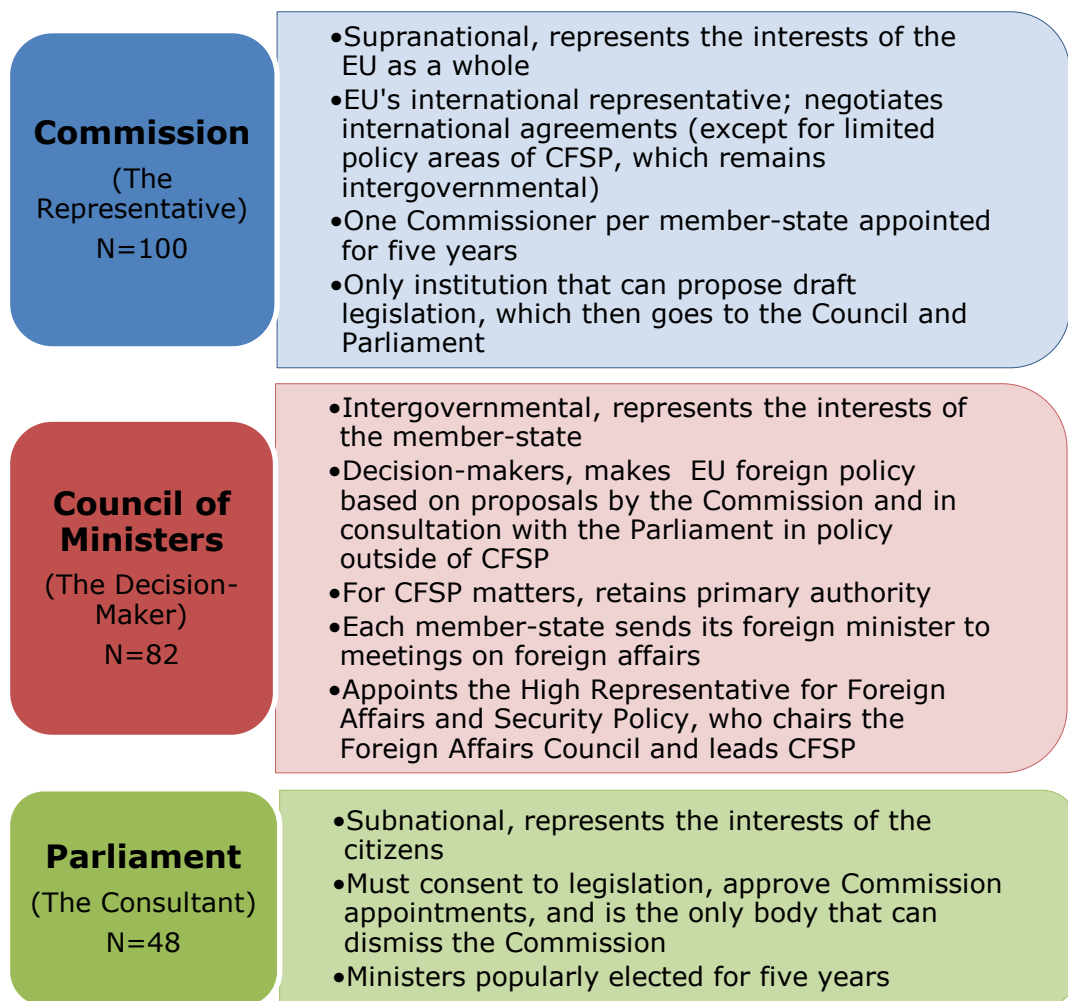- Ministers popularly elected for five years

Figure 2: Roles of Institutions

Finally, the Parliament is most critical of decisions made in the countries and of fellow EU institutions. It constructs democracy in holistic terms, meaning elements like elections and rule of law are pieces of a larger conceptualization of democracy. Thus the Parliament has the most comprehensive view of democracy, like that of scholars Diamond and Morlino (2004) and Coppedge et al. (2011), whereby democracy is a complex amalgamation of procedural and substantive qualities. The Parliament's construction of democracy is also a reflection of its character as the only democratically elected institution of the EU.

5.1 Discourse by the Commission

As the most supranational of EU institutions, it is the mandate of the Commission to uphold the interests of the EU as a collective entity. In foreign matters outside the scope of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), it has the authority to negotiate international agreements on behalf of the EU, which are subsequently finalized by the Council. Examples of policy areas outside the CFSP in which the Commission is lead negotiator include humanitarian aid, trade, development assistance, new member accession, and neighborhood policy. The Commission exercises this authority through its

directorate-generals (DG), or departments. The DGs most associated

with external affairs are the Directorate General for External Relations

and European Neighborhood Policy until 2009, and the DGs for trade,

humanitarian and foreign aid, development, and enlargement (Mix

2011, 17). The Commission is not lead negotiator for the limited policy

areas that fall under the CFSP—such as military missions, major

sanctions like those against Iran, weapons of mass destruction, and

the arms trade—which remain under the purview of state interests and

thus reside with the Council.

Because the Commission is like the EU foreign representative,

developments in the color revolutions were particularly salient and

relevant to this institution. The color revolutions were not part of the

CFSP, meaning the Commission had the greatest role relative to its

sister institutions in such matters. It responded to the dramatic

political events of Georgia, Ukraine, and the Kyrgyz Republic via

official means collected as data in this research. The 100 pieces of

data for the Commission that address democracy explicitly in the

context of the case studies include Action Fiches (financing proposals

designed to facilitate decision-making), external memoranda,

institutional press releases, official speeches, meeting minutes, and

institutional reports, all of which were made public and released as

official institutional discourse. Of the Commission data, almost half of

the data dealt with Ukraine, followed by Georgia and then the Kyrgyz
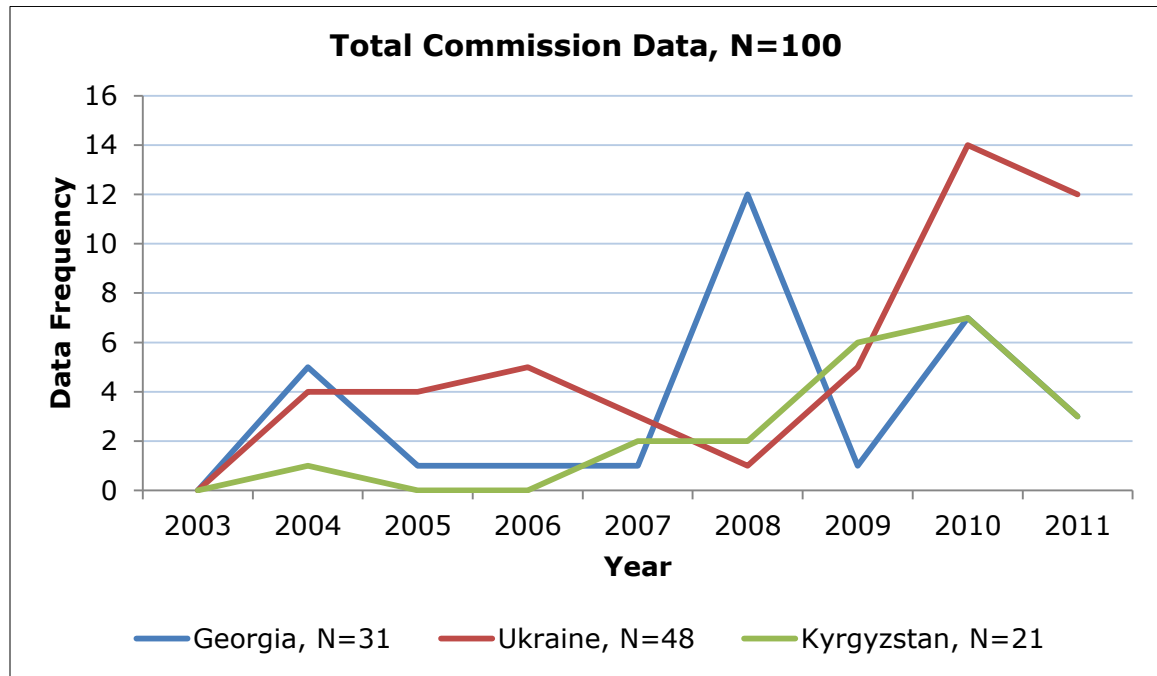
Republic. [See Figure 3]

Figure 3: Commission Data Linking Democracy and Case Study

5.1.1 Commission Discourse on Georgia

The Commission data for Georgia included 34 documents which
addressed democracy explicitly. The data revealed an emphasis on
rule of law, institution building, and elections for the time period
between 2003 and 2011. Throughout those years, the rate of
democratic discourse—that is, the frequency with which the
Commission explicitly linked the term democracy with the case of
Georgia—spiked in 2008 most notably, followed by 2010 and 2004.
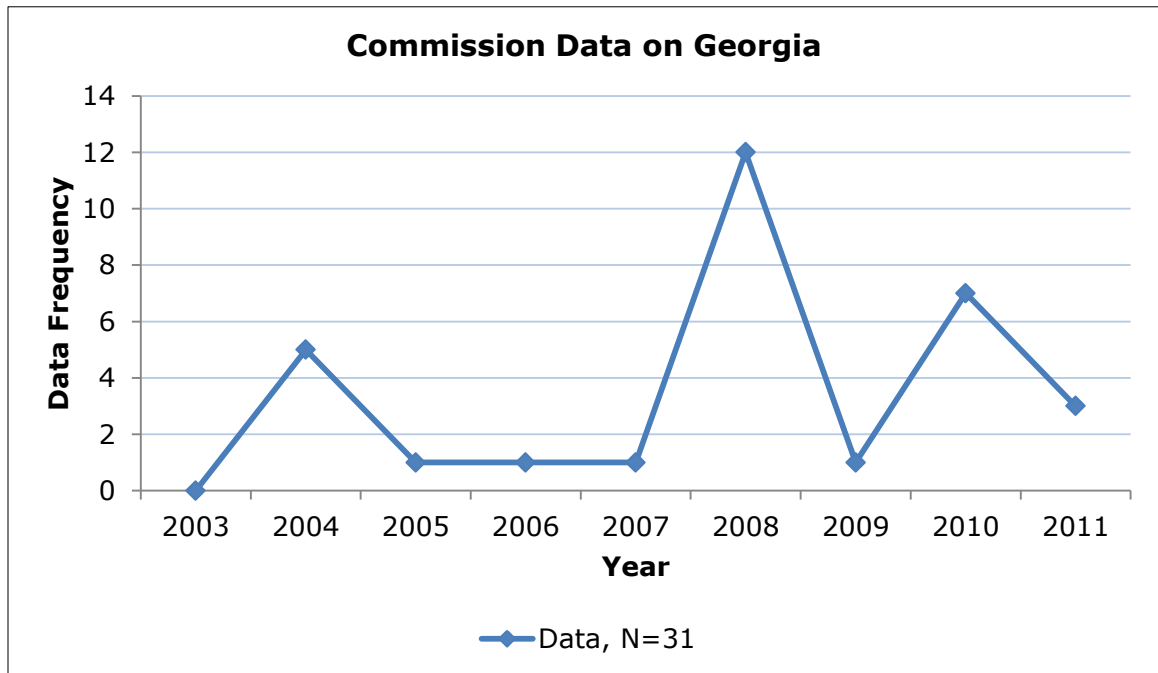[See Figure 4]

110

Figure 4: Commission Data on Georgia

The spike in democratic discourse by the Commission regarding Georgia has to do in great part with the volatile political context of that year. The year 2008 began with the aftermath of mass demonstrations held by the public in November 2007, in which citizens rallied against perceived corruption in the Saakashvili administration, culminating in a state-of-emergency declared by the government (Tatum 2009, 153). The protests were the largest since the rose revolution four years earlier. In response, President Saakashvili held early presidential elections, and, in January 2008, he was reelected by voters. In May of that year, Georgia held early parliamentary elections as well. Finally,

the brief war with Russia over secessionist Abkhazia and South Ossetia peaked in August 2008, though tensions were brewing in the months leading to that time. By September 2008, the economic effects of conflict with Russia became evident—growth contracted significantly from 12.7% the year before to 2.3% in 2008 (Müller 2011, 70).

The data also demonstrated a spike in democratic discourse in 2004, a crucial year for Georgia, since it immediately followed the rose revolution of late 2003. Discourse by the Commission reflects the cautious optimism of its day. One press release regarding President Saakashvili's first official visit to the Commission that year following the rose revolution emphasized rule of law (COM 2004/997): "We have confidence that President Saakashvili will show the political will to lead the courageous Georgian people towards a bright and solid democratic future, in which the rule of law and a free market economy replace organized crime and corruption."

The context in Georgia during the spike in 2010 was the passing of major amendments to the constitution by the Georgian Parliament. The constitutional changes diminished executive powers in favor of parliamentary ones, and set Georgia on the path toward greater parliamentary rule (Welt 2010). The reforms were controversial, however, as opponents skeptically claimed ulterior motives by

President Saakashvili, whom they viewed as posturing himself for the role of prime minister after his presidency (Welt 2010).

In the case of Georgia, the Commission's emphasis on rule of law, institution building, and quality of elections—seemingly directed at preserving order in a fragile democracy—were evident throughout the time period under examination. Often, democracy was framed in terms of paradoxical rules: the rules attempted to limit the government's power when it transcended certain undefined norms, but they also expected the government to preserve order when confronted with major challenges. For Georgia, it meant that the Commission expected a balance between order and repression for the sake of stability. This delicate balance was especially obvious in the late 2007 protests; the protestors' grievances against corruption; the subsequent government crackdown; and the consequent early elections. This was a series of events over the course of less than one year that challenged Georgia to preserve order without gross violations of human rights.

In reference to the protests, an internal memo made the following note (COM 2008/821): "Public administration reform is still at an early stage. The lack of institutional stability and the continuous changes and restructuring within the public administration are putting at risks the sustainability of reforms and impact negatively on the overall governance." In this case, institutional capacity was an

important precursor to good governance. Institutions as rules, particularly democratic institutions, were highlighted by the Commission. That year, they recognized basic democratic institutions were in place, "but further efforts need to be made to ensure that a democratic and human rights culture takes root in Georgian society" (COM 2008/817).

Rule of law was a common theme that became pronounced during and after the protests. Flagrant corruption was leading to mass protests. This concern was echoed by the Commission, which praised any small gain by Georgia in justice and against corruption: "Progress has been achieved in justice sector reform, improving the business climate and the fight against corruption" (COM 2011/915). The Commission made the connection between rule of law and good governance in a 2008 Action Fiche focusing on criminal justice reform, in which it stated that "good governance" was necessary so that Georgia may "comply with its international and national legal obligations in the field of human rights" (COM 2008/816). In turn, the document asserted, institutions would strengthen "in line with democratic standards, which is the precondition for stability and security in the country" (COM 2008/816).

