Master thesis in Global Studies

Longing for the global West

Georgian women's organisation representatives' perceptions of the global and the local

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Abstract

In academic discourses, the "globalisation process" is often described as multidimensional, non-unitary and erratic. Globally spread ideas, practices and values are commonly regarded as being re-interpreted and changed in local contexts. Early theories about globalisation being the same as homogenising "westernisation" have been criticised and many scholars claim that the world is not becoming more and more uniform to the extent that the non-western world looks more like the western world. Henrietta Moore suggests that all people, scholars and ordinary individuals, have implicit assumptions and presuppositions about what constitutes "the global" and "the local" and that these are concept-metaphors whose exact meaning cannot be specified in advance. How we perceive these concepts and the connection between them, informs the way we perceive globalisation. Adopting a people-oriented approach, I have analysed how a group of women's organisation representatives in Georgia perceive the concept-metaphors the global and the local. I have focused on exploring how the women perceive the connection between the nation's amplified contacts with the western world, combined with increasing involvement in the global neoliberal economy, and change of gender structures. This specific case has served as a lens through which I have analysed the interrelation between the global and the local. The data for my research has been collected through interviewing ten women's organisation representatives and their answers have been analysed with the help of theories about NGOisation, cultural feminism, rights-based approach and discursive market society etcetera. The interviewed women's valuing of western models, their gratefulness towards western donors and their ascribing of civil and political rights and gender equality as being ethic-historical pillars of "the West", indicate that the women are desiring homogenising westernisation. They understand the West as being the global in the sense of a "whole" or "holistic entity". The global neoliberal economy is perceived as an overarching but autonomous and unifying structure while Georgia is perceived as one part, demarcated by local "culture". The global is simultaneously viewed as a one-dimensional homogeneity and a multidimensional heterogeneity, composed by different local entities.

Acknowledgements

1. Introducing the research problem

Nowadays, a plurality of academic discourses and a vast amount of literature about "globalisation" describe the process as non-unitary and erratic, having different effects on nations and communities (Blackmore 2000, 468). But even though globalisation is not restricted to only being the accelerated integration of capital, production and markets the global economic interconnectedness is often emphasised as the main "force" of the multifaceted globalisation process (Moore 2004, 78). As Dirlik (2000, 8) puts it: *"...globalization is incomprehensible without reference to the global victory of capitalism, and pressure toward the globalization of "markets and democracy" are at the core of globalization..."* The idea of globalisation alleges that different "parts" (societies, cultures[1], individuals and mindsets etcetera) become a part of a larger "whole" which is frequently referred to as capitalism(s) (Moore 2004, 85). Academic discourses about globalisation are therefore often based upon assumptions of an immanent dominance of global economic structures over social, cultural and political structures.

The theory of westernisation serves as one example of a globalisation discourse that is built upon assumptions about neoliberal capitalism being a cultural, social and political dominant. Equalising globalisation to westernisation was common in the initial theoretical discourses about globalisation (Khondker 2000, 17-18). The westernisation concept has most often been used in a negative sense to explain how western societies[2], which are viewed as marked by a set of specific cultural traits, will come to strongly influence the non-western world (Heath 2004, 666). For example "materialism[3]" has been looked upon as a specifically "western value" and a constitutive of the capitalist economy (ibid). The spread of market economies

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[1] In the forthcoming text I will define culture as the beliefs, social forms, and material traits that a specific social group share. When I use scare quote marks around the term, the concept "culture" will
[2] Latouche (1995) analyses the definition of "the West". He states that nowadays the West is more an ideological concept than it is a geographical concept (Latouche 1995, 27). It can be understood, simply as the triangle of the northern hemisphere: Western Europe, Japan and United States. More often though the West is viewed as an entity, built upon a compound of certain economic, ethical, religious and cultural dimensions (ibid).
[3] Eckersley explains "materialism" in the following way *"...attaching importance or priority to money and possessions (and so broadly equate here with consumerism), and which underpins consumption-based economies"* (2005, 253).

and neoliberal capitalism has been considered to be a process where non-western societies come to adopt western values (ibid).

The reason why westernisation has been reckoned so objectionably has a lot to do with the concept's immanent power dimension. In other words, westernisation and related concepts like "cultural imperialism[4]" have become explanatory definitions of the consolidation process of the western world's economic and cultural domination. As Latouche explains it: *"The worldwide standardization of lifestyles, in its main features, is not a 'natural' process springing from a fusion of cultures and histories. It remains domination, with the attendant clashes of views, subjection, injustice and destruction"* (1995, 3).

This homogenising perspective of globalisation has been strongly criticised. Many theorists claim that globalisation is not the same as western cultural imperialism and the world is not becoming more and more uniform to the extent that the non-western world looks like the West (Khondker 2000, 20-21). Critics have considered westernisation, in the sense that it is adoption of western values generated through contact and emulation of the West, as a rather negligible force (Heat 2004, 667). Explaining the non-western world's resistance towards deculturation and acculturation is currently an important topic of concern. Disclaiming westernisation and instead emphasising the power of the local has been common within many different academic disciplines and fields.

One example of implicit critique of westernisation can be found within the field of feminist studies. Many contemporary feminist theorists state that "feminism" is having varied meanings in different political, cultural and historical contexts (Scott et al 1997, 1). Feminism is seen as a site of local, national and international political and cultural conflict and feminist theorists often claim that movements outside the western world are not just faithful copies of the movement in Western Europe and USA (Scott et al. 1997, 1-2). The heavily researched "clash" between western feminism and women in post-communist countries serves as an illustrative example for theorists who emphasise the non-westernisation of certain sets of

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[4] According to Tomlinson the concept "cultural imperialism" is a complex concept, which *"must be assembled out of its discourse"* (1991, 3). In relation to discourse about globalisation and westernisation, "cultural imperialism" has been defined as spreading of western values and habits, accompanied by transnational capitalism (Khondker 2000, 20; Tomlinson 1991, 3).

values (Einhorn and Sever 2003; Gal 1997; Guenther 2011; Ghodsee 2003; Sloat 2005; Watson 1997). After the fall of the socialist countries' closed trade regime, the former Soviet republics opened up their markets to different extent and became involved in the global capitalist economy. A westernisation perspective would suggest that the process of economic liberalisation must have provided also for the direct transfer of western sets of values. But many researchers have claimed that this was not the case, since postsocialist women instead rejected feminism and did not share the western feminists' perspective on issues related to gender identity and equality[5].

Like all discourses, globalisation discourses and theories are built upon presuppositions that are taken for granted. Theories of westernisation and "clash of feminism" are based on implicit assumptions, which when the theory is communicated seldom are made explicit. Instead these assumptive notions are handled by using certain concepts. Both the theorists who see globalisation mainly as a homogenising process and the ones who emphasise that local cultures resist or shape globalisation for their own purposes, have an inner image of what constitutes "the global" and "the local". Moore (2004) suggests that concepts like these two are so called "concept-metaphors"; terms that are used for making sense of data, experiences and processes but that cannot be empirically measured. These concepts orient people towards "areas of shared exchange" but their exact meaning cannot be specified in advance and they contain correlations to both imaginary constructs and concrete processes (Moore 2004, 73-74).

Concept-metaphors are not only used among practising academics but also shared by most people. Ordinary individuals also make use of the distinction between the global and the local. These concept-metaphors organise thoughts and actions and are a part of people's imagination and practice of everyday life (More 2004, 79-80). The fact that people live in an abstract relation to the global and the local makes it become important to interpret how people

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[5] Legacies of socialism, like a perspective among Central and Eastern European women that "class" rather than "gender" is framing inequality as well as focus on the collective rather than on the individual, are stated as some of the main reasons for the unsuccessfulness of westernisation of feminism (Guenther 2011, 869; Ghodsee 2004, 733). Added to this, it has been claimed that many postsocialist women also perceived western feminists' behaviour and theories about gender as implicitly universalising and imperialistic (Gal 1997, 31). The westernising features of western feminism values were in other words identified and rejected.

perceive these concepts if one wants to get a deeper understanding of how the local and the global are interconnected (More 2004, 79). In sum, to further develop theory about globalisation and to better understand both the homogenising and the differentiating processes, we need to turn attention to and study people's notions of the global and the local.

1.1   Purpose and aim

Adopting the above described people-oriented interpretive stance in relation to a specific case study, I aim to analyse how the relation between the global and the local is perceived by a particular group of people. In postsocialist Georgia, permeated by economic reformation and perpetually intensified contacts with Europe and USA, women's organisations are working to change patriarchal structures (Kvinna till Kvinna 2009). These organisations are deeply affected by and involved in the change of economic, political, cultural and social structures. In line with Moore's (2004) suggestion of interpreting how *people* perceive the concept-metaphors the global and the local, in order to get a deeper understanding of the interconnection between the two, I intend to explore the perceptions of a few of these women's organisation representatives. The particular focus of my research will be upon how the women perceive the connection between the nation's amplified contacts with the western world, combined with increasing involvement in the global neoliberal economy[6], and change of gender structures. The women's interpreted perceptions of this specific topic will serve as a lens through which I explore the interaction and interrelation between the global and the local. By doing this, I aim to add a dimension to the theoretical discourses about westernisation and the immanent connection between global economic structures and social, cultural and gender structures.

More specifically, I will analyse the interviewed women's attitudes and opinions about Georgia's intense existing and planned cooperation with western institutions and the international donor community. Furthermore, I will interpret their perceptions of the economic transition after the fall of Soviet Union and the nation's contemporary and future

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[6] Contemporary neoliberal economic globalisation is defined by Hettne as an institutionalisation of the market on a global scale (2009, 89-90). The process is built upon ideology of freeing the market from political and bureaucratic regulations and operates through the installing of a market-friendly political framework that facilitates capital accumulation and capital growth (Hettne 2009, 93). According to advocates for involvement in the global neoliberal economy, the most beneficial condition for welfare and development is a political order that fosters market forces and the free movement of economic production factors (Hettne 2009, 89).

involvement in the global neoliberal market economy. This will be put in relation to the women's opinions about how to reach gender equality and their thoughts about how gender structures have changed and are changing. Emphasis will be on exploring the women's perception of "the West" and the "global neoliberal economy" as well as on their perception of societal structures in Georgia[7].

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[7] See *Methodological and theoretical considerations* for further explanation about use of concept-metaphors.

2. Literature review

The connection between gender, western influence and changing economic structures has been a topic of concern in a bulk of literature dealing with the economic transitions in the postsocialist countries of Eastern and Central Europe (Ghodsee 2004, 730). The transitions between planned economy and market economy in the former Soviet republics provide clear-cut examples for studying the impact that economical change and global interconnections have for gender structures and especially for women's situation. Special focus has been directed towards the gendered impact that new market economy institutions have had for women after the collapse of socialism. Academic attention has also been drawn to the debatable "clash" between western feminist discourses and socialist perspectives on gender. The actual influx of local women's organisations and their approaches to prevent and alleviate the gendered problems of women, have also been academically analysed.