For the Commission, elections in Georgia needed to be free and fair. The motif was evident during elections years, especially in 2004

(the first post-revolution presidential election). Several Commission documents depict the emphasis on elections. In an Action Fiche from 2011, the Commission referred to a 2010 round of local elections, calling it "an important test for the maturity of the functioning of democratic institutions in the country" (COM 2011/959). It made a similar reference in 2005 regarding the importance of "local self-government" (COM 2004/997).

Several patterns in the discourse suggest the Commission's Western notion of proper elections. For one, the media would have to play a role in the proper conduct of elections. The Commission called the media a "fundamental freedom" in 2008 (COM 2008/1095) and considered it critical for democratic consolidation (COM 2010/1102, COM 2010/1222). In one press release in anticipation of the May 21, 2008, parliamentary elections, the Commission stated that, "The successful organization of these elections will contribute to strengthening the development of a democratic political system in Georgia" (COM 2008/1051).

The piece of data that perhaps best sums up the Commission's perspective of democracy in Georgia is a 2011 strategic document that took into account the tumultuous events of the preceding years. The Commission described democracy in Georgia as having made

significant gains toward democracy, but with noted need for improvement in some areas (COM 2011/915, 5-6, 9):

- Corruption: "Progress has been achieved in justice sector reform, improving the business climate and the fight against corruption."

- Political divisions: "In mid-2007, Georgia entered a period of political turmoil, marked by anti-government mass demonstrations and a polarized atmosphere between the ruling majority and opposition parties." And "In April 2009, the political opposition in Georgia started mass demonstrations, demanding the resignation of President Saakashvili. This development, and the criticisms made by the opposition parties, prompted the Georgian government to push forward even further with continuing democratic reforms, encouraging political pluralism, amending the election code and ensuring media freedom."

- Elections: "Early presidential and legislative elections in 2008 […] were reported to be in line with international standards, by the OSCE/OIDHR, though the reports outlined several irregularities in the conduct of both elections. The opposition parties also criticized the ruling

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majority regarding the conduct of elections and contested the validity of the results. This resulted in the decision of some opposition parties not to take up their seats in Parliament."

- Civil Society: "To be able to consolidate the reforms and assistance provided on good governance and in the development of a modern state, oriented towards the needs of its citizens, support for civil service reforms requires special attention… for strengthening democratic institutions and enhancing political pluralism, support for human rights and media freedom should be further encouraged. This point is supported by highlighting the need for civil society development, encouraging the systemic involvement of CSOs at all stages of programming and implementation."

The same 2011 document set forth "democratic development, rule of law, good governance" as the Commission's first priority in Georgia. The related sub-priorities were (COM 2011/915): (1) media freedom, political pluralism, human rights, civil society development; (2) justice sector reform; and (3) public finance management and public administration reform. The Commission claimed that these

would lead to "greater acceptance of democratic values and lasting results in democratization" and a "modern state oriented towards the needs of its citizens and increased public confidence in the justice system."

Considering the peak of democratic discourse in 2008, one event in Georgia was conspicuously missing in the Commission data: the Commission devoted minimal attention to Georgia's conflict with Russia, which peaked that year. One compelling reason for this is that the war itself falls within the scope of the CFSP, and thus resides with the Council of the EU due to the military and security implications of the issue. Still, in the 100-piece data linking democratic discourse by the Commission to Georgia, the Commission only addressed the conflict in terms of the stability and territorial integrity of Georgia and the refusal to recognize the independence of the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The conflict was not framed in terms of sovereignty from Russia, and the Commission only referred to the conflict as a domestic issue relative to the separatist regions. This perspective of the conflict was evident in two documents out of 100 (COM 2008/821, COM 2011/1235).

Overall, the democratic discourse by the Commission in Georgia focused on rule of law, institution building, and elections. The

Commission responded to major crises, valued stability and effective institutions, and anticipated election cycles in Georgia. These elements came together in late 2007 to 2008, when the Commission engaged in democratic discourse the most.

5.1.2 Commission Discourse on Ukraine

Of the three case studies, Commission discourse was consistently most fertile regarding to Ukraine. The database for this study includes a set of 48 Commission documents in which democracy and Ukraine are coded concurrently. Ukraine's political transition may have had a more immediate impact on the EU's geopolitical and strategic interests than that of the other case studies. Geopolitically, Ukraine sits between Russia and Europe. The accession of the former Soviet satellites would be of added significance to the geopolitical dimension, as Ukraine's orientation and policy preference for East versus West became more pronounced. Issues such as rule of law and procedural democracy would therefore have direct impact on the EU. The Commission's discourse in the case of Ukraine emphasized elections, rule of law, and basic rights for the years of the study. Throughout the years, the rate of democratic discourse spiked in 2010 and 2011 most notably. Figure 5 illustrates the frequency of

Commission documents which explicitly referenced democracy in the context of Ukraine in the dataset.
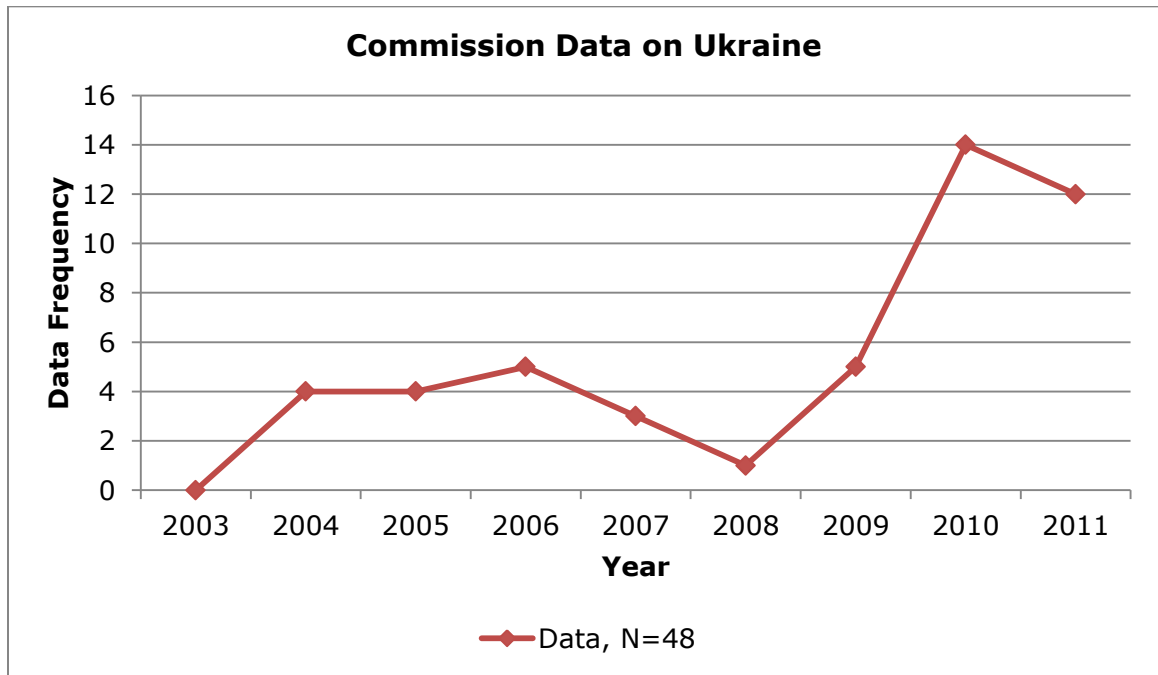
Commission Data on Ukraine

Figure 5: Commission Data on Ukraine

The spike in democratic discourse reflects major political setbacks in Ukraine during 2010 to 2011. Viktor Yanukovych, the same candidate who was deemed to have rigged the 2004 elections that sparked the orange revolution—won the presidency in a bitter election against then-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. It is also the same year in which Yanukovych, after his victory, commenced criminal proceedings against Tymoshenko; she was sentenced in 2011 to seven years in prison for ostensible abuse of office.

The data reveals a deep concern for political developments in Ukraine following the 2010 victory of President Yanukovych and the subsequent criminal case against Ms. Tymoshenko. Though the 2010 elections were generally described in satisfactory terms, almost all the data for those years emphasize rule of law and human rights. In 2010, shortly after Yanukovych assumed the presidency, the Commission pointed out that it was "concerned at consistent and wide-spread reports of deterioration in respect to fundamental freedoms and democratic principles in Ukraine. Particularly worrying are complaints related to freedom of the media, freedom of assembly and freedom of association" (COM 2010/1227).

In one instance, the Commission was very direct about the Tymoshenko case, asserting that "the procedural flaws in the on-going trials of opposition representatives were symptomatic of politically-motivated justice and acted to undermine democracy and the core European values" (COM 2011/1119). Indeed, as with the other cases, democratic values were often tied to the benchmark of European standards (COM 2011/972): "increased knowledge of EU standards and practices will raise democratic standards."

The ENP Indicative for Ukraine, released in 2011, illustrates the Commission's concerns over Yanukovych in the larger context (COM 2011/916):

Since the Orange Revolution of 2004, Ukraine has made significant progress in deepening respect for democratic norms and human rights: successive national elections have been conducted largely in accordance with international standards; civil society has taken root and flourished particularly in the larger cities; there is a large degree of pluralism in the media due partly to pluralism in media ownership. At the same time the major political forces in Ukraine (including both the former Orange Coalition leaders and the main opposition party) have confirmed Ukraine's European aspirations and its commitment to a reform agenda. Nonetheless, reform efforts in particular as regards implementation of laws and other normative acts have been significantly undermined by political instability. Political divisions within Ukraine's leadership have in turn been exacerbated by constitutional arrangements which lack clarity as regards the division of powers and responsibilities. Consequently in the past two years the pace of reform has slowed and at certain significant periods of time some of the major institutions of state have been virtually paralyzed […] Key reform priorities remain: reform of the constitution itself; strengthening of respect for the rule of law (notably through judicial reform), redoubling of efforts to combat corruption and strengthening of the business and investment climate. Ukraine's leadership has repeatedly confirmed the importance of continuing reform in all

of these areas and consequently these priorities are reflected in

the new EU-Ukraine Association Agenda.

The document acknowledges gains made in previous years, but

admonishes strife among political leaders, and diminished progress

toward reform and rule of law.

Another notable element of discourse was the question of future

EU membership. Democratic discourse in Ukraine was coupled with the

(un)likelihood of membership. The EU Commission made a concerted

effort to preclude membership, albeit without completely eliminating

the possibility of future membership. The sentiment was persistent

throughout the years. In 2004, it stated that, though "membership is

not on the agenda", the EU was "not closing any doors" (COM

2004/1201). In a 2005 speech, the Commissioner for External

Relations and the ENP stated (COM 2005/1202): "Ukraine has a great

deal of work to do to consolidate its democratic and economic

transitions, both of which are necessary before EU membership

becomes an option." In minutes from a 2011 meeting, the Commission

made the link between democracy and membership again (COM

2011/777): "the importance of the EU having a clear position in its

relations with Ukraine taking account, on the one hand, of the need to

make the signature of the association agreement conditional on

Ukraine's respect for the principles of democracy and rule of law and, on the other hand, of the support to be given to the country in order to confirm and crystallize it's rapprochement with the EU."

The EU's efforts to couple democratic progress with the prospects of membership are closely tied to EU precedent in the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe. In that case, the EU was using soft conditionality, in which the (credible) commitment and prospect of membership was the carrot and the threat of delayed or terminated accession negotiations was the stick. However, in regions further east like Ukraine where the distant prospect of membership was not compelling or sufficiently credible, EU's efforts to link democratic progress to future membership have minimal practical effects and remain in the discursive realm.

Overall, the democratic discourse by the Commission in Ukraine emphasized elections, rule of law, and basic rights. The latter had to do with the Commission's critical response to the politics of Yanukovych following his presidential victory in 2010 and subsequent criminal case against political rival Tymoshenko. In the case of Ukraine, the Commission also linked progress in democratic reform to the prospects of future membership, a policy area in which the

Commission is the primary driver. This linkage suggests weak

conditionality, or leverage, between the Commission and Ukraine.

5.1.3 Commission Discourse on the Kyrgyz Republic

Of the three case studies, discourse was least frequent in the

case of Kyrgyzstan. The database for this study includes a set of 21

Commission documents in which democracy and Kyrgyzstan were

coded simultaneously. The discourse emphasized very basic

democratic values and fundamental freedoms, especially as they

related to pluralism typical of democratic societies. The Commission

dedicated most of its limited democratic discourse to the years 2009

and 2010, which reflected a spike in the data. Figure 6 illustrates the

frequency of data which explicitly referenced democracy in the context

of Kyrgyzstan in the dataset.

The spread of data in the figure above is very telling about which

political developments were of significance to the Commission. For

years, Kyrgyzstan was under the Soviet-era leadership of President

Askar Akayev until the 2005 tulip revolution promised to bring about

democracy. From 2005 to 2010, the promises were never fulfilled by

Kyrgyzstan's new President Kurmanbek Bakiyev. The Commission

made conspicuously little mention of the tulip revolution years until

Bakiyev's suspect re-election in 2009. These years were crucial for the

region, because Kyrgyzstan was the first and, since then, the only country to popularly reject its Soviet-era president in 2005 in the name of democratic revolution. Despite the historical importance of those years, the dataset included only four Commission documents from 2005 to 2008 with democratic discourse.

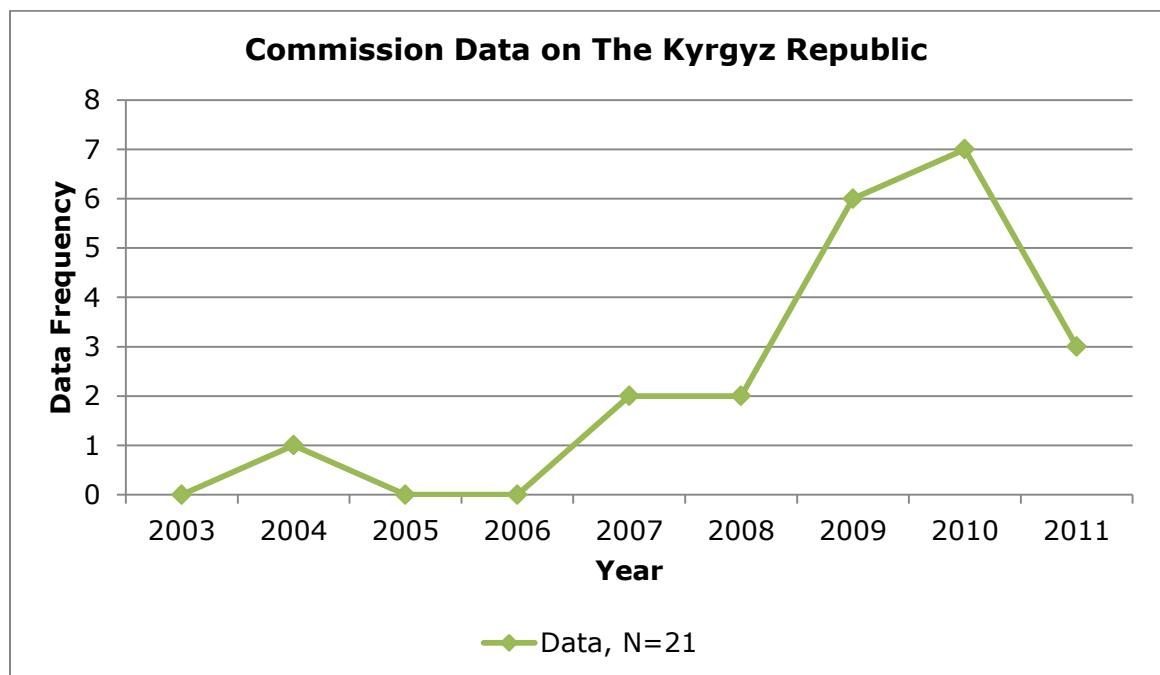**Commission Data on The Kyrgyz Republic**

Figure 6: Commission Data on Kyrgyzstan

It was not until 2009 and 2010 that the Commission paid notice. In 2009, Bakiyev won re-election in presidential elections highly criticized by onlookers. The elections were amid increasingly severe antidemocratic moves by Bakiyev. In 2010 Kyrgyzstanis staged another popular revolution, and Bakiyev was toppled by mass protests in April. In a bid to limit the broad powers once enjoyed by Bakiyev

under a presidential system, reformers established Kyrgyzstan as Central Asia's first and only parliamentary democracy. Thus the Commission's spread of data demonstrates that the promises of democracy from the tulip revolution did not garner significant democratic discourse until Bakiyev's bold moves in 2009 and the new revolution in 2010.

Though the 2009 re-election of Bakiyev was widely condemned by the international community as unfair, the Commission did not discuss the procedural elements of elections in the dataset for that year. There were no references to the flawed re-election methods of Bakiyev. Instead, the Commission looked toward freedoms of speech, as they related to the media and civil society. The Commission called the media a "'watchdog' for democracy and good governance" (COM 2009/872), and noted that civil society groups had "publicly complained about a shrinking of democratic space that has weakened their ability to make the different government levels accountable of their actions" (COM 2009/870; COM 2009/875).

Finally, in 2010, the Commission made more direct commentary on the state of democracy in the country, shortly before the fall of Bakiyev. A 2010 Action Fiche sounded alarm over "a risk of a worsening of the situation and a backtrack towards less democratic environments" (COM 2010/941; COM 2010/942). The Commission

responded to the 2010 revolution in the following memo (COM 2010/948): "The Provisional Government announced its resolve to return the country to democratic principles and prepared, with the support of the international community, including the EU and the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, a new Constitution which should create the region's first parliamentary democracy."

In addition to the gaps in discourse regarding the initial democratic promises of the tulip revolution, the Commission also did not address the widespread and deadly violent conflict that erupted across the country in May 2010 (just one month after the new revolution) in any of the democratic discourse data. Democratic discourse would have been very relevant, considering the severity of the conflict—the interim leader declared a state of emergency amid the violent and gruesome deaths of hundreds of victims, as well as the displacement of many more. The basic security capabilities of the state were under question, and other international observers placed blame on the authorities themselves in perpetuating the violence against ethnic minorities.

Overall, the democratic discourse by the Commission in Kyrgyzstan emphasized basic democratic values and fundamental freedoms considered typical of functioning democratic societies. The

Commission devoted most of its democratic discourse to the severe restrictions on freedoms of speech in the late Bakiyev years, shortly before the new revolution of 2010. With the new revolution, the Commission emphasized basic values, such as respect for human rights and civil society. Conspicuously absent from democratic discourse were the early democratic promises of the 2005 tulip revolution and the deadly ethnic conflict of 2010.

5.2   Discourse by the Council

As the most intergovernmental of the EU institutions, it is the Council's job to uphold member-state interests. It is responsible for consulting the Parliament and concluding foreign policy initiated by the Commission. The Council achieves this by convening monthly the Ministers of Foreign Affairs from each member-state. Before 2009, these meetings were called the General Affairs and External Relations Council; after 2009, it became the Foreign Affairs Council. As of 2009, the latter meeting is chaired by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who is then responsible for coordinating policy among member-state interests and for spearheading the Common Foreign and Security Policy, when applicable in sensitive policy sectors of military and security.

The dataset for the Council included 82 documents that address democracy explicitly for the case studies. The documents are press releases, meeting minutes, and official speeches and statements. More than half of the data dealt with Ukraine, followed by Georgia, and significantly less for Kyrgyzstan (see Figure 7). The data on the Council revealed an emphasis on critical elections, but also norms and ideals, rather than concrete institutions or reforms.
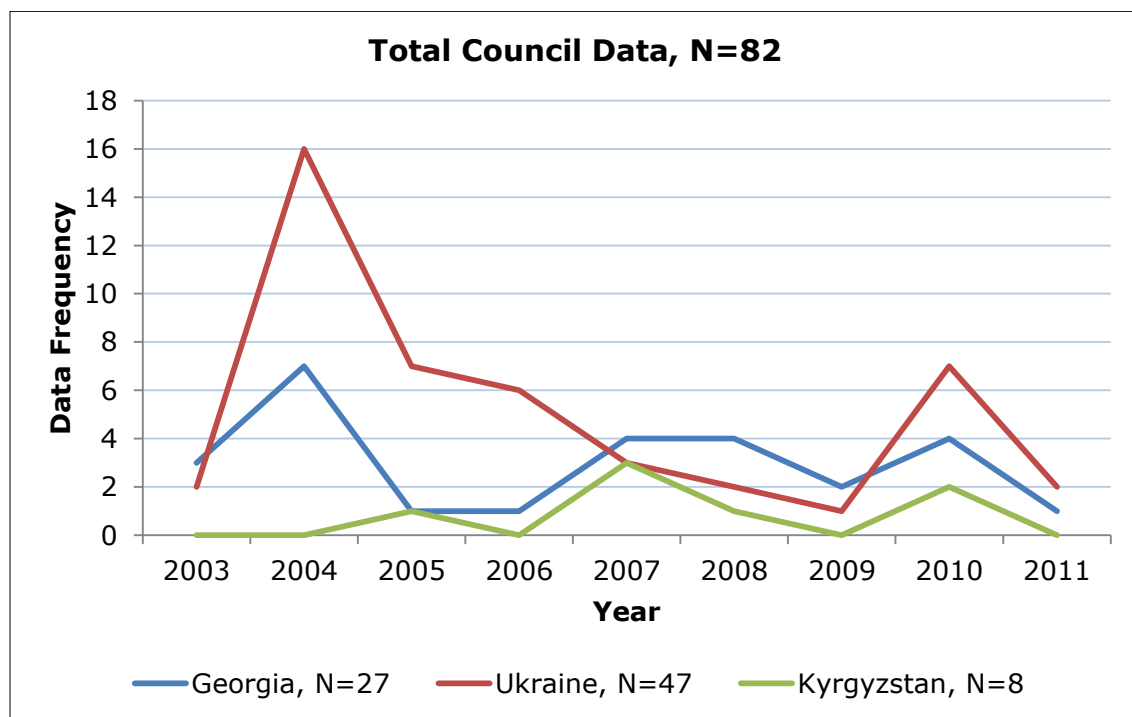

Figure 7: Council Data Linking Democracy and Case Study

5.2.1 Council Discourse on Georgia

The Council data on Georgia included 27 documents which addressed democracy explicitly in the context of Georgia. The data

emphasized elections especially and stability. The only spike in data was in 2004, which was the time period immediately following the rose revolution.
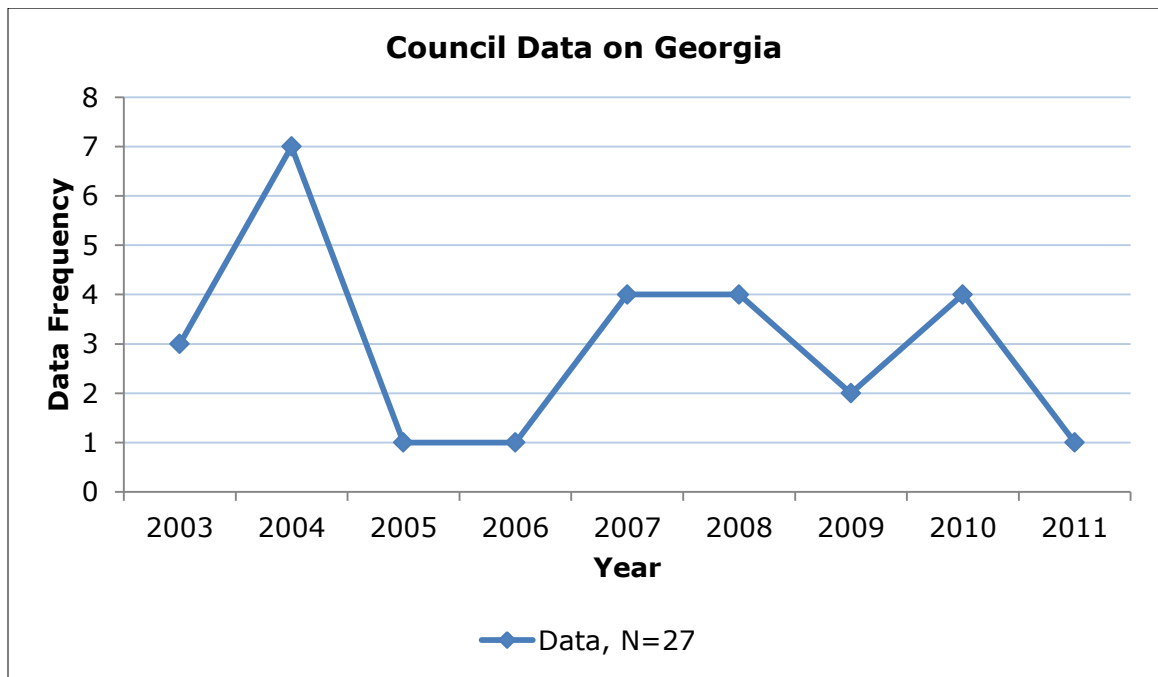
Figure 8: Council Data on Georgia

For the Council, the conduct of elections was paramount, and the secondary emphasis on stability was closely intertwined with elections. Major elections were held in Georgia in 2003 (parliamentary, the results of which were annulled during the rose revolution), 2004 (parliamentary and presidential), and 2008 (parliamentary and presidential); local elections were held in 2006 (the first local elections after the rose revolution) and 2010.

As early as the 2003 elections, the Council "emphasized the importance of stability in Georgia and in the region and urged all parties concerned to respect the rule of law and to resort only to peaceful and democratic means in seeking to resolve political differences" (Council 2003/1287), but shortly afterward issued a statement regarding election irregularities (Council 2003/2674): "The European Union regrets these developments which weaken the trust of the Georgian people in the authorities and are in contrast to the evolution towards a democratic civil society."

The rose revolution was a turning point for how the Council perceived elections in Georgia. Following the dramatic political changes of late 2003 and early 2004, the Council made several positive comments regarding the 2004 elections, including: "closer to meeting international standards for democratic elections" (Council 2004/2679); "commendable progress…closer to meeting OSCE and Council of Europe standards for democratic elections" (Council 2004/2683); and "…the elections demonstrated commendable progress compared with previous elections…" (Council 2004/2683).

The Council issued a press release regarding the 2008 presidential elections, which were held early in response to 2007 protests, stating (Council 2008/1444): "The Presidential Elections on 5 January 2008 were an important test for democracy and stability in

Georgia […] consistent with most OSCE and Council of Europe commitments and standards for democratic elections." Regarding the 2008 parliamentary elections, also held early for the same reason, the Council commented in a meeting, "…the situation in Georgia following the parliamentary elections held on 21 May 2008…were an important test for democracy" (Council 2008/1307).

When democratic discourse was not framed in terms of elections and stability, the Council referred to democracy in very idealistic and normative terms. The following statements stem from a 2008 meeting (Council 2008/1397): "The EU side welcomed the recent commitments of President Saakashvili for strengthening democratic institutions in Georgia, and expected concrete steps in this sense. The Cooperation Council agreed that consolidation of democracy was the key to ensuring Georgia's long term stability and its successful transformation into a prosperous, harmonious and united society." Similarly, in 2011, it issued a press release stating, "The EU supported the continuation of democratic reforms in Georgia and the need to consolidate democratic institutions, encourage political pluralism and enhance media freedom" (Council 2011/2346).

The Council's democratic discourse of Georgia was not evident during the most provocative political crises of the time period, notably the mass protests of late 2007 and the conflict with Russia. Though

the Council did indeed confront the Russian-Georgia conflict from 2008 directly under the CFSP, it did so independently of democratic discourse and outside the dataset for this research.

Overall, the Council emphasized elections primarily, but also stability and democratic norms. The Council considered elections to be barometers or tests of democracy for Georgia, and therefore placed great value on the procedural elements of elections.

5.2.2 Council Discourse on Ukraine

The Council data on Ukraine included 47 documents with explicit connections to democracy. The data also emphasized elections in this case, as well as freedoms of the media. The data show one spike in particular in 2004, where the Council demonstrated trepidation over the elections that eventually sparked the orange revolution. After the orange revolution in early 2005, the rate of democratic discourse consistently declined with the exception of a small spike in 2010 (presidential elections). The pattern of decline in democratic discourse suggests increased pessimism over the prospects of democracy in Ukraine throughout the years.

Figure 9: Council Data on Ukraine

The Council's emphasis on elections was most dramatic in the time immediately preceding the color revolution. The 2004 scheduled election in question was between then-Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych and handpicked candidate of the outgoing less-than-democratic leader, and the leading opposition candidate, Viktor Yushchenko. The latter enjoyed a clear lead in the polls, but somehow Yanukovych won the runoff election. The unfair election sparked mass protests, which led to a rerun in December 2004 and the victory of Yushchenko in early 2005. Thus, the frequency of democratic discourse was undoubtedly highest during the presidential election of

2004, and the most obvious patterns were frequent references to free and fair elections, and electoral irregularities.

The Council was paying attention very closely and critically to the two rounds of elections. One of the important elements of a free and fair election process was the media. In response to the contested first round, the Council expressed, "regret that the first round of the elections had not met international standards. The EU had on several occasions urged the Ukrainian authorities to observe democratic principles and to redress the deficiencies, including by providing equal access to the media for the two candidates, so that the second round of elections could be free and fair" (Council 2004/1299; Council 2005/1343).