2.1 The gendered impact of the economic transitions

When describing how women, families and women's organisations in Poland deal with the transition, Bystydzienski (2005) states that the restructuring of the economy has had a gendered impact. Looking into topics like unemployment and gender inequality in families, she points out how the introduction of market economy in combination with existing gender structures, resulted in worsening the situation for women (Bystydzienski 2005, 241-242). Women, traditionally having the constructed role of being responsible for the domestic sphere, where hit by the reduction of social services and provisions which was a significant part of the transitions (ibid). Bystydzienski also claims how the new economy, with its focus on private ownership and encouragement of conditions for entrepreneurship, has not been favourable for women (2005, 247). Lacking access to capital and being socially regarded as not fit for doing business, women experience many problems in handling the new rules of the economy (ibid). Like Bystydzienski, Einhorn and Sever (2003) are when describing the ideological and material background to the mobilisation of women's NGOs in former socialist states, presenting the transitions as being disproportionally disadvantaging for women. They are pointing out how the transitions resulted in a substantially high unemployment rate among women (Einhorn and Sever 2003, 164). This, in turn, led to women being relegated to the domestic sphere and thereby being largely prevented from taking active part in society (ibid).

Bystydzienski and Einhorn and Sever are not simply providing facts of the situation for women in postsocialist nations, when presenting the transformations as having gendered outcomes. The exposition of women as "the losers" of the economic transitions is also a reproduction of a certain discourse of the connection between economy and gender. Ghodsee (2004) is in her examination of the connection between the contemplated establishment of feminism and capitalism in Eastern Europe, regarding this type of discourses as an indication of "cultural feminism". She explains cultural feminism as a hegemonic western feminism, which emphasises "global sisterhood" (2004, 728). Moreover, cultural feminism promotes the idea that women and men are essentially different, be it because of biological reasons or irreversible socialisation (ibid). By stressing women's vulnerability in neoliberal capitalism and positioning women as an inevitable group of victims of economic transformation, Ghodsee claims that one also fuels the constructed separation between women and men which is a distinctive part of cultural feminism (2004, 734).

2.2   Historical legacies of socialism

One frequently scrutinised angle of the connection between gender and western influence concerns the question why Eastern and Central European women have been reluctant against western world feminism and gender mainstreaming. This theme has often been approached in relation to failed materialisation of feminist movements in the post-transformation society (Einhorn and Sever 2003, 164) but also in relation to women's general attitudes towards new paths of economical "development".

Sloat (2005) is focusing on describing how negative perceptions of feminism are the reason why women's movements in Central and Eastern Europe have not been able to create a unified agenda after the transitions. She highlights how women's campaign for gender equality in postsocialist nations have been seen as superfluous because of persistent recognition of socialist rhetoric, which stated that socialism have already "provided" women's emancipation (Sloat 2005, 447). More precise, Sloat claims that postsocialist women have refused to adopt the conceptualisation of gender equality, due to "false" supposition that socialism already have achieved that (ibid). Furthermore, by citing Fábián (2002) Sloat (2005, 443) states that many women in postsocialist countries discard western feminism as it is seen

as anti-male. The women consider it to be more important to prioritise general economic development before gender equality (ibid).

Ghodsee further develops her thoughts about Central and Eastern European women's reluctance against western feminism in her above-mentioned study about cultural feminism, that according to her was "exported" to the postsocialist states during the 1990s (2004, 732). Cultural feminism, subsuming issues of class and "race" under primacy of gender oppression did not, according to Ghodsee, work out well in the postsocialist states (ibid). She points out that cultural feminism works within the capitalist structure of society meaning that the main aim of this type of ideology is to make the neoliberal economical system more favourable for women's unique needs (ibid). Ghodsee claims that Central and Eastern European women had during the socialist era been taught that class interest was the priority in society. On an ideological level "bourgeois feminists", being the socialist term for feminists aiming at politically and economically incorporate women in the capitalist system on equal terms with men, were during Soviet times seen as a tool for capitalism (Ghodsee 2004, 733). This perspective remained also during the transition period and therefore the introduction of cultural feminism in the postsocialist nations was met with scepticism (ibid).

2.3   Construction and approaches of women's organisations

When discussing the actual existence and growth of women's organisations in postsocialist nations, the influence of international development and donor community must be taken into consideration. Although the discussion above underlines scepticism towards political feminist movements, postsocialist nations have, due to foreign and domestic governments and international agencies aim of supporting and creating a civil society in these nations, undergone a boom of raising numbers of women's NGOs (Guenther 2011, 868).

Guenther (2011) is focusing on what she calls "NGOisation" of women's NGOs in Eastern Europe. In common with Ghodsee (2003; 2004), Sloat (2005) and Einhorn and Sever (2003) Guenther claims that ambivalence and sometimes hostility towards feminism were present in the postsocialist countries. But Guenther also emphasises that organisations working with improving women's status and decreasing gender inequality still developed (2011, 869). This happened due to great influence from international NGOs and other types of foreign donors. Guenther argues that international funding had a mixed blessing for local NGOs (2011, 872).

Local organisations benefitted financially but they also, either explicit or implicit, became pushed in certain directions to appease donors (ibid). This resulted in NGOisation.

NGOs that focus on a small subset of issues that women face and promote pragmatic response to these are, according to Guenther, a certain feature of NGOisation (2011, 874). Encouraged by funding patterns, NGOs focus on particular issues like enhancing women's employment and providing social services and are thereby also discouraged to promote a broad feminist agenda that seeks to alter broad based gender structures (ibid). Likewise, Guenther states that organising around for example women's employment has been aiming at making women successful under capitalism and preventing new discourses about alternatives to free-market approaches (2011, 881). NGOisation has in other words resulted in reinforcing status quo, when integrating gender equality concerns into existing institutions instead of trying to transform those institutions and challenge their fundamental logic (ibid).

2.4   Summarising discussion

The above-mentioned authors are all in different ways discussing the unique situation and approaches of women in postsocialist nations in relation to western influence, the economic transitions and the contemporary global neoliberal economy. The most important features in the author's studies are linked to the seemingly contradictory discourses about resistance towards western feminism and the actual influence that western world approaches have on women's movements in postsocialist nations. Legacies of socialism and defiance against "new" neoliberal economy are presented as reason why no broad-based feminist movement was created in Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of Soviet Union. On the other hand, the international donor community, which is facilitating for cultural feminism discourses, is viewed as reinforcing and setting the agenda for a new set of women's NGOs in post-Soviet nations.

All these mentioned authors are building their theories upon notions of the power of both the local and the global. Their departing point is that the global neoliberal economy is dominating cultural and social structures in society, even though some theorists emphasise that legacies of socialism is still important in local contexts. While these authors are adopting an explanatory and somehow structural approach when addressing questions concerning gender, economy and western influences in a postsocialist context, my aim is to explore people's perceptions.

Choosing the specific case of women's organisation representatives in Georgia, I want to add a perspective to this research field, making people's own thoughts and reflections the empirical basis for analyse. Moreover, I wish to contribute to thickening the research that is done on specifically women's organisations in Georgia since this is a scantily explored theme.

When analysing how women's organisation representatives in Georgia perceive the connection between the nation's amplified contacts with the western world and involvement in the global economy and changing gender structures, I intend to elaborate with these authors' ideas. Theory about legacies of socialism, cultural feminism and NGOisation will be used to analyse the women's attitudes, opinions and perceptions.

3. Background: Georgia

With the purpose of introducing the reader to the political, economic, cultural and social context that the women's organisation representatives live in, in this chapter I introduce Georgia's economic and political history, its present formal connections with the West as well as attitudes among the population. Added to this the dominating gender regimes[8] and the practices of women's organisation in Georgia is presented.

3.1 Georgia's integration with the western world – political strategies and economic integration

In postsocialist Georgia, the endeavour for integration into the global economy and increasing contacts with the western world is dominating in the society. Georgia has during the last decade reformed its economy in a neoliberal direction and "opened up" for integration into the market economy (Papava 2009, 201; Tatum 2009, 157). Since independence was declared in 1991, mass privatisation of state property has been on going (World Bank 2003) and the nation became a member of World Trade Organisation in 2000 (WTO 2012). The country has been transformed from being a rather closed society to become an open nation, strongly oriented towards entering the "world community" (Zuidema 2004). The aim is to be considered as a market democracy and to become increasingly integrated and embedded into the western institutions (Romero 2011, 8).

3.1.1 Contemporary economic and political history

During the first years after Georgia became independent, hyperinflation and a drastic decline of production occurred (Papava 2006, 658). In the mid-1990s the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) "assisted" Georgia with reforming the economy, resulting in a stable currency and control of inflation (Papava 2006, 659). But in 1999 national budget revenues started to lag behind and the country lost the permission to lend money and get funds. In 2003, half of the population lived under the national poverty line (Papava 2006, 660). This situation created tremendous discontent with the contemporary

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[8] Byron et al describe gender regimes in the following way: "the institutionalized practices and forms of social norms, rules, regulations, and principles which inscribe the roles that men and women can play in any given society, and which become so embedded in everyday life that they become seen as 'natural'" (2008, 15).

government among the population and the Rose Revolution[9] in November 2003 had huge support (Areshidze 2007, 2).

After the revolution the new president officially praised "western" democratic values and human rights (Papava 2006, 205). In reality though, he amended the constitution so that the president got more power while the parliament was weakened (Mitchell 2006, 672; Papava 2009, 200). But the president also managed to fight corruption within the police, the energy sector and in the education system (Papava 2009, 201). Large-scale de-privatisation was implemented and previously privatised state property was forcibly taken back by the government, privatised and sold "again" (Papava 2009, 203). The government succeeded in creating financial stability and overcoming the budget crisis, which resulted in a renewal of funds from IMF (Papava 2006, 662).

In 2007 economic growth was on a steady rise as a result of the rapid growth of the financial sector (Beridze 2009, 168). This progress was erupted by the war in 2008[10] and the global financial crises (NIP 2011, 6). Less foreign direct investment and tightening of bank credits made the domestic demand weaker. The international donor community, with IMF and WB as leading actors, has economically assisted Georgia to prevent the worst effects of the two

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[9] In November 2003 thousands of demonstrators lead by Mikheil Saakashvili, the leader for the opposition party United National Movement, stormed the parliament building and forced the sitting president Eduard Shevardnadze to resign (Areshidze 2007, 1; Tatum 2009, 156). Apart from the ruined economy, protesters demonstrated against Shevardnadze's attempt to hold the president title over an illegally elected parliament (Mitchell 2006, 669). The Rose Revolution named after the roses that the demonstrators carried, was bloodless and popular among the people (Areshidze 2007, 2). In 2004, Saakashvili was elected as president, winning 96 percent of the votes (BBC 2004).