The Council was equally critical of the second round of that presidential election, shortly before the orange revolution. Having "followed the second round of elections with great concern... the EU had on several occasions urged the Ukrainian authorities to observe democratic principles so that the second round of elections could be free and fair; that the second round of elections had clearly fallen short of international standards and that in view of the irregularities detailed in the OSCE/ ODIHR report the EU seriously questioned whether the official results fully reflected the will of the Ukrainian electorate" (Council 2004/1423). In fact, the Council perceived this as

a crucial election (Council 2004/1716): "The aftermath of the second round of the Ukrainian Presidential Elections has brought Ukraine to a cross-road in her development towards establishing a fully-fledged democratic society, and in the EU-Ukraine relationship." Among the complaints lodged by the Council against the second round of elections were misconduct in the campaign period, reports of "widespread" intimidation, ballot-stuffing, and violence, among others (Council 2004/1716).

After the orange revolution, the frequency of democratic discourse in Ukraine diminished considerably. The Council returned to issues of elections with the 2006 parliamentary round, which it considered successful and indicative of democratic consolidation (Council 2006/1436; Council 2006/1263): "that the elections, which were considered free and fair, consolidated the democratic breakthrough in Ukraine and should provide a strong basis for renewed efforts to move forward in key reforms aimed at strengthening the rule of law, transforming society and strengthening the market economy." It also called the 2007 parliamentary elections "witness to Ukraine's progress in implementing its democratic reforms" (Council 2008/1247). Thus, for the Council, elections pave the way for substantive democratic goals. Critical elections are even sufficiently a

benchmark for democratic consolidation, an otherwise much too low standard in the general scholarly community.

By 2010, as Yanukovych returned to the presidency and launched a criminal case against his greatest rival, Yulia Tymoshenko, the Council made references to human rights in four of seven documents from 2010 to 2011. However, these references never made an explicit connection between Yanukovych's case against Tymoshenko and the state of democracy in Ukraine. Instead, it used vague language such as "respect for human rights" to state that such respect is crucial for EU-Ukrainian relations. The Council did not make the connection between the trial against Tymoshenko and the health of Ukrainian democracy until 2011, the year Tymoshenko was sentenced for alleged crimes; the Council noted "perceived deterioration of the quality of democracy and rule of law in Ukraine," but did not expound any further.

Overall, the Council emphasized elections in its democratic discourse of Ukraine, as well as the media as an enabler of proper elections. There was an initial spike in democratic discourse shortly before and after the orange revolution, but the frequency of such discourse declined throughout the years. Conspicuously absent from the discourse was an explicit connection between the widely publicized

and criticized trial against Yulia Tymoshenko and democratic progress or backsliding in Ukraine.

5.2.3 Council Discourse on The Kyrgyz Republic

The Council data on the Kyrgyz Republic included eight documents which addressed democracy directly. Unlike the other cases, the areas of focus in Kyrgyzstan were lofty democratic principles, with minimal discussion on which reforms would produce what effects. When the Council addressed elections in Kyrgyzstan, it did so superficially and collectively as an outcome, not a procedure with multiple potential points of failure.
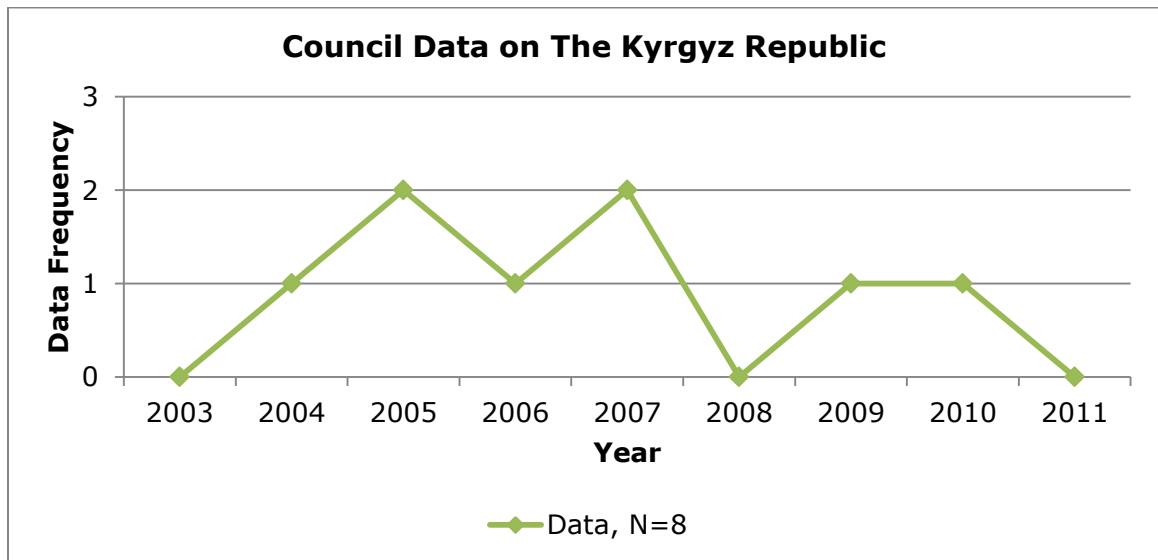

Figure 10: Council Data on Kyrgyzstan

The few pieces of democratic discourse by the Council suggest that—whether the period was the 2005 tulip revolution, the 2009 reelection of Bakiyev (the would-be reformer who was anything but), or the new revolution of 2010 and the subsequent ethnic conflict—the Council did not alter the frequency of democratic discourse. Instead, it simply "welcomed" the reforms on the incoming 2010 coalition government, for instance (Council 2010/2651).

In response to the events of the tulip revolution and the promises of democratic grandeur, the Council made the following comments (Council 2005/1726):

> The Cooperation Council was the first meeting at this level between the EU and the Kyrgyz Republic since the July 10 Presidential elections in the country. It called on the Kyrgyz leadership to use this unique opportunity to fully embrace democratic values, develop economic and social policies and tackle wide-spread corruption, which are essential preconditions for sustainable development of the country.
>
> The EU welcomes and strongly supports close cooperation between the Kyrgyz government and the OSCE. The EU is willing to increase its political and economic cooperation with the Kyrgyz Republic provided that the Kyrgyz government demonstrates its commitment to reform, particularly in the

areas of constitutional reform, democratization and improving country's investment climate.

The comments above emphasize reforms at the leadership level—socioeconomic policy and constitutional reform, for instance. Yet a few years later, the Council shifted the burden of change from the political elite to the citizenry. The Council placed the responsibility of democratic reform with domestic actors, particularly civil society (Council 2009/1260): "The task of sustaining a culture of human rights and making democracy work for its citizens calls for the active involvement of civil society. A developed and active civil society and independent media are vital for the development of a pluralistic society. The EU will cooperate with the Central Asia states to this end and promote enhanced exchanges in civil society."

Overall, the Council was supportive of democratization writ large, but it did not identify specific policies or political turning points that would either promote or hinder democracy. The Council maintained a consistent rate of discourse despite periodic political scandals otherwise related to democracy.

5.3   Discourse by the Parliament

As the institution most representative of the public and EU citizens, the Parliament is also the weakest in foreign affairs in terms of authority in the founding treaties of the EU. The Council consults with the Parliament on foreign affairs matters. This consultative relationship can take shape in several forms. The Parliament may ask the Council questions the latter must answer. The Parliament can also make policy recommendations to the Council, which may or may not be adopted. And, in issues areas outside the realm of CFSP, the Council must secure the consent of the Parliament for its decisions. Yet, only the Parliament can dismiss the Commission; while this has never happened, the Parliament can exercise pressure over the Commission in theory.

The Parliament had the least number of data in the set, totaling 48 documents. The data for the Parliament stem from minutes, reports, resolutions, press releases, statements, and the meetings of parliamentary subcommittees. Across the case studies, the Parliament adopted the most comprehensive view of democracy. Rather than emphasizing a particular facet of democracy, such as elections or rule of law, it viewed those elements as constituent parts of an overarching construct. For example, while elections may have been the defining

benchmark for the Council, elections in and of themselves did not define democratic success for the Parliament. The Parliament also adopted the most long-range perspective for the practical value of democratic reforms. Across the cases, the European Parliament couched democratization as closely intertwined with its long-term effects. Additionally, the Parliament was most directly critical of domestic decision-makers in the case studies and of fellow EU institutions.
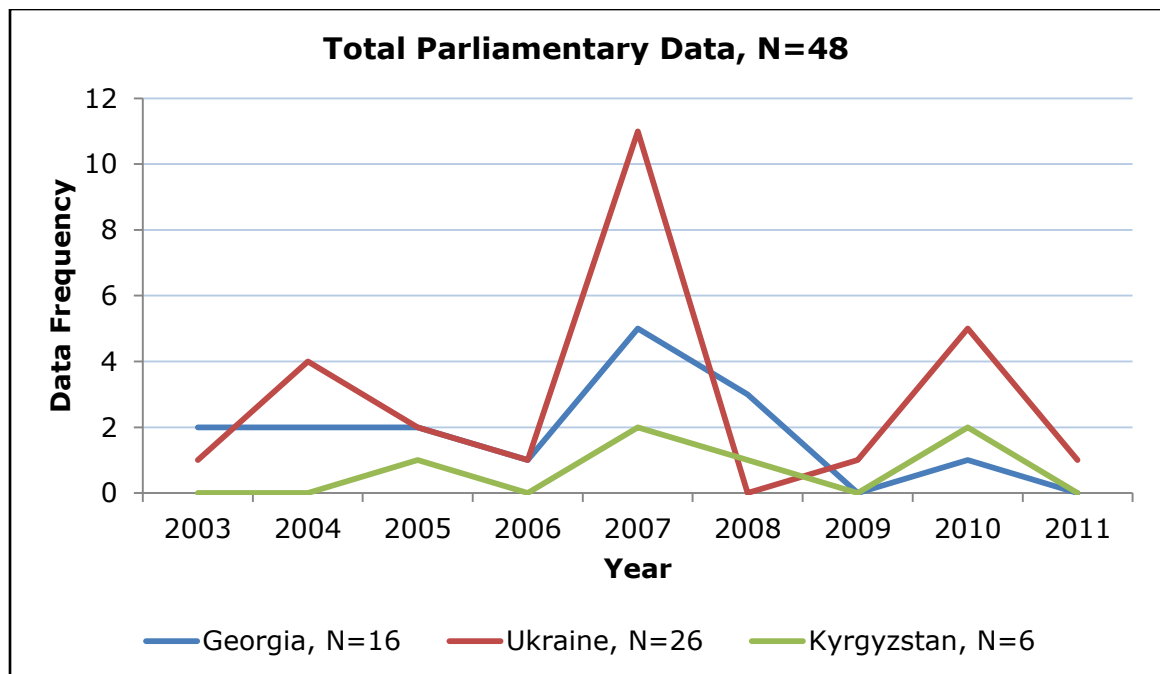

Figure 11: Parliamentary Data Linking Democracy and Case Study

5.3.1 Parliament Discourse on Georgia

The parliamentary data on Georgia included 16 documents that addressed democracy and Georgia concurrently. The data spiked in 2007, the year when Georgian citizens hit the streets *en masse* to protest government corruption. Parliamentary discourse on Georgia was holistic. It identified wide-ranging concerns, such as transparency, judicial reform and independence, civil society, local-level governance, and freedom of expression, among many others.
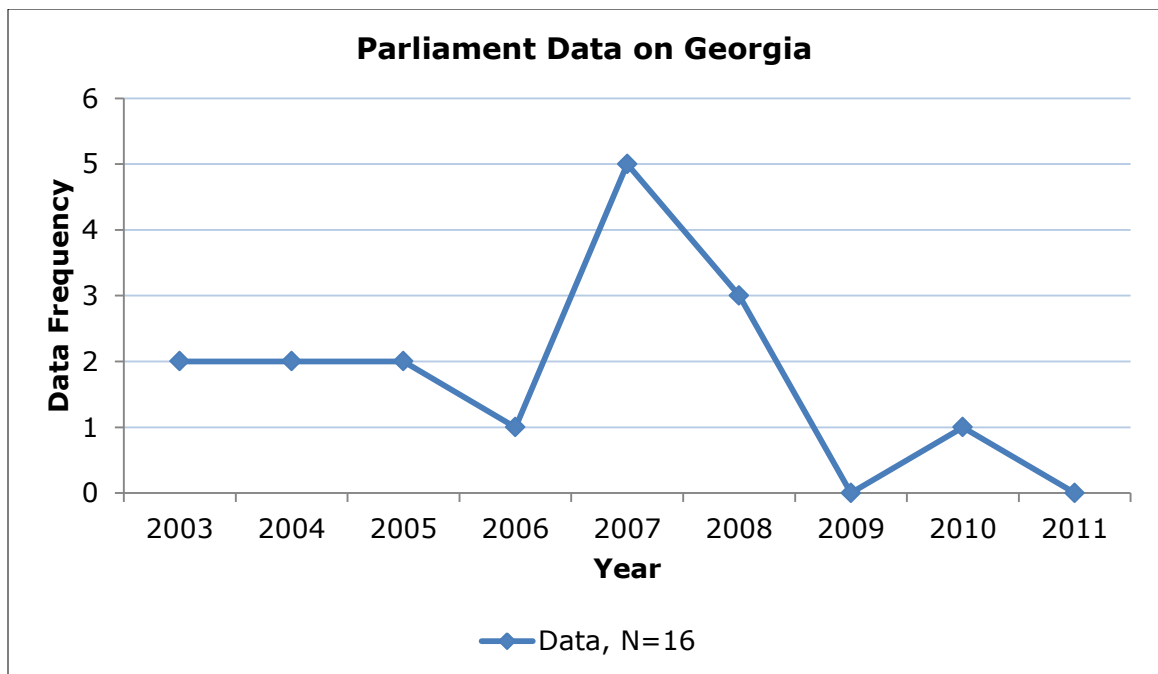

Figure 12: Parliament Data on Georgia

The Parliament's holistic view of democracy was set in the context of long-term effects. In 2004, the Parliament warned Georgia

that, despite applauding the conduct of the first major elections

following the rose revolution, democratic elections would only become

increasingly more challenging throughout the years as the system

became more competitive (EP 2004/2883). The Parliament was

optimistic of the rose revolution, though "Georgia still had to face a

number of issues, including improving the rule of law, reform of the

public service, economic reforms, and the reform of the judicial

system" (EP 2005/2886). In 2006, the year before the big protests of

2007, the Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (PCC) on Georgia

noted numerous areas of concern (EP 2006/2893): "stresses the need

for Georgian government to focus on the continuation of the political

and economic reform process, strengthening the respect for the rule of

law, the independence of the judiciary, human rights, consolidating a

democratic system of government, the development of civil society,

media freedom, environmental protection, sustainable development

and poverty reduction." The same document "call[ed] on the Council

and the Commission to take into account the views of the European

Parliament during the consultation process."