[10] After Georgia's independence in 1991 civil war broke out in Georgia (von Uexküll 2011). Two regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia declared their independence from Georgia. The latter responded by sending government troops to the regions (ibid). A cease-fire agreement was made between Georgia and Abkhazia in 1994, but before that the war had resulted in thousands of death and 250 000 people had fled Abkhazia. In South Ossetia cease-fire agreement was made in 1992 (ibid). The conflicts were not solved but instead became "frozen". After Saakashvili became president he stated that he would put an end to the conflict and once and for all incorporate the regions into Georgia. Russia backed up the two seceding regions by giving their inhabitants Russian passports and economic support and increasing the size of its "peace-keeping" troops in the regions (Sadri and Burns 2010). In August 2008, a five days long armed war took place between Georgia and Russia, after the Georgian government had commanded its troops to attack the capital of South Ossetia (von Uexküll 2011). The Russian troops forced the Georgian military to go back and the Russians didn't stop until they were close to the Georgian capital. USA assisted Georgia by sending humanitarian help. After five days of war Georgia and Russia signed a cease-fire agreement. Many villages in South Ossetia were destroyed, thousands of people had to flee and around 600 civilians died (ibid).

crises (ibid). Real growth was stable in 2011 and foreign direct investments are increasing but the trade deficit is still large (European Commission 2012, 8).

Despite the country's economic progress, people have been discontent with the rule of president Saakashvili. Unemployment rates are high and around one fourth of the population is below the national poverty line (World Bank 2009). In 2007 anti-government mass demonstrations were held in the capital. The demonstrators showed their dissatisfaction with the widespread poverty and they accused Saakashvili for ruling through "authoritarian" leadership, prohibiting media to report freely and for corruption in his "own team" (NIP 2011, 5; Tatum 2009, 157; von Uexküll 2011). The police met the peaceful demonstrations with heavy violence and hundreds were hurt (von Uexküll 2011). Similar mass-protests have occurred yearly since 2007 (BBC 2012).

3.1.2 Western contacts

In recent years Georgia has deepened its relationship with the European Union (EU) (The Caucasus Research Resource Centers 2011, 3). A legal framework, which came into force in 1999, regulates EU-Georgian bilateral relations and the agreement promotes cooperation in fields of politics, trade, investment, economics, legislation and culture (European Union External Action). Georgia is also a member of the European Neighbourhood Policy[11] and as a follow-up to this membership an action plan was developed. The action plan is aimed at increasing economic integration and "significantly advance the approximation of Georgian legislation, norms and standards to those of the European Union" (European Union External Action). In all the priority areas of the programme, covering democratic development, trade and investment, sustainable social and economic development and peaceful conflict settlement, gender mainstreaming and women's rights are emphasised as crosscutting issues (NIP 2011). In late 2011 EU also launched negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area aimed at boosting Georgia's participation in the EU single market (Europa 2011).

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[11] The EU to avoid the gradual beginning of dividing lines between the EU and the neighbouring countries created the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In 2004 the EU proposed the policy for 16 of its neighbours, among them Georgia. The framework policy is aimed to go beyond existing relationships and offer political association and deeper economic integration as well as increased people-to-people contacts and mobility (European Commission 2010). The "European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument" is the main financial mechanism for financing the ENP (EU Neighbourhood Info Centre).

The relationship between Georgia and USA is strong. The two countries started their diplomatic relations after Georgia became independent and USA has provided large amounts of economic aid and political support (Sadri and Burns 2010, 128). Furthermore, Georgian troops participated in the US-led war in Iraq (ibid). USA saluted the Rose Revolution and Georgia received a large aid-package aimed at increasing foreign investment, building infrastructure and supporting the private sector (ibid). In more recent years, the U.S.-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership was initiated and signed by USA and Georgia (Romero 2011, 19). The charter is an official framework that states the common values and beliefs shared by the countries, as well as the prioritised actions that need to be undertaken to strengthen the collaboration between the nations. It includes themes like democracy, security, economic sustainability and cultural exchange. Bilateral working groups are working on enforcing the implementation of strategies related to these priority areas (U.S. Department of State 2010a).

3.1.3 Attitudes

The Georgian government's intense integration with EU and USA is not one of the main factors that have set off demonstrations in recent years and the political opposition does not detest it (Tatum 2009, 166). There is a rather general political consensus that Georgia's course is to stay tight with the West[12] (ibid). Among the population the attitudes towards USA and Europe have been described as generally positive. Areshidze for example states that during Georgia's fight for independence from the Soviet Union, there was a dominating rhetoric of Georgians being western and therefore had the right to live in an independent country (2007, 17). Mitchell claims that the people in Georgia see the West as the model for political development and that no other ideology competes with the western democratic model (2006, 671).

Surveys done by The Caucasus Research Resource Centers have shown that a large majority of Georgians want to be a part of EU and many believe that EU membership means that security and welfare features will increase (2011, 3-4). Likewise, the Center's surveys have shown that more and more Georgians want to strengthen international links with a range of partners, like international organisations (ibid). But anti-western and anti-American

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[12] In this context the way I use the concept refers to the specific countries in Europe and North America but also to the population's (and my own) implicit assumptions of the West as an entity filled with certain economic, ethical, political and cultural dimensions.

tendencies have also developed and are expressed among some segments of the Georgian population. The reason for this is USA and Europe's seemingly uncritical and unconditional support towards Saakashvili's way of ruling (Papava 2006, 658).

3.2   Gender regimes and declaratory policies

Strong informal institutions and practices are governing the relationship between men and women in Georgia. Gender roles in the present Georgian society are constantly changing but women's main responsibility is considered to be in the reproductive sphere, taking care of household work and children (Duban 2010, 24). Men on the other hand, are supposed to, even though this is far from the actual reality in many cases, work in the monetary economy and bring in finances to the family (ibid). Women therefore have limited access to the business sector and in politics, due to social norms about the woman being less suitable and capable of participating in the public sphere (Byron et al 2008, 16). In 2010, only 6 percent of the parliament members and 11 percent of local government members were women (Duban 2010, 17). Furthermore, men have greater access in the formal economy and they earn considerably more than women (Duban 2010, 26).

Byron et al (2008) describe three overlapping gender regimes that are present in contemporary Georgia. The "patriarchal regime" denotes, according to Byron et al, the historical patterns of dominance of men over women expressed in various ways in people's everyday life. The norm, which informs that women are not competent to participate in the public sphere and therefore only should be working within the reproductive sphere, is one historically based feature of the patriarchal regime (Byron et al 2008, 16). The "Soviet gender-regime" brought rhetoric about and formal implementation of women and men's equal participation in the educational sphere and working force and to some extent in the political sphere. This resulted in the forming of a subsection of "public" and "professional" women (ibid). Although in reality, roles and stereotypes were still cemented in the private sphere. As Byron et al suggest, the fact that the state provided services like childcare, could have even increased the norm of other reproductive tasks being "women's duties". And the man was continuously considered to be head of the family (ibid). The "post-Soviet" or "neoliberal" gender regime is constituted by a change of gender roles were women, working in foremost the informal economy, to an increasing extent in low-paid formal economy and within the civil society sector, have shouldered the role as breadwinners of the family (Byron et al 2008;

Jashi 2005). As stated above though, in today's Georgia stereotypes of the woman as belonging to the reproductive sphere and the man being primary breadwinner are dominating features of gender roles. Present gender roles are outcomes of all the mentioned gender regimes.

Since Georgia's independence, the nation has signed various formal declarations in favour of gender equality. Georgia joined the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1994 and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched a project of the "Women in Development" (WID) paradigm[13] in 1997 (Sabedashvili 2007, 18). There are no legal provisions or formal laws that discriminate between men and women and the Georgian constitution states that access to education and healthcare, as well as legal capacity to manage and inherit property, should be equal for both sexes (ibid). In 2010, a national Law on Gender Equality was adopted. But the political will to address gender inequality and discrimination and to "mainstream" concerns of gender in all the state's policy-making has been more declaratory than actual (Sabedashvili 2007, 20). Neither enough human nor financial resources have been dedicated for the implementation of the official regulations, which has resulted in policies remaining formal and not substantive.

Sexually gender based violence is a feature reproduced by as well as reproducing the gender regimes. This type of violence is a dominating problem in Georgia, although not fully acknowledged among the population since the "problem" is supposed to be kept within the family (Duban 2010, 28). In the majority of cases the victims are women and children.

3.3 Women's organisations

Women's organisations and NGOs started to develop in Georgia in the mid-1990s, parallel to Georgia's participation in the Beijing Conference[14] and UN Development Programme's launching of the Women Development programme (Sabedashvili 2007, 30). In 2007 there were around 200 registered women's NGOs in Georgia (ibid).

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[13] WID and its more recent follower "Gender and Development" (GAD) are two economically oriented development paradigms, first established by the western aid community, the international financial institutions and the UN during the 1970s (Ghodsee 2003).
[14] The Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing in 1995 (Sabedashvili 2007, 18).

The main activities of women's organisations in Georgia have been related to the economic and social fields, like providing welfare services and support to women (Sabedashvili 2007, 30). Nowadays though, there is an increasing number of NGOs that are focusing more directly on "empowering" women and on gender awareness (ibid). Many of these organisations seek to import western originated theories, concepts and tools but the term "feminism" is still not broadly accepted or used (Sabedashvili 2007). Women's organisations that work with raising awareness of gender equality are acknowledged in society for their work within special areas, like helping victims of domestic violence, but they are not considered as strong actors in the civil society in general (ibid).

Between the different Georgian women's organisations there is a rather competitive attitude, due to the constant search for financial support (Duban 2010, 17; Sabedashvili 2007, 33). Networks have been created and the term "cooperation" is often rhetorically used but in reality there is a rather limited will to collaborate (Nadaraia 2012).

4. Methodological and theoretical considerations

In this chapter I will present the research process by introducing the different methods I have used for collecting and analysing data as well as reflections over my role as a researcher and the delimitations and limitations in the research. This includes ethical considerations as well as discussions about the problems that I have come across when doing fieldwork and writing the report. Moreover, this chapter includes reflections about how the interpretation of the data has been done and how theory has been applied.

4.1 Case study

When seeking to analyse notions of the local and the global I will use a particular case study as a lens; the case of Georgian women's organisation representatives' perceptions of the connection between western world influence and involvement in the global economy and change of gender structures. While the large amount of details that is gathered in a case study are providing opportunity for deeper analyse, it is providing little basis for generalisations that are appropriate for other cases (Axline 1994, 15). My research is an explorative study aiming at creating an empirically based understanding of concept-metaphors in an actual context. It is an interpretative case study meaning that I relate previous research and existing theory to analyse the patterns I have found in the collected data (Albrektsson 2008, 14). In sum, the results in this study cannot be generalised to explain a larger context. Results can rather be seen as exemplifying knowledge possible to compare with other related studies.

4.2 Data collection and data analysis

Since I departure from the standpoint that people construct their own versions of reality and that the social world is made up by multiple subjective realities (Albrektsson 2008, 13), I have chosen to use a people-oriented approach for my study. My intention is to understand how people perceive certain concept-metaphors, namely the global and the local. Hence I chose to use qualitative semi-structured interviews as main method for data collection. During the implementation of my field study I was an intern at one women's organisation in Zugdidi, Georgia[15]. Therefore it must be mentioned that I also did continuous participant observations, which came to influence my choice of research problem and the themes in my interview guide.

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[15] I was an intern between mid-November 2011 and beginning of May 2012.