The spike in data in 2007 revealed a similar pattern in which the

Parliament outlined a comprehensive critique of democracy spanning

numerous weaknesses. A report that year outlined the need to work

on government-opposition dialogue, rule of law, human rights,

judiciary independence, and many other basic freedoms and features of Western democracies (EP 2007/2856). Data from the minutes of a PCC meeting included a parliamentarian who (EP 2007/2910): "stressed that as part of the democratization process, there are positive points mentioned by various NGOs such as the electoral process, freedom of the media, local governance, and that they certainly welcome the electoral process because it was deemed by the international community to have taken place at European standards. She also stressed the importance of being prudent in putting pressure on all authorities, and she drew attention to "corruption, independence of the judiciary and dialogue between government and the civil society…" The final parliamentary recommendations from that same PCC meeting included regard for local level democracy (EP 2007/2911): "deems that the reinforcement of local democracy and self-governance is an effective instrument for the modernization of the territorial administrative configuration of Georgia."

The Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs mulled over a set of proposed amendments in 2007 for EU policy. The document went through a thorough count of both improvements and shortcomings in democracy, and it proposed specific paragraphs to a policy proposal under consideration by the Council (EP 2007/2861):

Reiterates its continuing support for Georgia's efforts to introduce political and economic reforms and to strengthen its democratic institutions, thereby building a peaceful and prosperous Georgia that can contribute to stability both in the region and in the rest of Europe; expresses deep concern over the recent developments in Georgia, which escalated into a violent police crackdown on peaceful demonstrations, the closing down of independent media outlets and the declaration of the state of emergency; welcomes the decision by the Georgian authorities to hold early presidential elections and a referendum on the timing of parliamentary elections, in order to restore the democratic conditions for free and fair elections and the referendum; calls on the Georgian government, as a matter of urgency, to: – respect the rule of law and restore media freedom; – engage in a meaningful dialogue with the opposition forces and with the public; – carry out a thorough, impartial and independent investigation into the serious violations of human rights and freedom of the media, and bring the cases concerned to a fair trial;"

And—

Underlines the crucial importance of an independent and effective judiciary as a central element of solid democracy; encourages the countries of the South Caucasus to implement

judiciary reforms in conformity with European standards;

supports the exchange of experience in this field.

Documents from the subsequent years continued to balance praise with criticism across an array of democracy features. The Parliament called for conditionality in 2010, stating that "EU assistance should take place within the framework of political conditionality, such as progress in political dialogue and reform and democratization processes" (EP 2010/3012).

5.3.2 Parliament Discourse on Ukraine

The database included 26 pieces of data which explicitly linked democracy and Ukraine. The frequency of discourse spiked in 2007. As in Georgia, the Parliament maintained a holistic perspective of Ukrainian democracy, in which elections were as important as freedom of assembly and democratic institutions. The European Parliament was also very direct in its criticism of democracy in Ukraine.

2007 was a year of political discord between coalition and opposition factions in the Ukrainian parliament, which ultimately led to the calling of early parliamentary elections in June 24 of that year. The crisis stemmed from a conflict between President Yanukovych and the Ukrainian Parliament which led to thousands of supporters gathering in

support of each faction. Yanukovych dismissed the Parliament in April, while the legality of his decision was contested in the courts. After much quarreling, an agreement was made to hold early parliamentary elections in June.

Parliament Data on Ukraine
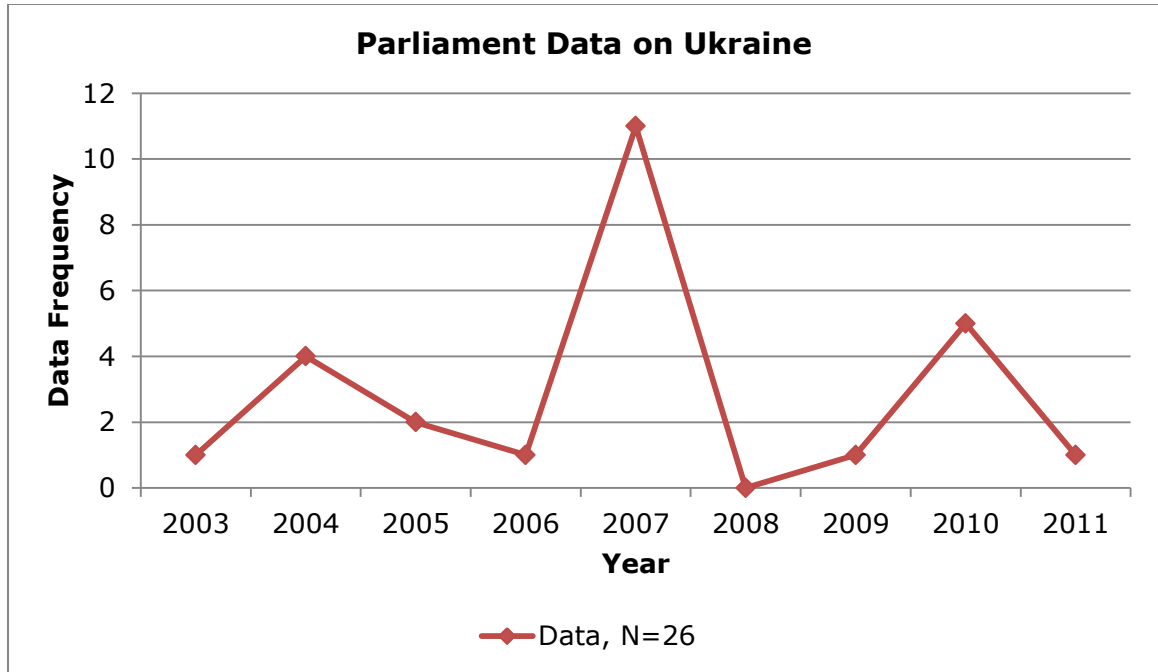
Figure 13: Parliament Data on Ukraine

Of the three EU institutions, the Parliament had the greatest discourse regarding Ukrainian parliamentary affairs. The European Parliament addressed the 2007 crisis very directly and didactically: It urged Ukraine to resolve the tensions between President and Parliament "swiftly", and to "further consolidate the footings of liberal democracy" as it was "currently in a transition period…decisive for the long-term stabilization of the country, for safeguarding of democracy,

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pluralism and the rule of law and for anchoring Ukraine in the European democratic community" (EP 2007/2829).

The EU Parliament described progress in democracy as residing in "a stable constitutional system, the protection of individual freedoms, strengthening democratic control mechanisms and stable anchoring of the rule of law" (EP 2007/2829). The institutional tensions between the president and parliament of Ukraine, and the subsequent demonstrations, were the context for the following press release by the EU Parliament (EP 2007/2909): "Building a successful and democratic future in Europe will require from Ukraine institutions and rules that are strong, clear and legitimate and a political culture in which all forces accept their share of responsibility…. Therefore, without further delay the Ukrainian political and civic leaders should agree on a comprehensive constitutional reform, aimed at improving the system of checks and balances, clarifying the separation of powers and reaffirming the supremacy of the rule of law… All these issues should be addressed by the political players of the country without involving the street action. The politicians must now concentrate on agreements made and not on their disagreements."

In the years that followed the crisis, the Parliament noted the improvements and shortcomings of democracy in Ukraine. Elections were considered important but they were by no means the sole

benchmarks of democracy. A 2010 statement said, "The EP delegation noted that the election process was carried out correctly but… any functioning democracy also needs a wider, long term legal framework. Accordingly to [a parliamentarian] 'this election clearly showed that Ukraine is consistently moving towards political stability and maturity. The next step should be to restart the long postponed reforms of the country for the benefit of Ukrainians" (EP 2010/2963). The Ministers of the EU Parliament were "deeply concerned that media freedom and independence have come under pressure in recent months and draw attention to the disappearance of the editor-in-chief of a newspaper that focuses on corruption. They also call for an investigation of the Ukrainian USB Security Service, its politicization and possible 'interference in the democratic process'" (EP 2010/2972).

The Parliament grew especially critical of Ukrainian democracy by 2010. Whereas in 2007 it encouraged institutional and constitutional reform, in 2010 it exhibited concerns of democratic backsliding—that is, Ukraine was losing many of the democratic gains it had accumulated in the preceding years. A 2010 resolution reflects the Parliament's holistic view of democracy in 2010 Ukraine (EP 2010/3014):

> …allegations have been made that democratic freedoms, such
>
> as freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and freedom of

the media, have come under pressure in recent months… the establishment of a democratic, effective and durable system of checks and balances should remain a priority and the process for achieving this should be open, inclusive and accessible to all political parties and actors in Ukraine… following the presidential elections held in January 2010 there are increasingly worrying signs of a lessening of respect for democracy and pluralism, as evidenced, in particular, by the treatment of some NGOs and individual complaints by journalists about pressure from their editors or the owners of their media outlets to cover or not cover certain events, as well as increased and politically motivated activity by the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) and the misuse of administrative and judicial resources for political purposes… [The Parliament] is concerned at recent developments that could undermine media freedom and pluralism; calls on the authorities to take all necessary measures to protect these essential aspects of a democratic society and to refrain from any attempt to control, directly or indirectly, the content of reporting in the national media; stresses the urgent need for a reform of the laws governing the media sector […] Emphasizes the need to strengthen the credibility, stability, independence and effectiveness of institutions, thereby guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law and promoting a consensual constitutional reform process

based on the clear separation of powers and effective checks

and balances between state institutions […] Calls on all the

relevant political stakeholders, including the government and

opposition, to take part in this process…

Thus the EU Parliament focused on a wide range of democratic

elements in Ukraine—whether praise or criticism. It was most critical

about how the President and Ukrainian Parliament interacted in 2007,

citing separation of powers and political culture as the underlying

culprits (EP 2007/2909).

5.3.3 Parliament Discourse on The Kyrgyz Republic

The parliamentary data on Kyrgyzstan linking democracy and the

case study explicitly totaled only six documents, and they were spread

into 1-2 documents every other year. It viewed democracy in

Kyrgyzstan as extremely fragile, yet promising. The Parliament

explicitly referenced the EU Commission and the Council, who have

more authority than the Parliament, to support Kyrgyzstan in its
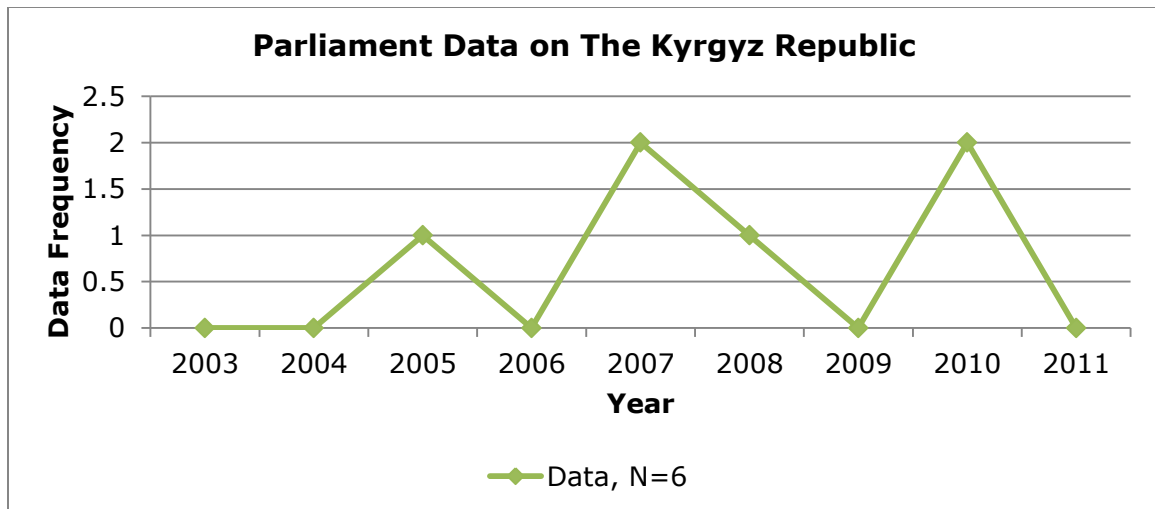
democratic endeavors.

Figure 14: Parliament Data on Kyrgyzstan

In its 2005 document, the Parliament was very optimistic of the tulip revolution and the potential that it could serve as a model for the rest of the Central Asian states (EP 2005/2997): "[The Parliament] intends firmly to support the current democratic transition in Kyrgyzstan, the effective exercise of freedoms – especially fundamental rights, freedom of expression, freedom to oppose the regime and press freedom – and genuine, transparent elections; Believes that a proper democratic process in Kyrgyzstan could provide an excellent example for the other Central Asian countries; Calls on the Kyrgyz Interim Government to steer a democratic course by embarking on a policy of dialogue and national reconciliation, and to maintain public order; Calls on the authorities of Kyrgyzstan to make every effort to start a real process of democratization of the country based on a genuine multi-party system and respect for human rights

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and the rule of law; welcomes, in this connection, the initiation of an inclusive process of constitutional reform aimed at ensuring that the previous system of power is fundamentally changed; Urges the Commission to find ways to upgrade the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Kyrgyzstan and adjust it to the new situation, defining democratic and economic benchmarks such as should lead to enhanced relations." A similar optimism was evident in a 2007 document from the Parliament, in which it noted that Kyrgyzstan had "the potential to become an example for all the other Central Asia states in the areas of democracy, human rights, and rule of law" (EP 2007/2832).

Despite its optimism, the Parliament was very critical of democracy in Kyrgyzstan. A 2007 strategy paper highlighted shortcomings in human rights, including the purported abuse of women (EP 2007/2832), treatment of political prisoners, independence of the media, and rule of law (EP 2007/2858). A 2008 document was critical of the Central Asian region as whole, and in Kyrgyzstan it specified the "fragile democratic institutions", the need "to safeguard the appropriate checks and balances," and condemned "crackdowns" on civil society (EP 2008/3005). Noting the failed promises of the tulip revolution, the Parliament had the following to say about renewed promises in 2010 (EP 2010/3010): "Points out that the Tulip

Revolution of 2005 had created strong expectations of democratic reforms in Kyrgyz society that did not materialize; calls on the Council and the Commission to show coherence and assertiveness and to use this opportunity to find ways to assist the provisional government of Kyrgyzstan and help the authorities to pursue democratic reforms and improve peoples' lives through national development and the empowerment of citizens in cooperation with all the stakeholders and Kyrgyz civil society."

The Parliament's view of democracy in Kyrgyzstan was therefore a heightened optimism for the potential it could serve as a model for the region juxtaposed with a critical assessment of wide-ranging shortcomings in democracy.

5.4 Democratic Discourse Summary by Case Study

In the case of Georgia, the Commission focused on rule of law, institution building, and elections. The spike in 2008 revealed a sensitivity regarding the late 2007 protests against corruption, the government crackdown, early elections, and conflict with Russia—all in the same time period. The Commission paid most attention to the events of that year more than any other event by any of the institutions. With Georgia, the Commission was most critical of the

government's ability to maintain order in politically palatable ways and to maintain stability in the country. This overarching concern surpassed the important of transition politics during the rose revolution.

In the case of Georgia, the Council emphasized elections and stability, as well as the norms and ideals deemed central to any Western style democracy. The Council's discourse on Georgia demonstrated that critical elections were consistently the test and benchmark for democracy in Georgia. Otherwise, discourse focused on what norms Georgian democracy ought to aspire to attain. These concerns surpassed concerns of human rights, corruption, and rule of law. Finally, the Parliament adopted a holistic view of democracy exemplified by a comprehensive critique of democratic gains and shortcomings. The data spiked in 2007 more than it did in 2008, meaning the popular unrest from 2007 received more attention than the subsequent elections and conflict with Russia. [See Figure 15]

In the case of Ukraine, the case study with most attention of all, the pattern exhibited by the Commission was an emphasis on elections, rule of law, and basic rights. The spike in 2010-2011 demonstrated a basic human rights concern framed in terms of rule law—the concern was that the criminal case against a major opposition figure was politically motivated. The Commission also addressed

Ukraine's desire for future membership more often in this case than did any other institution for any other case. The Commission's attention to the Yanukovych-Tymoshenko crisis surpassed the democratic discourse it devoted to the orange revolution.
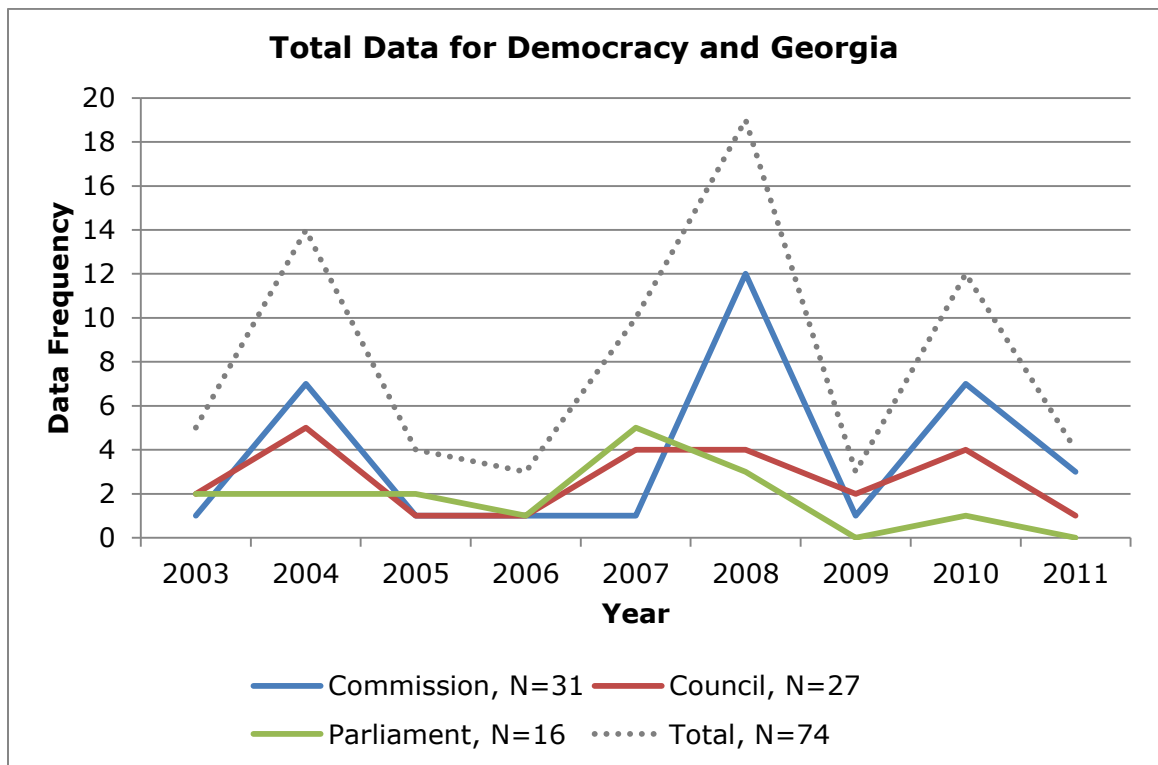
Figure 15: Total Data for Georgia

In the case of Ukraine, the Council emphasized elections most of all, but also the media, and Western norms of democracy. The spike in democratic discourse at the time of the orange revolution demonstrated its focus on the promises of the transition. After the orange revolution, the Council never devoted as much democratic

discourse to Ukraine again. Finally, the Parliament maintained a

holistic view of democracy in Ukraine. There was a noticeable spike in

democratic discourse in 2007, a year of significant discourse among

Ukraine's legislators and between the president and the parliament.

The institutional crisis in Ukraine received more attention from the EU

Parliament than the orange revolution, the human rights crisis of

Tymoshenko's imprisonment, or any election. [See Figure 16]
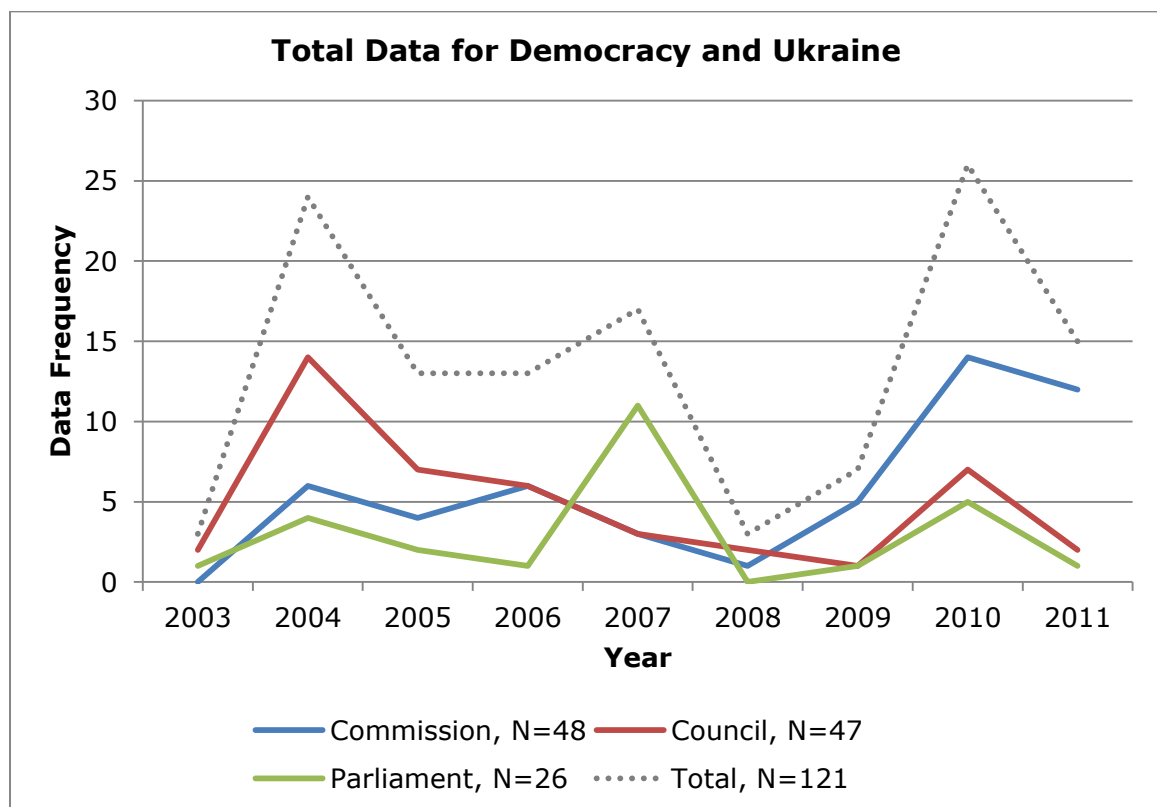
Figure 16: Total Data for Ukraine

In the case of Kyrgyzstan, the case which garnered the least

democratic discourse by any institution, the institutions focused on

basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Commission's data

spiked in 2010, the year of the second revolution; the Commission

addressed democracy in Kyrgyzstan more than the other institutions.

The Council and the Parliament addressed Kyrgyzstan directly less

frequently, and they tended to discuss Central Asia as a region more

broadly than Kyrgyzstan as an individual state and context. [See

Figure 17]

Figure 17: Total Data for Kyrgyzstan

5.5 Conclusion

Each of the three major EU institutions demonstrated different patterns of democratic discourse in the data (see Table 5). The Commission demonstrated emphases of rule of law and elections, as well as basic rights and freedoms. The Commission was most sensitive to political crises, as it was the institution with the most discernible spikes in each case study. The Council emphasized elections, and it otherwise adopted discourse of lofty principles, norms, and ideals. The Parliament adopted a more holistic perspective of de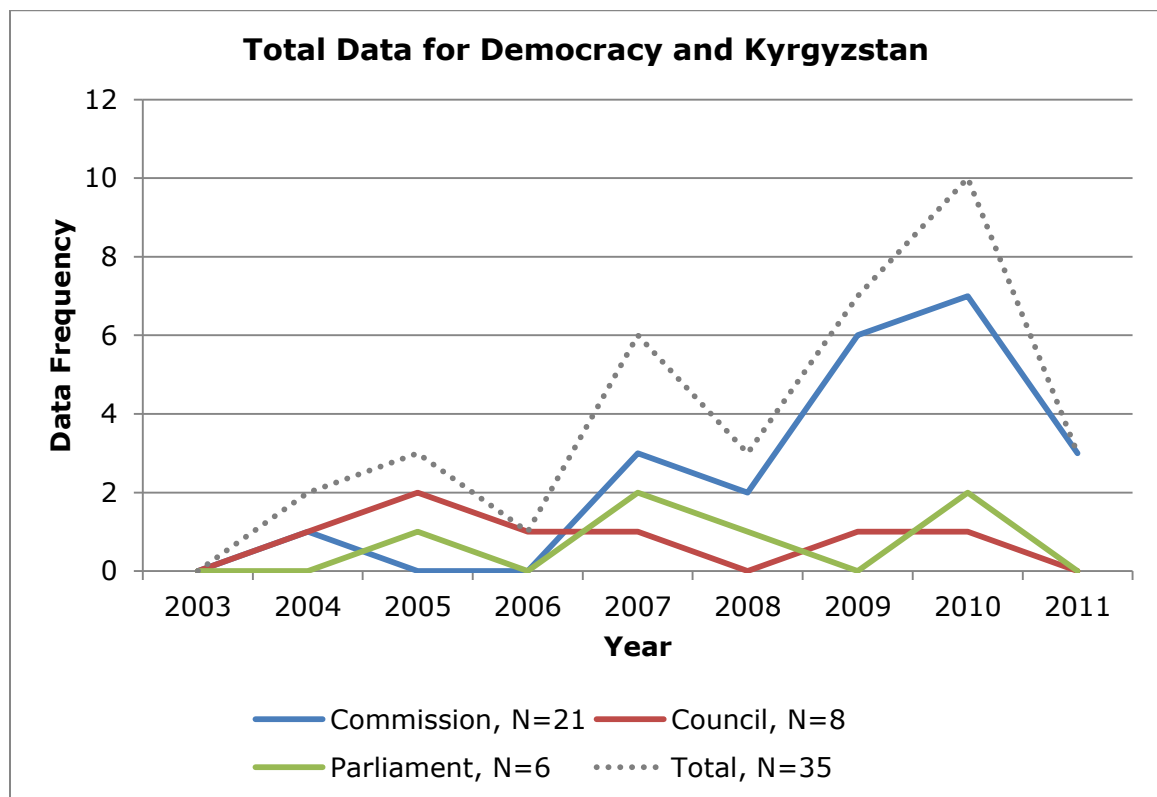mocracy, one in which elections and rule of law were but pieces of a larger democratic puzzle. The Parliament was more critical of not only the actors and institutions within the case studies, but also of its peer European institutions.

Table 5: Patterns of Discourse

	Georgia	Ukraine	Kyrgyzstan	Overall
Commission	Rule of Law, Institution Building, Elections	Elections, Rule of Law, Basic Rights	Basic Values and Fundamental Freedoms	Rule of Law, Elections
Council	Elections, Stability, Norms	Elections, Media	Norms	Elections, Norms
Parliament	Holistic and Accountability	Holistic and Accountability	Holistic and Accountability	Holistic and Accountability

The patterns identified in the table above will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: Explaining Convergence and Divergence

The data in the previous chapter reveal patterns that suggest the European Union's role as a cohesive global actor is challenged by its own institutional dynamics. This chapter explores the explanation for the varying patterns between institutions.

6.1   Constructing Democracy through Discourse

The Commission tended to emphasize rule of law and elections in its construction of democracy. The Commission described democracy in procedural terms that valued stability and order. Elections were the venue for these values, but rule of law was the critical enabling factor for democracy.

The Council emphasized elections above all else, while it adopted discourse of lofty principles, norms, and ideals in between. It constructed democracy in minimalist and procedural terms that distinctly valued critical elections as tests of democracy.

Finally, the Parliament adopted a holistic perspective of democracy, and it did so very critically of decision-makers both within the target country and within the EU. Elections and rule of law were

not independently paramount but rather elements of a larger construction that included everything from substantive elements to procedural factors.

The three constructions of democracy therefore reveal different ways each institution judged democracy—different priorities and concerns. All three institutions valued the procedural facet of democracy, including elections, rule of law, and institutional accountability. However, the three institutions varied in the extent of the substantive sphere of democracy, like civil and political freedoms.

6.2   Explaining Convergence and Divergence

This research proposes that the following may explain the institutional dynamics observed in this research: the institutions of the EU have different stakes in foreign policy commitments and outcomes. Institutions with greater authority to act in foreign affairs, based on the powers granted to them in EU treaties, perceive greater stakes in decision-making. Institutional authority means an institution has the ability to demand and enforce (such as conditionality). If an institution enjoys such authority, it can exercise it either formally through public conditions or pre-conditions, or informally through recommendations and pressure rather than explicit prerequisites. Institutional stakes are

the vested interests of institutions regarding outcomes based on tangible losses for that particular institution.

This research hypothesized a negative relationship between institutional authority abroad and levels of democratic discourse. That is, the least powerful institutional actor of the EU, the Parliament, would have been most likely to use democratic discourse in reference to the non-member-states, because the limited impact of its discourse—due to lack of incentives and disincentives—allowed it to make bolder statements. The inverse was expected to hold as well, since greater institutional authority abroad leads to greater responsibility and accountability. If an institution has less authority in foreign affairs, then it faces fewer repercussions when using democratic discourse, as it will likely not be held accountable for the fulfillment of such norms in EU relationships with target states. These dynamics were observed in the democratic discourse, which were the outcomes that captured EU institutional dynamics in EU policy.

The reason why institutions with greater authority in foreign affairs perceive greater stakes relates to two measures, based on Levitsky and Way (2005), of perceived loss proposed earlier in the research. The first measure is whether there were competing issues on the institutional agenda. The second measure is the degree of economic, geopolitical, and social linkages to the case study.