4.2.1 Participation observations

As an intern at organisation A[16] I took part in the organisation's daily work with providing free English and computer courses for women. My main tasks included being a co-facilitator for a "club" which the course-participants attended. In this club "awareness raising" trainings and workshops about gender equality and women's formal rights were held, aiming at increasing women's participation in the public sphere. I was also responsible for writing proposals, seeking funding from international donors for the organisation's new projects. Taking part in daily activities, events and interactions I sought to understand the explicit and tacit aspects of my colleagues working context, their approaches and ideological perspectives.

My aim with this kind of participation observation was to create an idea of what to focus on in my semi-structured interviews. As Dewalt and Dewalt (2002, 2) mention, participation observations are rarely the only technique used by researchers when doing fieldwork. The observations provided the context for choosing interviewees and construction of the interview guide (ibid). Even though I did not take detailed notes of specific scenes, I tried to "see as much as possible" in every situation. When I had started to narrow down my research problem, I took field notes and wrote down my reflections when for example having meetings with donors.

Being an intern at organisation A I got a tacit understanding for the women's organisation representatives' values. Since the main method for collecting data in this study is semi-structured interviews, I have not tried to describe or make my tacit knowledge and insights explicit enough to approach it analytically in the written result chapter. Still, I am sure that the apprehensions I gained during my participation in organisation A have had implicit impact and have shaped the way I interpret also the interview answers.

4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

A qualitative research method, like semi-structured interviews, is conventionally preferable when you want to address people's perception and meaning making (Bryman 2008, 394). Using this kind of interviews I could direct the focus of my interviewees into beforehand selected themes while at the same time giving them space to formulate their thoughts without being steered by closed pre-set questions. Moreover, the presence of suggested questions

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[16] See *Appendix 2* for further details about the organisation.

provides for the answers to stay within one broad "topic", thereby making it possible to gain deep knowledge of each interviewee but being able to compare and see patterns (Fridh 2012, 4).

The theoretical framework is one key influence to what the researcher will observe and record (Dewalt and Dewalt 2002, 68). In my research, theory and my experiences from participant observations are determinants for the broad themes that the interviews are focused on. Since I wrote the literature review before making the interview guide, I was informed by these theories when selecting themes for the interview guide[17].

I interviewed ten women from four different women's organisations[18] in the city Zugdidi in western Georgia[19]. The interviews were conducted between the 4th and 21st of April 2012. All except one took place in the offices of the four organisations. The interview with Sofi was conducted in her home, since she invited me to join her for dinner. During the interviews with Nino, Salome and Maia other colleagues sometimes made small comments upon my questions or the women's answers since we were sitting in open rooms. Ana and Elo were, upon their request, interviewed together. Every interview took between fifty minutes and one and a half hour depending on the women's varying talkativeness.

Since some interviewees do not speak or did not feel secure enough to be interviewed in English I used two translators when talking to five of the women. The fact that I used Ana as a translator when talking to Maka, Nino and Maia and Mariam as translator when interviewing Lali and Tamona must be reflected upon. Both Ana and Mariam had been interviewed before they assisted me as translators. There is therefore a risk that the translators' own views and perspectives impinge some of the translation. It is also possible that the translators have posed the questions in Georgian according to their own interpretations. To reduce these risks I talked through the questions thoroughly with my translators and emphasised the importance of translations being as close as possible to the interviewees' own versions.

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[17] See *Appendix 1*.
[18] The organisations are all defining themselves as "women's organisations" or "women's NGOs".
[19] See *Discussion of the empirical findings* and *Appendix 2* for further details about the interviewees, the organisations and the context.

Neither the interviewees nor I are native English speakers and to make the interview situation go as smooth as possible, I tried to utilise a language that was easy to comprehend. Sometimes the women's answers were difficult to understand and words were used improperly. To avoid misunderstandings but still preventing the occurrence of the women feeling uncomfortable, I used probing questions or interpreting questions[20] when I thought it was necessary.

I used the stated question in the interview guide as a point of departure but many times I had to explain further and give examples of what I meant with my questions. Even though the topic was not perceived as sensitive and many of the women are used to talk about gender issues and how they are working with improving the situation for women, they are not familiar with articulating and analysing the connection between changing gender structures, global economy and influences from the West. It was therefore important to let the women reflect upon the questions and to use follow-up, specifying and direct questions to encourage them to develop their answers (Kvale 1996).

With the consent of all interviewees I recorded the interviews and transcribed them verbatim. Many times during the interviews I experienced that the women eventually got "off topic" in descriptions and explanations and sometimes I thought that they slightly misunderstood some questions. When transcribing and reading through the transcriptions I discovered that also in the answers I had first perceived as irrelevant, many patterns could be seen which I could relate to my research questions

4.2.3 Sampling method

I applied a purposive sampling strategy that can be viewed as a type of snowball sampling (Creswell 2007). Since my purpose is to have a people-oriented approach when exploring the interaction between the concept-metaphors the global and the local, I had decided to focus on one particular group namely women's organisation representatives in Zugdidi, with different backgrounds and ages. Thus I started to interview the women that I worked with in

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[20] Kvale (1996, 133-135) describes *probing questions* as ways of pursue and probe the content in the answers. He describes *interpreting questions* as a way for the researcher to rephrase an answer, thereby asking if one has made the right interpretation of the answer (ibid).

organisation A. One gatekeeper, Mariam*,* then introduced me to women in all the other women's organisations in Zugdidi.

Having to rely on a gatekeeper can be problematic since this person then has the power to influence who will be available for interviews. Mariam suggested that I should interview the chairpersons for the organisations. When meeting these women I asked them if they in their turn could suggest other women that worked within their organisation. In that way I also got in contact with younger interviewees with different backgrounds and education. All persons that were asked to participate agreed.

Choosing to interview women's organisation representatives from Zugdidi[21] is a natural consequence of me being an intern in this city. If I instead would have chosen to interview representatives in for example the capital Tbilisi, I might have seen different tendencies in my empirical findings. Due to the limited time of my fieldwork and scope of the research I decided that I wanted to focus on the selected group of women in Zugdidi instead of for instance comparing their perceptions to organisation representatives in another city or to other groups of women in the population.

4.2.4 *Categorising*

To categorise fieldnotes and to explicitly describe how this is done is according to Sanjek important for the validity of ethnographic research (Sanjek 1990). I emphasise that categorising is also applicable for the validity of my qualitative interview methodology. Sanjek argues that the validity, assessed from "theoretical candor", involves that the reader should know both the specific theory that the data from fieldwork has generated and the larger significant theories that this relates to (1990, 396-397). I therefore have made categories out of my empirical data and when analysing I proceeded to do what Bryman (2008, 551-552) explains as "outlining connections" between the developed categories and theory and literature.

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[21] Zugdidi is the province-capital of the Samegrelo-Upper Svaneti region, located in west-Georgia and bordering to the breakaway province Abkhazia. The city was severely hurt by the war in the early 90s and more than 200 000 people who fled from Abkhazia passed the region. Zugdidi became the first city to host the people who fled and this put a heavy pressure on also the local population. The unemployment rate and poverty level are high. More than 40 000 internally displaced people still live in Zugdidi today (IDPVoices).

When reading through my transcripts I decided that the themes that I used for the interview guide was not suitable as overarching categories for analysing. Hence I created "new" categories[22] from the patterns and significant findings in my empirical data. Next step was to pick out pronouncements from the transcripts that could exemplify each category and put them into a worksheet. By doing this I could control that the categories I had chosen were actually valid. Moreover, when comparing all the statements in the same category I could distinguish certain aspects of the categories and create sub-categories as well as merging a few initial categories together.

4.2.5 *Interpretation of concept-metaphors and use of theory*

Kvale (1996) states that a researcher will interpret interviews from the certain perspective that she or he departures from. He argues that multiple questions can be posed to a "text" (interviews) and depending on what question you pose the text has different meaning. This is particularly important in this study since I use a specific case study when seeking to explore certain concept-metaphors. Other questions could have been posed to the collected case data and then the women's pronouncements could have been interpreted in a different way.

Likewise Kvale points out how the researchers theoretical conceptions will influence how one interprets interviews (1996, 206). As the analyst seeks to work out structures and relations of meaning that are not immediately apparent in a text, one often applies a theoretical stance (Kvale 1996, 201). In my research I analyse the empirical findings (the women's perceptions) by comparing these to theories from the literature review. The role of the literature review is therefore both to theoretically explain the "state of art" of the research field as well as constituting a theoretical framework for analysing results. In addition to the literature review, I use certain other theories (explicitly described in the discussion of the empirical findings) to further explore the women's notions of the interaction between the global and the local. These theories were applied after the categorisation was done and are therefore not the basis for a hypothesis or used as a holistic, overarching explanatory theory. Rather the different theories are used to deepen my analysis of the various categories.

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[22] The sub-chapters in the chapter *Discussion of the empirical findings* are representing the categories.

Concept-metaphors

Of great importance for my study is Moore's (2004) approach to concept-metaphors; she defines these as concepts used for making sense of phenomenon but which' meaning differs and cannot be specified in advance. Moore points out that the local and the global remain the initial concept-metaphor tropes but when trying to explain how they are interconnected and how the local and the global interact, scholars have developed complementary concept-metaphors (2004, 77-78). She mentions how common theoretical debates about "the effects of globalisation on the nation state" or attempts to "characterise the nature of contemporary or 'late' capitalism" can be viewed as "complementary" concept-metaphors (ibid).

In my study I explore how my interviewees perceive both the relationship between amplified contacts with the western world and gender structures as well as the connection between global neoliberal economy and gender structures. This case serves the same purpose as the theoretical examples of complementary concept-metaphors mentioned above. I use this case study to get an understanding of the women's imaginary notions of the interaction between the local and the global. My aim with doing this is to add a "people-dimension" to theoretical discourses about globalisation as westernisation and discourse about globalisation and dominance of economic structures. As a part of this I analyse the women's notions of the West and how they perceive the global neoliberal economy, making these the alternatives to the concept-metaphor the global. Their perceptions of societal structures (including gender structures and "culture") in Georgia will make up the alternative to the local.

4.3   Role of the researcher

When talking about the role of the researcher in qualitative studies Creswell emphasises the importance of acknowledging axiological assumptions (2007, 18). He claims that all researchers bring values to a study and that this will inevitably lead to biases. One must therefore recognise that the result analysis is as much a presentation of the researcher as of the interviewed subjects (ibid).

Addressing my role as an analyser, the fact that I have my own implicit presumptions and values about what constitutes the West and the global neoliberal economy must be acknowledged. These presumptions will colour my interpretations of how the women perceive these alternative concept-metaphors. Thus, the fact that I have picked this particular

case study to explore interaction between the local and the global implies that I have an own pre-set conceptualisation of the West and the global neoliberal economy as being constitutes of the global. Even though my axiological assumptions will always be present, I use theories from the literature review and additional theories to deepen my interpretation and decrease biases. But likewise, when selecting and applying additional theory to strengthen my discussion of the women's perceptions I inevitably also have to do an interpretation of this theory.

My personal characteristics have been one limitation for my research. I am Swedish and I do not share the same ethnic affiliation and cultural background as my Georgian interviewees. Naturally this has influenced my interpretation of the interviewees' perceptions. Additionally, me being a "westerner" might have made my interviewees more reluctant to express negative thoughts about the West and more eager to be positive. This limitation was to some extent extenuated by the fact that I during my internship got to know some of my interviewees and became more familiar with the social context as well as the context of the organisations.

5. The women's organisation representatives

To deal with some of the ethical issues that is an intrinsic part of interviewing, I have tried to apply confidentiality and informed consent for my interviewees. In line with Kvale's (1996, 112 ff) ethical guidelines, before interviewing the women I informed them about the purpose of my study, the fact that I would analyse their perceptions and who the potential readers of the written report could be. I also stated that their answers would be reported anonymously and that they at any point could withdraw from the study. All assured that it was not a problem to describe their background in my thesis. Although, to keep the women's basic confidentiality I have changed their names to other names commonly used in Georgia. The names of the organisations are replaced by *A, B, C* and *D*.

The ten interviewees, *Mariam, Ana, Elo, Tamona, Lali, Nino, Sofi, Maka, Maia* and *Salome*, have various professions within the organisations, ranging from chairpersons and founders to "trainers", project managers, accountant and administrators. The interviewees are all between 28 and 55 years old. They have university education and belong to the middle class. Elo, Ana, Salome and Sofi are in their late 20s, early 30s and they are all unmarried and live with their parents. All the older women, apart from the sisters Mariam and Lali who live together, are married and live with their husbands. Tamona, Nino and Sofi are originally from the breakaway-province Abkhazia and fled to Georgia during the war in early 1990s.

All know each other well on a personal as well as professional level. They regularly meet when participating in official meetings arranged by for example local self-government bodies, local offices of UN-organs or the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM)[23]. All women have participated in a great amount of trainings, courses and workshops focused on themes like gender equality, women's rights, domestic violence and women in peace-building processes. These events have been arranged by different international organisations, the UN and EU. The different women's organisations are not implementing any mutual projects or activities although being involved in the same various national and international gender

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[23] EUMM is the EU's unarmed civilian monitoring mission in Georgia. It has offices in different places in Georgia; among them one is placed in Zugdidi. EUMM's role is to monitor that the cease-fire agreement between Georgia and Russia is followed and to report to the EU about the situation.

networks. Moreover, the organisations are focused on the same overarching themes namely awareness raising of women's rights and gender equality, women's health, help for victims of domestic violence and enhancing women's capabilities and skills.

The interviewed women share the same opinions of what constitutes the contemporary gender regime in Zugdidi. They describe how structures are changing; women now take more space in all spheres of society and many women know their rights. But still the general norm is to consider the man to be the head of the family and entitled to dominate women. Often the interviewees refer to the "Soviet gender regime" when explaining why the situation looks like it does today. Although the socialist slogan was that men and women are equal, the interviewed women state that in reality women were taught to be obedient and dedicate their self to their husband and family. According to the interviewees, even though women most often are the actual breadwinners of the family today, the stereotype of the woman as having "her righteous place in the kitchen" still prevails and this causes problems.

More details about the women and the organisations are presented in Appendix 2.

6. Analysis of the empirical findings

In this chapter I present the collected data combined with an analysis of my findings. The interviewed women's organisation representatives' "answers" are analysed and compared to paralleled presented theory and theories from the literature review. The sub-chapters *Dependency relations and western paragons* and *Rights-based approach*, are structuring the answers to the broad research theme *Impacts of integration with the West. The economic transition's impact on changing gender roles, Economic globalisation - necessary and unavoidable* and *Economic growth and involving in the monetary economy – prerequisites for women's welfare and participation in the society* are sub-chapters that structure the research theme *Impacts of integration in the global economy*. All sub-chapters represent the categories made from the patterns and significant findings in my empirical data. Below, as an introduction to the first sub-chapters, I briefly reflect upon Georgia's official "integration" with the western world.

6.1 Impacts of integration with the West

"The global expansion of Europe, resulting in cultural clashes in the radically new context of civilizational encounters, was driven by the development of individual nation-states competing for power and wealth. Today civilizations or macro-cultures interact in the new context of globalization. The question often raised is whether this interaction will be in the form of a clash or dialogue" (Hettne 2009, 15).

The quote of Hettne lifts up the question of how interaction between cultures will proceed in the globalisation process. "Clash or dialogue" are the two contrasting scenarios he suggests. When power-dimensions are essentially differing between two parts, the term "integration" often becomes more applicable than the term interaction. Integration has the same meaning as incorporation while interaction more refers to reciprocal action. If interaction works, dialogue has most likely been the utilised method as well as the result. If interaction fails, clash is presumably the outcome. But if integration works or fails the result is, rather than simply dialogue or clash, a matter of functioning or non-functioning dependency of one part to another.

Georgia's official "interaction" with the western world can be illustrated by the opening remarks at the annual meeting for U.S. – Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership[24] in 2010 (U.S. Department of State 2010b). U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, who co-chaired the meeting, emphasised that USA and Georgia stand on a foundation of mutual interests and values and that USA is committed to make Georgia become a wealthy and secure member of the "western family of nations" (ibid). Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri met these complimentary comments by expressing Georgia's gratefulness to USA for giving financial support to the nation's infrastructure building. Furthermore, he praised USA for developing the educational area, leading to the population of Georgia adopting "western-type thinking" (ibid). The political message is clear; USA, being a symbol of the western world, is ready to integrate Georgia and the integration is wanted.

Looking at the interviewees' attitudes of connections with the West in combination with their interpretations of certain gender concepts and their opinions regarding how to improve gender equality, I will analyse the question of how the women perceive the connection between gender structures and the integration with the western world. How do they perceive the dependency as functioning or non-functioning? When doing this I will come across topics of how the West is seen as a model but also a superior, how the West is perceived as a holistic entity and how the integration with the West has brought "new" awareness of human rights.

6.1.1 Dependency relations and western paragons

The women's organisation representatives have all, although in different stages of their lives, experienced living in the "closed" socialist Georgia. Now they are instead living in a time where the Georgian political elite is aiming at copying western world models. Furthermore they are working in organisations, which are totally dependent upon aid money from western industrialised countries. In this chapter I explore the women's opinions about the relationship between Georgia and the West.

The West teaches and the local learn

Tamona and Lali, both having lived their first 25 years in the Soviet Union, are expressing a great credence for the influence of the western world by stressing how Georgia simply should follow the West as a role model. As a supporter of the sitting president, Lali expresses a great

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[24] See background-chapter.

confidence in Georgia's prospects of future economic and social development. She points at the fact that in comparison to living in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet times, when Georgia took the "European direction" people experienced that the social-economic and political spheres where better structured. Also Tamona states her reliance in copying the policies of more developed countries.

> "When you deal with a person and you communicate with a person and see and like her good manners and you can respect [her] knowledge, [her] education. Of course you try to take example from her or him and to follow /…/. And on the country level, of course it is quite acceptable for me when we take example from Europe /…/ from those countries that are more developed than we are. And when we try to model our policy on developed countries like Europe, European countries and America /…/ (Tamona)

By drawing parallels between personal interrelationship and Georgia's relationship to the "developed" Europe and America[25] the two latter are represented as the axiomatic examples to be followed. The West is here portrayed as the "wellbehaved" and sage role model. For the local Georgia the receipt for becoming developed, referring to both economical and societal development in general, is to simply copy the methods (formal and informal institutions) of the West. As well as avoiding describing what societal results the European and American models actually lead to, the women do not specify exactly what the policies and attitudes consist of and imply. It is clear though that the women's perception of what constitutes "development" is built upon one-dimensional and homogenous theory, which equalises the development with the institutions and structures of the "modern" western world (Hettne 2009, 11).

In terms of improving gender equality and changing gender structures, influences from the western world is often put in relation to women's increasing role in political decision making. Salome is pointing out how becoming a member of NATO[26] or other western originated coalitions can have a positive outcome for local gender equality.

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[25] Referring to North America, in particular USA.
[26] North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

"I saw the picture in the Internet, this was the picture of parliament members and they were almost 40 percent of women parliament members. And this country was the member of NATO. And I think this will change the level of the places for women in politics. /…/ Women will get more chance to be involved in politics, in economic, in business, in everything" (Salome).

Adopting western political structures, as well as values about gender equality being the same as more equal numbers of men and women in the political sphere, is regarded as a natural outcome also for Georgia. Once again, the western world is viewed as providing a model that can be copied if Georgia integrates with the West.

The women's organisation representatives also express credence towards how Georgia can learn from the West regarding gender equality in general. "Globalisation" equals the process which makes transfer of western values and information possible.

"I think that other countries will show us that it is important this gender and this equal /…/. I want Georgia to change and see other countries. I think that other countries and this kind of globalisation will help Georgia to change their opinions about this gender…" (Sofi).

What the quote states is that Georgia seems to lack information of how to change gender structures as well as lacking awareness of the importance of gender equality. Georgia is here perceived as the uninformed, which needs to open its senses and involve with the discerning West to be able to learn from it. The immanent opinion among the women is that Georgia is not sufficiently aware of how to improve and reach gender equality. The West on the other hand has the solution. The process of opening up for the western world, here defined as the equivalent of the term globalisation, is the way to learn from and letting the West teach Georgia.

Some of the interviewees are underlining that there are "good" traditions and customs in Georgia that should be kept and there is a fear that the globalisation force will also change these features. While it is important to change local gender structures the women do not want the Georgian "culture" to be destroyed.

"There is nothing bad in these changes towards the western civilisation. /…/. But what is the traditional, our culture, traditions, our food, our hospitability. /…/. This is Georgia, this is ours. I don't want to change these main things. I like the American democracy but not their traditions" (Maia)

The quote by Maia is a clear example of how the "local Georgia" often is described by the interviewees in terms of "culture" defined as the appreciation of historically developed traditions of food-making, music, folklore and festivities etcetera. This part of the local is indeed very precious for the women and it must be kept as it always has been.

The interviewees want Georgia to integrate with the West, because they associate integration with increasing possibilities to copy the western master models of structuring the political and economic spheres of society. It will also lead to changed social structures meaning that the people will adopt the values, norms and institutions, which the interviewed women ascribe to the West. But this does not mean that the interviewees want absolute global homogeneity. The part of the local that involves historical customs, artefacts and tangible elements must prevail.

Dependency of the attributes of donors

Funding is one crucial connection to the West that is of special concern for the women's organisation representatives. All the interviewed women are working for organisations, which are currently or have recently been implementing projects funded by aid money from Europe and North America[27]. By viewing the women's attitudes towards donors, their perception of the relation between local Georgia and the West can be analysed from the perspective of dependency.

The general perspective among the interviewed women regarding dependency of donors can be illustrated by the following quote.

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[27] Among the donors we find international organisations, originating from Europe or North America; *Conciliation Resources* (Great Britain), *Filia – die Frauenstiftung* (Germany), *Global Fund for Women* (USA), *Mamacash* (Netherlands) and *Kvinna till Kvinna* (Sweden). Intergovernmental organisations like the *International Organisation for Migration* (IOM), *United Nations Development Programme* (UNDP), *United Nations Refugee Agency* (UNHCR) and *United Nations Women* (previously UNIFEM), have previously funded the Georgian women's organisations.