Throughout the discourse, a competing interest for the Commission was the prospect of membership for the case study. This explains why the Commission was extremely cautious to link democratic reform to the possibility of membership in Ukraine most of all. The discourse also demonstrated a competing interest of stability along the periphery.

The Council, on the other hand, had competing interests at the national level. This was most evident in the limited CFSP policy areas, though most of the discourse fell outside the CFSP. The discourse by the Council demonstrated a "lowest-denominator" pattern which suggests that it allowed for such competing interests to be channeled at the national level, independent from the EU. The Parliament, however, did not have the authority to lead foreign policy, but it did have an interest in accruing greater institutional authority relative to the other institutions. This institutional stake was evident in the Parliament's intermittent calls for the Commission and the Council to pursue a particular type of policy or approach in the target country, such as conditionality.

The second measure of perceived loss, or stakes, was the linkage between the EU and the case study. This measure helps explain why discourse was highest across the institutions for Ukraine, second highest for Georgia, and lowest for Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan had the lowest linkages relative to the other case studies: it is far more

dependent economically, geopolitically, and socially to Russia than the West. Despite Georgia's yearning for deeper linkages with the West, the perceived loss of ties to Ukraine was more geopolitically consequential than Georgia, and as such may have prompted greater discourse.

Commission (Supranational)
- Most Authority Abroad
- Occasionally critical
- Emphasis on two elements of democracy
- Middle rate of democratic discourse
- Negative relationship between authority and discourse

Council (National)
- Select Authority Abroad
- Least critical
- Heavy emphasis on one element of democracy
- Lowest rate of democratic discourse
- Negative relationship between authority and discourse

Parliament (Subnational)
- Least Authority Abroad
- Most critical
- Most holistic construction of democracy
- Highest rate of democratic discourse
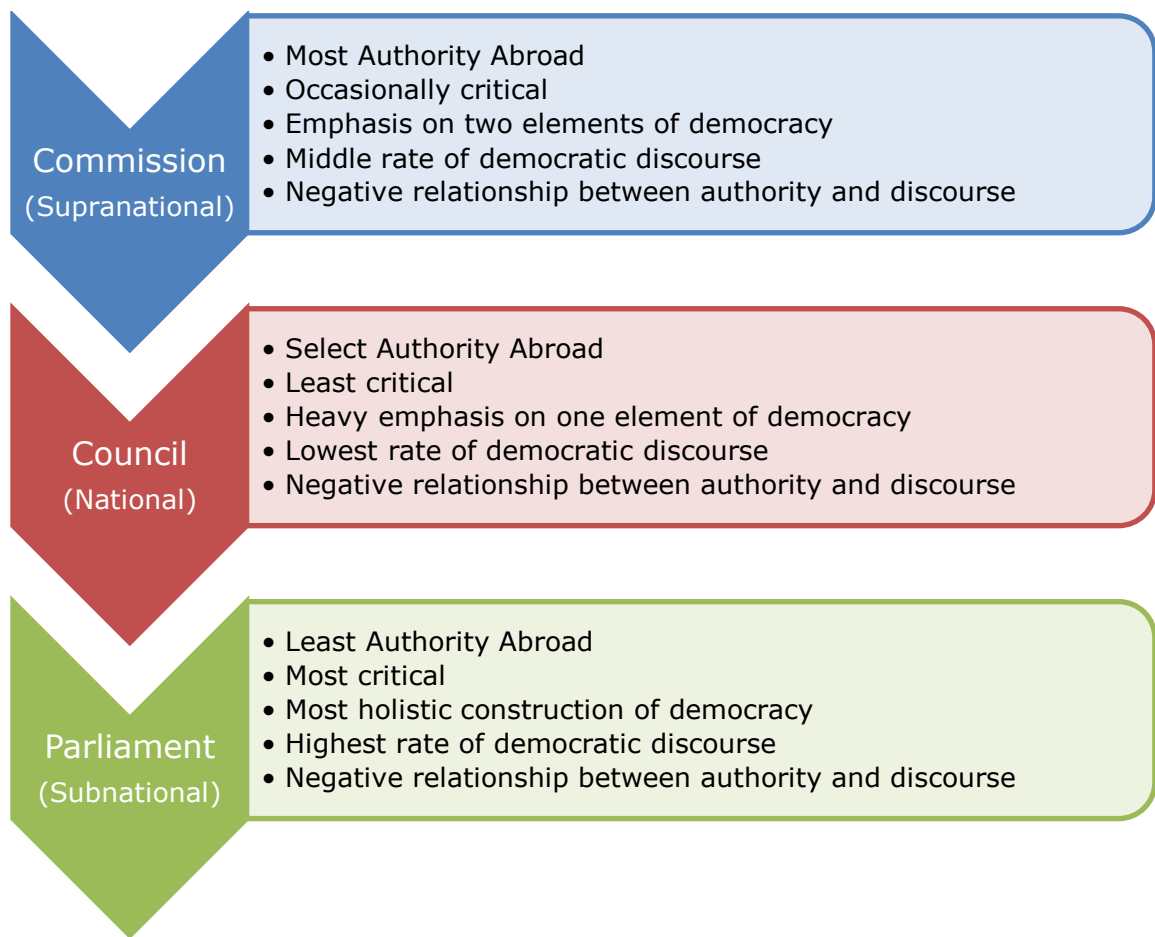- Negative relationship between authority and discourse

Figure 18: Institutional Authority and Democratic Discourse

Figure 18 demonstrates how institutional authority relates to the democratic discourse, based on the data. In the figure, I propose five

categories to illustrate the analysis. First is the level of institutional

authority, which is the ability to demand and enforce. This was

determined according to the role the institutions played in the foreign

affairs of the case studies. The Commission had the greatest authority,

because it was the EU's lead negotiator and foreign representative on

all but the most sensitive security issues. The Council had much less

breadth of authority in foreign affairs, except for very limited security

policy issues falling under the CFSP. The CFSP has been reserved for

the discretion of interstate deliberation through the Council because of

the sensitive nature of defense and security. Due to the limited scope

of the CFSP in this study, the Council was weaker than the

Commission in general foreign affairs.

The second indicator is how critical the institution was of

democracy in the case studies, qualitatively. This reflects the extent to

which the institution discussed the scope of challenges facing the case

studies in overall democratic processes when compared to the other

EU institutions. The third element summarizes the general pattern of

democratic discourse based on the conclusions from chapter 5. The

fourth factor is the rate of democratic discourse. This is the frequency

of codes that link "democracy" and the case study explicitly in the

coded dataset relative to the raw dataset. The last indicator is a direct

response to the hypothesized relationship between institutional

authority and rate of discourse. The assessment is whether a negative or positive relationship exists.

In each institution, there was a negative relationship between that particular institution's authority in matters of foreign affairs and in the level of democratic discourse it employed throughout the case studies. The institution with the least power abroad used the highest rate of democratic discourse. The reason for this consistency was the weight and gravity of democratic discourse—the more powerful institutions were more likely to be held accountable for discourse and thus had a greater stake in it.

The Commission was the institution with the greatest ability to exercise authority, relative to the other EU institutions, in its relations with the case studies. The primary way it could do this was through conditionality. Conditionality is the "exercise of policy instruments by one party to secure compliance and shape the actions of another party," and it can be formal or informal. The former can be identified when conditions or pre-conditions are publicly stated, whereas the latter manifests through recommendations or pressure rather than explicit prerequisites. In democratic discourse, the Commission utilized conditionality only informally. That is, the Commission did not establish explicit pre-conditions of democratic reform in exchange for incentives, as it did with so many former Soviet satellites seeking

accession. Instead, it expressed the standards of rule of law, elections, and stability. The rewards for progress in those sectors—in other words, conditionality—were implicit in the potential access to funds, resources, and markets.

The Council of the EU had select authority in foreign matters, restricted only to "high-level politics" of sensitive defense and security issues. To provide a sample of the kinds of policy reserved for the Council under the CFSP, matters such as sanctions, terrorism, proliferation, and arms trade, and places like Iran, Syria, Libya, Afghanistan and Iraq, Somalia, and Sudan were most common during the time period of this study.

The Council exercised its authority under CFSP in the case studies in the following occasions. It dealt with Georgia in the aftermath of the 2008 South Ossetia War, when it sent an EU Monitoring Mission to serve as peace monitors and observers in the conflict zones. There was no explicit democratic discourse in those documents, which were therefore not part of the dataset of this study. It also dealt with Georgia by sending a Brussels-based "Special Representative." The Special Representative's mission was to ensure stability and to monitor the conflict areas. At no point was there explicit democratic discourse in the context of the Special Representative to Georgia. The third and final instance of CFSP activity

in Georgia was an early rule of law mission, sent in 2004 under the CFSP's predecessor (the Common Foreign and Defense Policy) for one year to support and advise Georgian decision-makers. The sole reference to democracy was a brief description of another separate document, already included in the dataset for this research.

The CFSP was invoked only one time in Ukraine in 2005, when the Council supported Ukraine financially in its efforts to combat the accumulation of small arms and light weapons. It never invoked democratic discourse in that case. The Council dealt with Kyrgyzstan under the CFSP on one occasion, also sending a Special Representative. The Special Representative was assigned to the Central Asian region and based in Brussels. The primary mission was to promote good relations with the region, contribute to stability, address key threats, and "contribute to strengthening democracy, rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Central Asia," which was the sole reference to democracy. The CFSP documents on the Special Representative were very technical, covering aspects such as financing of the position, composition of the staff, in-country privileges and immunities, and the team's security. Otherwise, there was no discourse of democracy or of related substantive issues.

The Council did indeed enjoy power in narrow but significant policy areas, and it exercised authority in the case studies during the aforementioned instances. However, it had the lowest rate of democratic discourse relative to the other institutions and heavily emphasized elections when it did discuss democracy. Because the Council represents the interests of member-states, rather than the EU as a whole, the Council likely moderated its democratic discourse due to shared values of sovereignty. In other words, it does not behoove states—especially member-states with fragile democracies of their own—to be highly critical of neighboring states. Furthermore, individual member-states were not confined to the EU sphere and could still act independently through the foreign ministries of their own states. This allowed them to circumvent institutional chokepoints within the EU.

The Parliament was the least powerful in the foreign affairs arena, relative to the other institutions, yet it demonstrated high rates of democratic discourse. The Parliament does not have any authority in the CFSP, but it does retain some powers in other foreign policy areas. The Parliament must agree with the Council on decisions proposed by the Commission, or else they need to amend the proposal until an agreement is reached. In the scope of this research, this

process in the foreign affairs arena never failed to reach consensus, and amendments to such proposals were included in the dataset.

Though the Parliament did not have the power to leverage conditionality or to send special envoys, it was still very critical of democracy in the three case studies and of its fellow institutions. The Parliament does not represent the interests of the EU as a whole or the interests of the states; instead it represents the collective interests of EU citizens, who may share similar concerns of democracy in their own home states. The Parliament may have been exerting itself through discourse despite limited authority in an effort to demand greater powers in the future. This is consistent with the Parliament's incremental growth of powers throughout the years.

6.3   Conclusion

The data from the previous chapter demonstrated that patterns of democratic discourse existed in the three institutions of the EU. This chapter argued that each institution had stakes in foreign commitments and outcomes. The greater the stake, the less democratic discourse was used, indicating a negative relationship between institutional authority abroad and levels of democratic discourse. The institution would face repercussions commensurate with

its foreign powers when using democratic discourse, because it could

be held accountable for such discourse. The next chapter will conclude

with the implications of this research.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Implications

7.1   Concluding Comments

Since the Treaty of the European Union in 1993, the EU has embraced institutional reforms with the stated purpose of greater unity and cohesion abroad. The prospects have been dim, as the EU has struggled to project itself as a unitary actor in foreign matters. The political and economic transitions of Central and Eastern Europe following the collapse of communism provided it with an opportunity to assume a leading role across a wide range of reforms. Indeed, in matters of democracy, the EU seems to have maintained a consistent and common position.

The color revolutions that began with Georgia in 2003, spread to Ukraine in 2004, and reached Kyrgyzstan in 2005 could have been another opportunity for the EU to exert itself as a unitary actor in former Soviet space. At the time, the EU was still reeling from the recent decision to accept ten former Soviet satellites. Despite a consistent commitment to democracy in the former Soviet states, even if in rhetoric only, the EU struggled to remain the strong regional actor it was reputed to be elsewhere in Central Eastern Europe.

This research asked whether the institutions of the EU promote or hinder the EU's ability to act as a global unitary actor. It selected an issue area in which the EU would be "most likely", based on precedent, to display a common position: democratic discourse. It chose case studies that did not have immediate prospects of membership and were located in former Soviet space during a time "most likely" to be receptive to democratic discourse: Georgia, Ukraine, and the Kyrgyz Republic, all from 2003 to 2011. It used official institutional documents from the European Commission, the Council of the EU, and the European Parliament to identify patterns of discourse in the construction of democracy.

The analysis demonstrated that, across the institutions, democratic discourse was only consistent in the minimal procedural requirements, such as elections and rule of law, but the institutions diverged considerably in the extent to which democratic reform could be judged as such. It argued that a reason for these differences was a negative relationship between institutional authority in foreign policy making and rate of democratic discourse.

The findings indicate that the limits of the EU as a unitary actor are not to be found only in national-level divergences. Instead, the EU as a whole and its institutions represent competing interests, as well, which present potential challenges to unitary policy abroad.

The lack of institutional cohesiveness in normative affairs points to the limits of EU institutional consolidation. Nevertheless, this characteristic may actually serve as a safety valve for the EU by allowing competing interests to exist within the same organization. This safety valve is also a form of burden sharing within the EU. When consensus is a requirement, such as the limited sensitive policy areas of the CFSP, the EU is much more vulnerable to undermining divisions. This stems from the voting structure in CFSP versus non-CFSP policies: the policy process of the former requires unanimity among all member-states in most cases, while the latter requires a qualified majority.

When consensus is not a requirement, ambiguity can be beneficial to balance realpolitik with normative pressures. It also provides windows of opportunity for interest and identity formation. The Parliament highlights this dynamic well, because it is able to pursue greater institutional power throughout the years, essentially challenging the EU hierarchy itself. Challenges to the structure and hierarchy in EU foreign affairs can redistribute power among the institutions and thus shape future patterns of integration.

7.2   Implications for Defining Democracy

Though the European Union as a whole does not have an official definition of democracy, this research indicates that each of the three institutions conceptualize and embrace different definitions of democracy. Overall, the Commission, or the supranational representative, had the "middle of the road" approach; the Council, or the intergovernmental decision-maker, had the most minimalist approach; and the Parliament, or the subnational consultant, was the most critical of all. From their discourse, the following definitions can be deduced.