"Without international support and international assistance not a single women organisation can develop their goals, their mission, their objectives…" (Mariam).

The women are expressing a unanimous opinion of donors being necessary for both the initiation and existence of women's organisation as well as for the actual operationalization of projects and activities. Focus is often put on the actual funding. Salome and Elo both stress how it is important to get funding for different projects to be able to solve the local problems in Georgia. Elo, having grown up in a family that was quite well off during Soviet times and whose father lost his job after the collapse, is mentioning how the government does not give the women's organisation any money. In a society that no longer provides social safety nets and employment for all and where the patriarchal structures hinder women to be active society members, the interviewed women see aid money as crucial since it is the only possible way of financing projects that can provide support and raise "awareness" among the people.

The financial support from donors is not all that matters though. When addressing the question of what donors have advised the organisations to focus on, the importance of learning from the international organisations is emphasised.

"…when the people who has huge experience with this stuff, working in women's organisation and working with women stuff, ok, women's issues. This is the hugest support from the other countries for us" (Ana)

"…of course nowhere in the world there is a perfect society, there are some problems of course but those international organisations who arrived in Georgia, they assisted to change the mentality of society" (Lali)

Donors' professional experience of working with strengthening women's position is appreciated as well as their ideological influence. The women express how donors are entitled to show, direct and even push Georgia to follow their ideology and the result will be a welcomed change of mentality among the society's members.

Although highlighting the inevitability of donors, the women's organisation representatives also recognise that experiences and knowledge of the local population need to be taken into consideration when donors are funding locally operated projects. Salome, who is working for organisation D and has to spend lots of effort into getting short-term project support, emphasises local knowledge.

> "But it is very difficult to get funding from international organisations because they don't know the needs of the local problems. The local woman needs specific help, they have specific needs and this is not near, this is not close to the international donors /…/" (Salome)

The women underline that insights into what specific gender inequality problems there are in Zugdidi as well as awareness and inherent understanding about social conventions and norms are of great importance for implementing projects. Furthermore, some of the women also acknowledge that the power hierarchy between aid receivers and donors sometimes leads to unversed international organisations giving inappropriate directions that local NGOs have to follow.

Looking at both the positive opinions concerning the dependency relationship between women's organisations and donors and the more problematizing perceptions, it is interesting to take into consideration the debate of a clash between western feminism and postsocialist women. The interviewed women's opinions regarding support of western donors are not representative for the theory of postsocialist women's reluctance of western feminism. Rather than rejecting theories about gender and other feminist ideas that was brought forward by aid agencies (Guenther 2004, 733-734) for being universalising and imperialistic (Gal 1997, 31), the Georgian women's organisation representatives are embracing these. Impeaching the occasionally insensitive relationship between donor and aid receiver and stressing local contextual knowledge, is not a questioning of the supremacy of western ideas of how to strengthen women's position and increase gender equality. Westernisation of feminist values seems to be wanted, not rejected.

Becoming a part of the western world

Using the western models and being taught by the West can be looked upon as an immanent wish to become a part of the West. Just like Clinton stated that Georgia should be helped by the USA to become a member of the "western family of nations" (U.S. Department of State 2010b), the interviewed women are expressing a desire and need for becoming a part of the western world.

> "So we, our government do everything to be more pro-western. They are involved in all treaties and in all global summits that is organised by the EU and by […] so we are doing everything and every effort [is] directed towards to be more globalised and one of the part of western countries" (Mariam)

It is clearly acknowledged by Mariam, who is supporting the sitting president, that today local Georgia needs to put serious endeavour into becoming a part of the West. Once again the meaning that the term globalisation is filled with, is strongly connected to the perception of the West. Involving in the globalisation process is seen as becoming a part of the western world. Lali also expresses that this desire to become a part of the West is nothing new, but more an inherent historical feature of local Georgia.

> "But it was fifteen republics in the Soviet Union but always Georgia and the Baltic countries were set out from the others because Georgia expressed their desire, we will find out more about the other world" (Lali)

This quote implicitly expresses Lali's perception of how the Georgian peoples' experiences from living in the former socialist system influenced their view of the West as the ultimate homogenous contrast to the Soviet Union.

Moore explains that the general idea of globalisation "invokes an idea of different parts becoming part of some larger whole or process" (2004, 85). As well as parts are viewed as linked to wholes or internal divisions are linked to holistic entities, the local is perceived as linked to the global (Moore 2004, 84). This reasoning can be used in relation to the alternative concept-metaphor the West. Taking into consideration the women's implicitly and explicitly expressed desire to become a member of the West, it appears like the West is perceived as the

homogenous whole while local Georgia is a part that can be included. Adding the women's variously expressed sense making of how Georgia should learn from the western world but also emphasise local contextual knowledge and importance of maintaining local "culture", it appears like the women view the West as able to penetrate the local with its different and unifying sets of values but without resulting in the dissolvent of the local. The global is perceived as both a homogeneity, a unified whole, as well as a heterogeneity, built by different local parts.

6.2   Rights-based approach

Seeking to explain the lack of success for the WID-paradigm[28] in postsocialist states, Ghodsee (2003) points at the fact that women in Central and Eastern Europe did not want to adopt the "basic needs-based approach" immanent in the paradigms. Motivating women in these countries to meet their "basic needs" by involving in microcredit schemes and encouraging entrepreneurship (help to self-help) did not work because of legacies of socialism. Ghodsee states:

> "Whereas in the Third World, "needs" were imported by "successful" development projects and microcredit and entrepreneurship helped women to meet those needs, in the socialist context these "needs" already existed (at least rhetorically) as the basic rights and entitlements of the citizen. In other words, the introduction of "modern" technologies and institutions in most communist countries (i.e., universal education, Western medicine and health care, modernized agriculture, heating, electricity, etc.) was intimately bound up with the idea that it was the state's responsibility to provide them without cost to society" (Ghodsee 2003, 27).

Today the "needs-based approach" seems to have faded in development thinking and instead the "rights-based approach" has become the cadre of UN and the approach is widely mentioned by international aid and development agencies (Kirkemann Boesen and Martin 2007). Hintjens states that since 2002, the UN has taken a positive pledge to mainstream the human rights-based approach into all its agencies and programmes and to prioritise gender equality and empowerment has become a way to "ensure" the commitment to human rights (2008, 1184).

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[28] See footnote number 13.

The difference between the needs-based approach and the rights-based approach can be explained by the former's focus on meeting physical needs, while the latter is framed as including a more holistic perspective of empowering people in terms of their civil, political, social, economic and cultural roles (Kirkemann Boesen and Martin 2007, 10). If considering the aim of this approach in relation to Ghodsee's claim about the postsocialist women's negative attitudes to the needs-based approach, one could anticipate that the rights-based approach would be an approach more in line with legacies of socialism.

By analysing the opinions and attitudes of the interviewed women's organisation representatives regarding awareness-raising of women's rights, gender equality and political participation, I intend to get a deeper understanding of how the women perceive local Georgia's integration with the West and the impact it has for changing gender structures.

The new turn

The interviewed women express a unified voice of the importance of acknowledging and improving human and (most important) women's rights. Emphasis is put on how western donors can make it possible for women's organisation to do their main task; protecting human rights and to making women aware of their rights. Rights are, rather than associated with socialism, regarded as the number one priority of the West and should therefore naturally be the focus for local Georgia.

> "This is the main support from [Swedish donor] and from other international [donors].
> That we have opportunities to go [to] the women and [make] them aware of their rights
> and to give them support and to feel confidence and to [make] them feel that they are the
> member of society" (Elo)

When taking a closer look at what kind of rights the women are emphasising, it becomes clear that civil and political rights are foregrounded. Political decision-making is constantly repeated as the most important and urgent method for improving women's situation. Gender inequality in the political sphere is stated as the most crucial problem. Thoughts about what defines gender equality and changing gender structures are expressed as being closely connected to a more equal amount of women and men in politics. The balance of numbers is

what constitutes equality. Lali, who has been a driving force in the establishment of organisation A's new "political" club, expresses her thoughts:

> "…we have very low representation of women in the governmental structures and if this problem is settled we consider that this gender balance would be also provided" (Lali)

Ghodsee (2003) has scrutinised other postsocialist countries regarding funding from the USA and Western Europe. She claims that western grants have been given to local NGOs in this region for promoting democracy. But according to Ghodsee, the female population has perceived advocacy campaigns negatively and she suggests that women might view not enrolling in politics as a political act in its own.

The interviewed women express no such considerations. For them, enrolling in politics is both the inevitable means to reach and the constitutive of gender equality. For example, middle-aged Nino, who is able to compare the present situation with socialist days, points out that it is the "globalisation process" that brought awareness to local Georgia. Integrating with the West is equalised to being empowered in terms of having strong political and civil human rights, since this set of rights is associated with the western world.

The quest for equal numbers of men and women in the political institutions in Georgia has to do with the perception of men and women having essentially different priorities, needs and characteristics. This becomes obvious when the interviewees further develop their thoughts about why women should participate to a larger extent in decision-making. Being the initiator of a local network that discusses the particular problems of women in the province, Maka has a strong belief in women's specific knowledge and experience.

> "…but the main thing is women must involve in decision-making processes. And mostly social life. The most women know the problems, what is going on in social life and they must be actively to make decisions /…/" (Maka)

The interviewed women claim that women have knowledge about what is needed "socially", like what kind of different social security and welfare interventions that must be provided in society, and this needs to be utilised by involving women in politics and policymaking. This

is a perspective that marries what WB states in its latest development report.

> "Resent findings suggest that women's rights and agency play a role seeing that those public investments are made. In a world where women care about different things from men (and women do appear to care for children more than men do), it may be that when women have more voice, they can drive institutional investments in a way that favors children. So, when the women have more rights in the political arena, does the nature of public investment change? Yes" (World Bank 2011, 68)

The interviewed women and the development report use the same rhetoric about how women and men differ in their thinking and that women are mostly concerned with "caring" about social issues. To view men and women as being basically different from each other has much in common with what Ghodsee (2004) and Alcoff (1988) call cultural feminist ideology. This type of feminism originates from the West and one of its key features is to invoke universalistic conceptions of "woman" in an essentialist way (Alcoff 1988, 413). Ghodsee claims that cultural feminism, promoting "global sisterhood" and subsuming issues of class and "race" under primacy of gender oppression, has been exported from the western world to Central and Eastern Europe since the collapse of socialism (2004, 732). The vector for exporting cultural feminism has been the western feminist and international women's organisations that "jumped on the aid bandwagon", referring to the flow of aid money that was transferred from the West to postsocialist nations after the collapse of Soviet Union (Ghodsee 2004, 730). The transfer of western cultural feminism values that had become mainstream in the West during the 1960s, became an intrinsic part when local eastern women's organisations received donor money (Ghodsee 2004, 731).

While Ghodsee is claiming that "a clash of feminisms" occurred when cultural feminism was introduced in postsocialist nations, this clash cannot be traced in the interviewed women's opinions. The cultural feminist feature of valuing women's special traits is something the interviewed women share with the great symbol for "global donors", namely WB. Western originated cultural feminism appears to as well as pervading WB, have influenced and been adopted by the women's organisation representatives in Zugdidi and no legacies of socialism are apparent.