The Commission emphasized rule of law and elections, and it constructed democracy as a procedural phenomenon. Democracy for the Commission is a stable system with regular elections, and without gross violations of political, civil, and human rights. This is a mostly procedural definition, although the Commission does have an unstated threshold for substantive dimensions of democracy, most evident in discursive spikes during political crises. For democracy theory, the Commission's preference for stability is reminiscent of Huntingtonian political order (Huntington 1968), which posed the controversial argument that political order was a necessary precondition of democracy. As the institution entrusted to guard EU supranational

interests, this conceptualization of democracy indicates a concern for stability along the neighboring corridors of the EU.

The Council emphasized critical elections heavily. Democracy for the Council is a system with successful elections—as measured by third party NGOs. This reflects a minimalist definition of democracy similar to traditional democracy theory. Schumpeter (1942) argued that democracy ensures minimal procedures and structures are in place for elite competition, and voters choose among the competing elites. Adam Przeworski (1999, 23), who views democracy as simply a system in which rulers are elected, argues that additional criteria beyond minimalist definitions—while important for the quality of democracy and its prospects for survival—are not necessary for the basic definition itself (50). The Council's tendency to characterize democracy in basic minimalist terms reflects the intergovernmental nature of the institution. The Council comprises so many different members with very distinct political pasts—Western liberal societies, fascism, communism, and the various domestic political crises in between—that a "common denominator" definition of democracy may be the best one it can invoke.

The Parliament constructed democracy with substantive and procedural standards higher than the other institutions. This suggests the Parliament defines democracy as a complex web of indicators. The

Parliament's view of democracy is most similar to the post-1980s trend in the democracy literature, which was influenced by the transitions of southern Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe. The democratization theorists who looked at democracy as multifaceted in nature were critical of minimalist definitions. Furthermore, the Parliament's view of democracy is careful not to assume any reform is necessarily democratic. This perspective is like Levitsky and Way (2002), who argued that some transitions can lead to hybrid nondemocratic regimes. As the institution most representative of European citizens, this conceptualization of democracy may be indicative of popular perspectives regarding their own national democracies.

Nevertheless, the lack of an explicit definition of democracy in the EU may actually behoove the organization. It may reflect a concern over whether EU members themselves can meet democratic criteria, as many of them are fraught with scandals of their own. The ambiguity in the definition affords EU members some protection from being criticized over democracy domestically. In addition to member-states, the EU itself has also been subject to criticism for its lack of democratic credentials: only the Parliament is democratically elected, and the other institutions lack transparency in their decision-making

processes. Therefore, the lack of a definition also provides the EU itself some protection from similar criticism.

On the other hand, if democracy is defined too minimally, non-member-states could claim democracy prematurely, especially in places where membership is geographically possible. Such ambiguity in the definition allows for discretion over who to deem as democratic or not, especially when democracy is considered the most vital requirement for potential membership.

Though ambiguity is beneficial by balancing the pressures of pragmatism versus idealism, it also undermines the EU's ability to adopt a clear stance on basic human rights and political crises in many cases. The lack of a definition or common understanding of what democracy should mean leads the EU to adopt inconsistent rhetoric and action. In some instances of human rights violations or gross political setbacks, the EU's failure to embrace a consistent interpretation of democracy tarnishes its image as a normative actor in the world.

7.3   International Relations and Integration Revisited

The implications of this research also contribute to theoretical discussions in international relations regarding the value of

international institutions. It moved away from the neorealist assumption that states are inherently in conflict and thus cannot achieve meaningful cooperation through institutions unless it is to ensure survival and security. Based on the EU's experiences in Central and Eastern European reforms, the views inherent in regime theory were a useful premise instead. Regime theory argues that international regimes allow interdependent states to pursue objectives they could not realize on their own through policy coordination (Keohane 1984, 97).

Nevertheless, there are limits to a liberal institutionalist understanding of the EU due to the inter-institutional discord evident in discourse. These limits are best understood by the constructivist lens, because the interests of institutions and the interests of individual agency (whether the member-state or actors within the institution itself) comingle to produce a complex web of competing interests. While this may be a prominent feature of bureaucratic politics in general, it becomes a problem in practice when the EU tries to assert itself as a unitary actor and as it tries to promote democracy as a precondition for membership.

Another limit of liberal institutionalism best captured by constructivism is the assumption in the former that the primary role of institutions is as facilitator between states (Hyde Pierce 2004, 104). As

this research shows and constructivism supports, institutions themselves are essential to the process of interest- and identity-formation (104). This was apparent when parliamentarians called for the Commission to utilize conditionality mechanisms in Georgia, for example. This was an instance of one institution seeking to shape shared interests with another institution through discourse. Another example is the Parliament's gradually increasing role in foreign affairs, as evident in its growing power through treaties. This demonstrates that the Parliament, as an institution, is able to articulate its own interests independent of the traditional state.

This research therefore contributes to the constructivist school of thought, in which discourse, ideas, and norms shape international relations. By looking for inter-institutional dynamics through discourse, this study demonstrated that different contexts demonstrated different levels of discourse. For example, the Commission's sensitivity to political crises and the Council's sensitivity to elections generated different constructions of democratic norms. Such findings support the constructivist argument that changing contexts affect how norms are constituted.

By considering the authority of each institution to enforce norms, this research also contributes to constructivist arguments that assign agency to actors beyond the traditional state. For example, the

Commission is a supranational actor and institution, whose power of norms and discourse could be independent from the traditional state unit. While constituent member-states can still enjoy power through discourse, the Commission was the representative of the EU with the greatest ability to inject discourse in international negotiations and agreements.

Despite any apparent inefficiencies or trouble conjuring up unitary actorhood in the EU, the history of EU institutional integration suggests that a possible theoretical explanation for inter-institutional divergences may be a lag in institutional development. In this case, a lag or gap exists between formal institutional design—such as those aimed at pursuing a more unified voice in foreign affairs—and informal institutions, which are a set of informal constraints deeply rooted in cultural norms, standards, and beliefs within society (North 1990, 36-47). The EU may be very slowly transcending many centuries of Westphalian identity in key foreign policy sectors to build toward a unified voice based on effective institutions. It may simply take time for the 'informal' institutions within the EU, such as norms of interstate cooperation, to 'catch up' with the formal growth in supranational foreign policy power in the last twenty years.

7.4   States, Foreign Policy, and the EU as a Global Actor

The possibility that the EU is gradually breaking away from centuries of Westphalian identity among member-states presents the question of the state itself, and leads to another implication of this research. Within the EU, the state continues to be the primary element of the Council, but the traditional state does not necessarily dominate the other institutions. Instead, the case of the Parliament demonstrated how discourse can circumvent the state to shape norms. Furthermore it is perhaps flawed to assign stateness to the EU, which may be better understood as anything from a neo-medieval empire (Zielonka 2006) to a hybrid arrangement. This suggests that it may not be necessary, or even desirable, to seek a unified foreign policy, and that multiple levels of foreign policy can exist in a complex institutional arrangement like the EU.

The EU continues to pursue a unified front in foreign policy, and many scholars assign at least normative power to the EU in this arena. This research focused primarily on areas outside the Common Foreign and Security Policy to identify prospects for the EU as a global actor. It suggests that the institutions of the EU may not be conducive to exerting durable normative power or effective as norm exporter. Scholars who are critical of EU activities that appear to impose norms

on weaker states can expand their inquiry to ask the extent to which EU norms are inextricably linked to credible carrot-and-stick policies, and whether such normative power can exist in places lacking membership prospects altogether.

Although the EU as a whole and its constituent member-states can potentially act as unitary actors, this research demonstrated a dilemma arises when they attempt to do so at the same time. The competing interests meet at the institutional level, and this is precisely when gridlock is most likely to occur. The most exemplary instances of when member-state interests conflict with EU interests are the controversial topics of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, in which the EU as a whole must often defer to the state due to the intractability of agreement among voting member-states. However, in non-CFSP cases like those mostly addressed in this research, the competing interests shift away from a member-state versus EU dynamic, to a more inter-institutional dynamic, in which the member-state channels interests through the Council. This means that competing institutional interests may be more likely to arise in non-CFSP matters, and competing state interests more evident in CFSP issues.

The dynamics discussed in this research may reflect a new kind of arrangement with multiple foreign policies, identities, and

interests—that of different institutions and constituent member-states. This is most evident in policies outside the limited purview of the CFSP, such as bilateral, multilateral, humanitarian, and normative foreign affairs. The tension between pragmatic and normative policies may seem to undermine the EU, but it may actually be characteristic of a new supra "state" in the making, one that is not supposed to embody the cohesive foreign policy of traditional Westphalian nation-states. Whether this is a return to a neo-medieval arrangement, as some scholars have suggested, or some new conglomerate remains to be seen. The latter would be especially innovative, as it would be a pseudo-"state" with a single economy, yet multiple foreign policies, identities, and interests.

7.5   Additional Avenues for Future Research

This research presents several possibilities for future research in international relations and comparative politics. This study demonstrated that foreign policy or discourse thereof is likely based more on organizational self-interest than the circumstances of the foreign policy issue at hand. This is similar to Graham Allison's argument on bureaucratic politics as a model for institutional foreign-policy, except that the major role of individual players and

personalities within the institution was outside the scope of this study. Future research can explore how competing concerns outside foreign policy, such as access to resources, may have shaped discourse at the institutional level (Allison and Halperin 1972; Hyde-Pierce 2004).

Some additional avenues of study include unpacking each institution to determine patterns of discourse within. Because this research adopted the institution as the unit of analysis, questions remain of agents within institutions, such as those proposed by scholars like Graham Allison, and forums of discourse. Future research could look for personalities within institutions—such as the president of the Commission; the largest, most economically robust, and most political influential states within the Council; and the national origins of vocal parliamentarians. These actors may reveal further intricacies that underlie or even compel power in institutions. In addition to actors within institutions, the forum in which they project discourse could also be an avenue of research. It may be possible that a particular institution is more or less likely to invoke democratic discourse in official speeches rather than bilateral agreements, as one forum is more legally binding than the other.

Using the constructivist lens, additional studies can explore the existing discourse further by identifying exogenous shocks to the discourse, or how agents within the institutions shaped intersubjective

structures through rhetoric and persuasion (Widmaier and Park 2012). Democratic norms can be explored to identify how or whether they conformed to the "life cycle" of norms proposed by Finnemore and Sikkink (1998), in which norm entrepreneurs draw attention to the issue (emergence), norms reach a tipping point for diffusion and socialization (cascade), and the international community widely embraces the norms (internationalization). Researchers can do this by selecting normative discourse data, determining which norm entrepreneurs were active in the rhetoric, and identifying the longitudinal dimension of attitudes regarding the norms in question.

Other potential future research topics can expand the time period or case studies to include a longer period of institutional development or a wider range of political contexts. For example, research could compare the EU as an actor in the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe with new case studies to determine whether the institutional dynamics identified in this research were present in cases where the EU enjoyed more effective conditionality.

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Appendix A: Acronyms

AP   Action Plans

CFSP   Common Foreign and Security Policy

DG   Directorate General

EEAS   External Action Service

EMU   Economic and Monetary Union

ENP   European Neighborhood Policy

EU   European Union

EUMM   EU Monitoring Mission (in Georgia)

TEU   Treaty of the European Union

PCA   Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

PCC   Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (of the Parliament)

PSC   Political and Security Committee (of the Council)

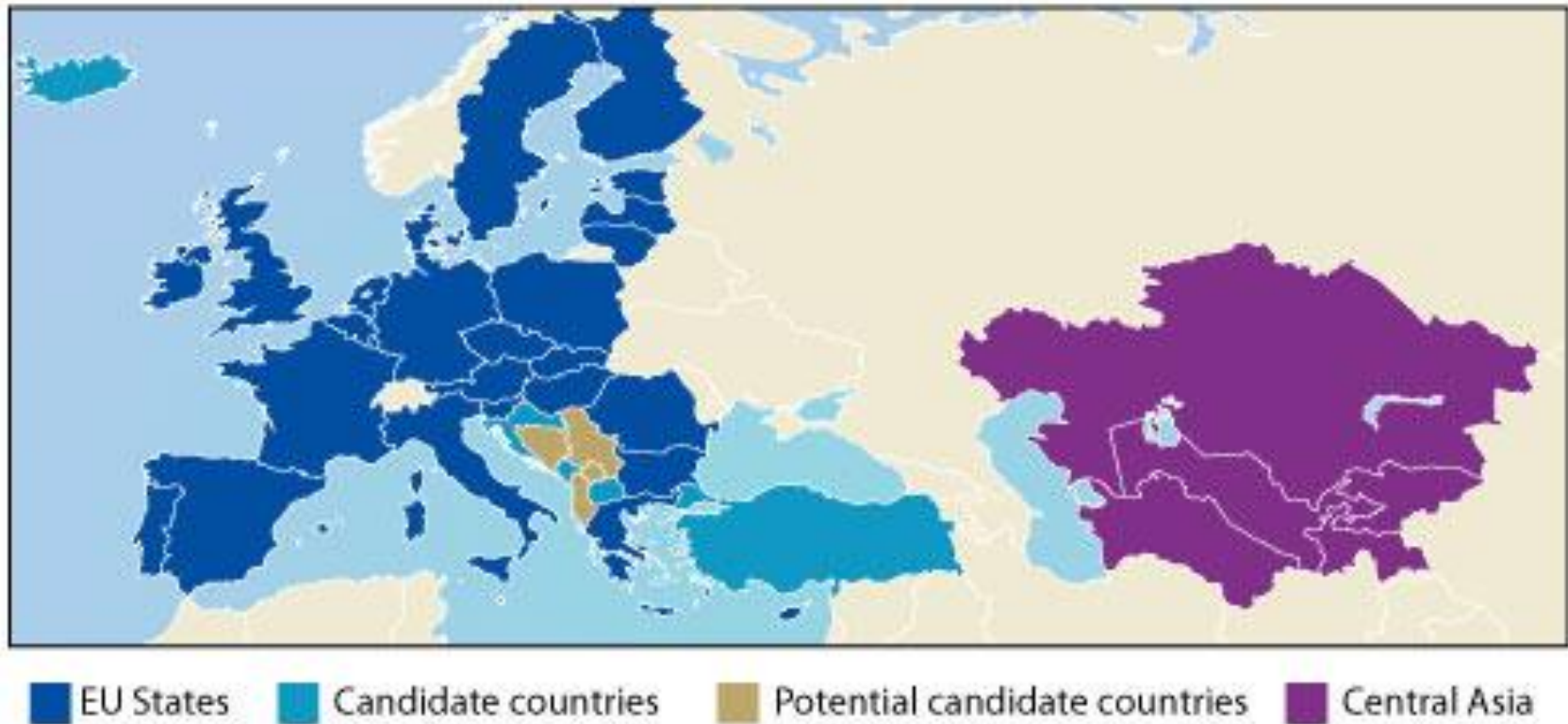SEA   Single European Act of 1986

Appendix B: Maps

Figure B-1: Map of EU and Neighborhood

Source: European Commission, 2013

Figure B-2: Map of Caucasus and Central Asia

Source: University of Texas Libraries, 2003