The "enlightened" women's organisation representative

When accentuating the methods that are used when working with changing gender structures, the interviewees are pointing out the lack of awareness of women's rights and gender equality that still is common among the local population. Sofi, who has attended many courses arranged by international organisations on the topics of women's rights and peace building, often emphasises the importance of spreading awareness and knowledge.

> "These women cannot understand, what kind of rights do they have today and I think that it will be good if you know more about women's rights, about human rights. /…/…when they cannot understand what does it mean, women's rights or human rights /…/ they don't have progress and results are always negative" (Sofi)

This lack of awareness can be dealt with by providing information sharing and transfer of knowledge so that the women will be able to claim their rights. The interviewees are unanimous; NGOs should be in charge of this awareness raising.

> "Not only trainings for women will change this situation. We must provide information about the gender equality, not only for women but for men also. /…/. They will get information about the role, about gender equality" (Salome)

> "This is very good that some NGOs are having some trainings. Aware the women about their rights, their roles. This is western civilisation and European civilisation. /…/. They are teaching the women to like be [them]selves. Like to feel their rights /…/. (Maia)

In the quotes above we can see that the women, although working for the same organisation D, have different perspectives of which people the organisations should address. One possible explanation is that Salome is younger than her boss Maia and potentially more indoctrinated into the "newer" rhetorical use of the concept "gender" and the approach of involving men. Maia started organisation D twelve years ago with the aim of helping women practically. For her, putting focus on especially women is the main goal.

What the interviewees do, regardless if they refer to women beneficiaries[29] or the entire population, are to position themselves and other organisation representatives as being the "aware" ones. Describing women and men as unaware of human rights and the meaning of gender concepts is not only a simple act of characterising the problem context in Georgia. It is also to implicitly classify oneself in a contrasting position. While the beneficiaries need to be informed about their human rights, the women's organisations are there to help them with exactly this.

Spivak (2004) is questioning the role of human rights advocates, which are positions that the interviewed women can be said to have. She is stating that "human rights" are not limited to having or claiming rights (Spivak 2004, 523-524). The concept of human rights also invokes that someone must be dispensing rights; someone must be "righting the wrongs" that is done to people (ibid). An inherent assumption is that people who engage in making people aware of human rights and fight for human rights are the ones who are called to "do the right thing" for others (Cornell 2010, 105). Spivak means that human rights advocates are found all over the world (2004, 525). They are unified by exceeding a certain class line, which cuts through the North-South divide [30] (ibid). Furthermore, Spivak claims that these advocates, regardless if they are coming from the North or the South, are not sharing the same mindset as the people who are "below" the NGO-level and whom the advocates are protecting (2004, 527). This is partly the result of how the "enlightened" advocacy workers often are educated in western-style institutions and that their own knowledge about human rights is originated from western sources (ibid). The point Spivak wants to make is that as long as human rights advocacy is limited to consciousness raising (awareness) about the human-rights norm, the presupposition that "righting wrongs" is the manifest destiny of a certain group of people will go on prevailing. If the people who are receiving the help of rights-dispensers are regarded as

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[29] The women's organisation representatives, when describing the women that are participating in the various projects, commonly use the term. The term "rights-holders", regularly used within the discourse of rights-based approach (Kirkemann Boesen and Martin 2007), is rarely utilised.

[30] The "North-South" divide is a way of defining the structural socio-economic and political differences that prevail between regions in the world. Reuveny and Thompson (2007) explain it by referring to how during the Cold War the "predominant global axis" was thought to be the East (China, Soviet Union) -West (USA and Western Europe) divide. After the fall of Soviet Union, when some of the former socialist states joined the West (various forms of cooperation, for example joining the EU) or in contrast became considered "a developing nation", the East-West was to some extent exchanged by the "new" categorisation of North and South (Reuveny and Thompson 2007, 557).

"others" who need to be made aware of their "natural" human rights, a kind of Social Darwinism can be said to be operating within the human rights culture (Spivak 2004).

Analysing the interviewed women's perceptions about gender equality and women's rights in the light of Spivak's claims can be useful for understanding how the women view their own role in relation to the West, but also to the local beneficiaries. By defining the beneficiaries as unaware and as not understanding, the beneficiaries become "the others" from the women's organisation representatives themselves as well as "the others" of the West. As Cornell (2007, 105) explains it: "What many human rights advocates do not note however, is that their definition of the wrongs they are "righting" carries with it an ethically dangerous representation of those others for whom they seek to do the right thing". The wrongs that the women's organisation representatives are righting, with the help of the West, is simply the beneficiaries (and other people's) "unawareness" of what constitutes women's rights and gender equality. While the interviewed women themselves, thanks to contact with the western world (donors, personal relationships), have been kitted with the knowledge about what human rights and gender equality means, the local beneficiaries must be helped to become aware.

The interviewed women's suggested methods for raising awareness of human rights and gender equality, providing and giving information through various activities, are if adopting Spivak's perspective a way of teaching "to spell and memorise" in contrast to really understand and thereby be able to question (2004, 551). To solely inform about global women's rights conventions and resolutions, about the importance of gender equality and claiming your rights, is also leading "the others" to uncritically adopt and not question the "human rights model". What Spivak emphasises is that one must not forget that the contemporary human rights model, which the women's organisation representatives are the dispensers of, is not autonomous of the socio-economic and political context (2004, 530). This model is on the contrary formed and shaped by the global restructuring of economy and power formations (ibid) and this should also be taken into consideration when *educating* about human rights. The effective way of establishing a society where international and domestic-elite pressure on the state will not remain primary forever, as well as eliminating the sense that it is only the human rights advocates that are "called to do the right thing", must be

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done by raising these kind of questions among the population. In other words, to break the hierarchical trait inherent in the idea of human rights it must also be brought up and questioned.

Summarising the analysis about the interviewed women's view of their own role in relation to the local beneficiaries and to the West, it can be said that the women seem to identify themselves as the middle-hand between the West and the local beneficiaries. The women have already adopted the western values of "universal" human rights and the local beneficiaries can, after they have been informed, follow the same track. As a result of the humbleness for the West, the anticipated universality or naturalness of women's human rights and gender equality, expressed in global conventions and resolutions, is not questioned.

Returning back to the introducing discussion about the needs-based approach versus the rights-based approach, it can be stated that the interviewed women hardly praise human rights because of the legacies of socialism. The rhetorical rights-based approach in the socialist context was merely concerned with providing economic, social and cultural rights while the rhetorical rights-based approach, utilised by the UN and the international aid community, is claimed to have a more holistic perspective. In other words, the latter approach is stated as also including civil and political rights. Taking into consideration how the interviewed women seem to perceive the concept human rights, it is clear that their focus is put on civil and political rights. Women's participation in political-decision making is pointed out as the main constitutive of as well as the main method for achieving gender equality. Regardless of the push for a holistic perspective in the official rights-based approach, the interviewed women draw the strongest parallels between this approach, the western world and civil and political rights.

When using the alternative concept-metaphor the West as a part of exploring imaginary notions of the interaction between the local and the global, the women's adopting of western originated cultural feminism is noteworthy. A clash between values of postsocialist women's rights activists and western feminism, often referred to by scholars, is not appearing within the group of interviewed women. On the contrary, the women's organisation representatives

seem to share the values that constitute western cultural feminism. As discussed before, the values of the West are wanted so that local Georgia can develop.

Furthermore, notions of the interaction between the local and the global can be understood when analysing the interviewed women's perceptions of their beneficiaries. Positioning and identifying themselves as awareness-raisers (rights-dispensers) for the unknowing "others", the women end up in between the omniscient West and the unaware local. As a step of being incorporated into the West the local Georgia (here personified by the local beneficiaries) must be helped to get awareness of values (here exemplified by the perspective of human rights as universal) with the support of the middle-positioned women's organisation representatives.

6.3   Impacts of integration in the global economy

> "Globalisation was said to be the new form of development, which in practice meant integration in the global economy preceded by reforms" (Hettne 2009, 87).

According to Hettne the shift to a new dominant discourse within development theory, where integration in the global economy became the equivalent to development, was established around 1980 (2009, 85). He points out how after the fall of Soviet Union, the Washington Consensus[31] became a symbol for how "globalism" entered the development discourse (Hettne 2009, 91). In other words, neoliberal economic globalisation became the recipe for development. This basically meant to integrate national markets into the global neoliberal economy (Hettne 2009, 90).

In feminist and gender theory much has been written about how economic globalisation has had diverse effects on women (Acker 2004; Benería 2003 and Marchand and Runyan 2000). As an example, much research has been done about how nations integration in the global neoliberal economy has brought new job opportunities because of the establishment of global corporations in the South and how this have had both positive and negative effects for women. As Acker explains it:

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[31] The Washington Consensus is a term used to describe the market-driven capitalist development, promoted by WB, IMF and the U.S government, among many more. The consensus is associated with how a certain package of policies, called structural adjustment programs, has been implemented in many developing countries and former socialist countries since 1989 (Benería 2003, 3-4).

"Global changes also affect personal gender relations and identities. For some women, increased opportunity for paid employment may mean greater autonomy and equality in personal life, or avenues out of oppressive relationships. For others, these changes lead to less security, greater difficulties in taking care of themselves and their families, and, perhaps, the necessity to remain in unsupportive or violent relationships with men" (Acker 2004, 35).

Adopting a people-oriented interpretive stance I want to explore how the women's organisation representatives perceive the connection between integration to the global economy and changing gender structures. Using the global neoliberal economy as an alternative concept-metaphor I seek to understand the women's notions of the interaction between the local and the global. The women's perspective of the economic transition, establishing a background for integration into the global market, and its impact for gender roles will be discussed as well as their perceptions of Georgia's contemporary efforts to increase various economical and financial connections with foremost the West. Added to this, I will analyse the women's perceptions of the role that economic growth and women's participation in the monetary economy have for changing gender structures.

6.3.1 The economic transition's impact on changing gender roles

Bystydzienski's (2005) and Einhorn and Sever's (2003) research of the gendered impacts of the economic transitions in postsocialist nations shows that the situation for women generally worsened, due to cut-backs of social services and provisions. Unemployment among women was substantially high and the new focus on largescale private ownership and entrepreneurship, characteristic for neoliberal market economy, did not include women. Georgian economist Charita Jashi claim subscribes to this described scenario by pointing out how the economic transition in Georgia ousted more women than men from employment (2005, 80). Furthermore she states that many Georgian women had to adapt to the new market economy by taking low-paid jobs in the informal economy, but were unable to find jobs that corresponded to their professional qualifications (Jashi 2005, 82).

The scenario that the interviewed women paint correlates with the views of the above-mentioned authors to the extent that they also emphasise the economic hardship that the

women in Georgia had to live through. But what all the interviewees especially underline is how Georgian women became breadwinners during the transition while the men were "inefficient". Tamona, who had to flee during the war that occurred during the initial years of Georgia's economic transition, describes a rather dark picture of the situation. Although in common with Maia, she is also pointing at the change of gender roles that the transition resulted in.

> "And during the transition period when men became very inefficient, so much burden was laid to women. So gender roles changed, the war brought about the changing of the role, gender role. /…/. [Women had] to support their families /…/. " (Tamona)

> "The role has changed now. Men became on the second level. On the first level stand the women. And this means the role has changed you know. Men and women's roles are changing in our society" (Maia)

The "change of gender roles"-picture that the interviewees depict, stands somehow in contrast to Bystydzienski's and Einhorn and Sever's "victimising of women" that Ghodsee (2004) has criticised for being an expression of cultural feminism. Indeed though, the interviewed women's distinguishing between the woman as the responsible and efficient and the man as irresponsible and apathetic can be seen as an expression of cultural feminism as well. Women and men's traits are viewed as essentially different but instead of emphasising women's vulnerability the strong characteristics of women are praised. Even though using rhetoric about changed *gender* roles, essentially different characteristics of men and women are paradoxically viewed as the reason for the changed gender roles.

Although sharing the perspective of men and women handling the economic transition in Georgia in fundamentally different ways, the women's opinions about whether this is good or bad, are multiple. Just like Tamona, Nino has experienced fleeing from Abkhazia and her depiction is also rather negative. Mariam on the other hand has always had very strong anti-socialist opinions and expresses much more positive memories of the transition.

"In this transition period, it affected mostly on women. Because they forgot their main personality. They were doctors, teachers, like the lawyers. They went to the market to sell, for life" (Nino)

"…and they became entrepreneurs during this period, they became family providers, they became leader women and more active and since they happened to be very effective in the period, when they looked back they never wanted to come back to life they had before the transition period or before the war" (Mariam)

While Mariam is seeing the transition into the new socio-economic system of capitalism as an emancipating process for women, Nino view the changed roles for women during the period as not positive but necessary. Both the positive attitude to the connection between market economy and women's situation, as well as seeing women's new role as unavoidable, invoke a sense of how the transition was causing change of social structures (including gender structures). The changed roles for men and women are perceived as both the result of their different essential traits but also of the casual relationship between economic transition and changed social structures.

The women's perceptions of the economic transition from planned economy and socialism to market economy and capitalism are building the foundation for their perceptions of the connection between local Georgia and the global neoliberal economy. Their understanding of how the global economic system has an impact for changing social gender structures will inform their perceptions of Georgia's contemporary involvement in the global neoliberal economy.

6.3.2 Economic globalisation - necessary and unavoidable

"Development strategies must be tailored to the history and social reality of each country, transforming it without destroying the fundamental values on which it is based. I mention this point for its striking contrast with the homogenizing tendencies that have been represented by the Washington Consensus during the past two decades – in which market and capitalism, in particular, have been presented as the only path leading to world development and global economic interaction – and to "the end of history" (Benería 2003, 2).

Benería puts focus on how homogenising neoliberal policies have dominated the economy on a global scale since the fall of Soviet Union. Political forces have adopted this kind of policies because of the fact that involving in the global neoliberal market is considered as the only route to development. Using the "global neoliberal market" as an alternative concept-metaphor, I want to analyse the relationship between the women's organisation representatives' notions of local Georgia and their notions of the global.

The women's perceptions of the importance of connecting to the global economy seem to coincide with Benería's description of mainstream development theory, demonstrated through the Washington Consensus and adopted by various political forces around the world. They agree that Georgia can do nothing on its own and to reach development the nation must be a part of the global economy.

> "…because Georgia is not very rich country /…/ not very rich so that Georgia could do something by itself. Because it is not enough [to be] only close[d] and not export not import. I think it is important today to have more way /…/ and I think that globalisation will help today" (Sofi)

Sofi sees "globalisation" (here the term is used to describe the integration into the global neoliberal economy) as necessary just because of the fact that Georgia needs other nations' support. The dependency to other nations is explicitly declared and economic globalisation is seen as the process were the dependent local Georgia can reach development.

While some interviewees speak implicitly in terms of how the local Georgia can decide to "join" or not "join" global neoliberal economy and economic globalisation, some other interviewed women see it as not just necessary but unavoidable. Maia, Nino and Maka have all lived as adults in former socialist Georgia and are therefore able to compare between the two economical doctrines. They seem to view economic globalisation as a force of its own that is leaving no options for the local to decide whether to unite or not. Their image of the global is referring to how the power of nations and borders has and is diminishing.

"We are involved with it [the global neoliberal economy]. It is, you cannot stop. You cannot fight against this globalisation process, it is on-going in whole world" (Nino)

The quote of Benería in the introduction to this chapter states that development strategies must be custom-made in accordance to each country's specific needs, which differ because of differences in history and social reality. Ana and Maia, both expressing worries about Georgia's economic situation point at the fact that Georgia, being a post-Soviet state, was "economically raised" in a totally different way than for example USA. Maia mentions how although Georgia is slowly adapting, business culture for example is different in Georgia as compared to the West. These women question the one-dimensionality of capitalism. Legacies of socialism are emphasised as the reason why local Georgia has not yet succeeded sufficiently in their economic development. But in contrast to Benería, the women do not highlight that homogenising neoliberal policies are not suitable for all nations. Ana stresses that local Georgia's government must be responsible and help the population, but this implies enforcing the "right" type of capitalism. Although adding the importance of how different "locals" have different contexts to the perspective of the economic globalisation, Ana and Maia are still reproducing the necessity of global capitalism.

The interviewed women's emphasis on the necessity and unavoidability of the global neoliberal economy can be seen as expressions of what Polanyi would call the discourse of "market society" (Benería 2003, 68). Benería is using Polanyi's theories about the development of capitalism when she analyses the gendered effects of globalisation. She explains how Polanyi saw market economy as socially constructed, meaning that the spreading of self-regulating markets was not in any sense "natural" (Benería 2003, 66). Polanyi stressed the importance of governmental interventions, in the form of for example policies for strengthening private property as well as various regulations that created a new labouring class who were ready to work for low wages (ibid). But Polanyi also stressed how the market economy could only exist in a society where general norms and behaviour enable the market to function; the so called "market society" (Benería 2003, 68). Benería draws parallels from this theory to how expansion of markets in the last two decades was accompanied by a hegemonic discourse of how a free market is the best form for organising the economy, ruling out any other type of economic structure (2003,72).

The interviewed women's perceptions of the global neoliberal economy do comprise a discourse that supports Polanyi's theory. Their thoughts about involving in economic globalisation as *the* path to reaching development as well as their view of global neoliberal economy as unavoidable can be seen as results of and reproducers of a discursive market society. And through these discourses, assumptive notions of the naturalness and autonomy of the global neoliberal economy are iterated.

6.3.3 Economic growth and involving in the monetary economy – prerequisites for women's welfare and participation in the society

In relation to Polanyi's theory of how the evolving of capitalism led to a situation where the economic system became the determinant of social organisation and its goals and outcomes, Bernería (2003) accentuates how the extension and deepening of markets at the global level, influence gender (re)constructions and relations. She states "As women become direct participants in the market, their motives and aspirations will be shaped by the ways in which they respond to it, probably adopting patterns of behaviour traditionally observed more frequently among men" (Bernería 2003, 84). I will by analysing the women's organisation representatives' thoughts of economic growth and women's participation in the monetary economy, explore how they perceive the connection between Georgia's incorporation in the global neoliberal economy and the changing of gender structures.

Economic growth and changing gender norms

In the previous chapters, the interviewed women's thoughts about the correlation between economic development[32] and integration in the global neoliberal economy have been described. The sum of their thoughts is that being involved in the global market economy is a prerequisite for economic development and growth. In WB's latest development report, the importance of economic growth in relation to women's status and opportunities is emphasised.

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[32] On page 33 I describe "development" in the following way: "*…the women's perception of what constitutes "development" is built upon one-dimensional and homogenous theory, which equalises the development with the institutions and structures of the "modern" western world*" (Hettne 2009, 11).

"It has often been posited that cultural and social norms (or "informal institutions" in the Report's framework) "hold back" human capital investments. So, many policy efforts try to change the status quo by trying to nudge norms. The results here present an alternative route - expand economic opportunities, and human capital investments in girls will increase. Markets can affect private household decisions, even with slow-moving social norms" (World Bank 2011, 67)

Many of the interviewed women share the WB perspective. Mariam, who is an eager proponent of capitalism, talks about how economically poor women often are afraid of breaking free from their passive roles and domination by men because of being economically dependent on for example their husbands. Even though women became breadwinners during the economic transition, property almost always belongs to men and therefore the women are economically dependent upon men. With increasing general economic growth and opportunities, Mariam believes women will be able to get a job in the formal economy and then start thinking in a more "independent way". Tamona also focuses on the connection between economic growth, increasing job opportunities for women and the result: changed gender patterns. Some of the other interviewees are emphasising the relationship between economy and political rights.

"If women will like feel free from family, she is like prisoner at home from this not good economy in our country. It is a disbalance /…/. And if she wants to go into politics or some high position, she must feel free from economy. From family, she must feel free. To think about another issue. /…/. And it must increase, the economy. To involve more women in politics /…/." (Maka)

The interviewed women are seeing economical growth as both enabling new "practical" opportunities for women as well as making it possible for women to have new aspirations and abilities to break free from old traditions. Tamona and Salome emphasise how participation in the formal monetary economy and improved health care will increase women's activeness and wellbeing, while Mariam and Maka focus more on economic growth as a prerequisite for change of mentality and women's emancipation. But rather than challenging the perception of women as responsible for childcare and the reproductive economy, the interviewees see economic growth as a prospect for making this kind of responsibility easier to manage.

Some of the women's organisation representatives are expanding the perspective of economic growth as the simple causation of changing gender structures. They highlight the importance of working actively (also) with changing norms and stereotypes, not relying only upon the power of economic development. Sofi, Ana and Elo, all being engaged in "trainings" and making women beneficiaries at their organisations aware of women's rights and gender equality, are to different degree pointing out importance of "changing the mentality".

> "Maybe great would be both. Because I think that only change mentality it means nothing. /…/. We have a little bit changed mentality and maybe we need a little bit more but this economical development maybe is necessary for us. And that is why I wish both. A little bit change mentality and mostly development economical" (Elo)

> "Maybe it [economic development] will be good to make some working places /…/ and many unemployed people will find job /…/. It is good of course but I don't think that it will work good for this some old tradition to, how is it called, break this gender. And I think that it needs different work" (Sofi)

The young women express insights into how "changed traditions" are a prerequisite for changing gender structures. Gender equality must be achieved also through working directly with awareness raising and changing norms and stereotypes. But the inevitability of economical growth, achieved by increased foreign direct investments and integration in the global market, is not questioned in these quotes.

Although the interviewed women vary in their perspectives of what one should put most efforts in achieving, changing norms or increasing the economy, none of them are paying attention to the immanent relationship between the global neoliberal economy and gender structures. Some of the women indeed see economic growth as causing women's psychological emancipation and material opportunities, but they do not question the possibility that "informal institutions", social and cultural norms, are prerequisites for the existence of the global neoliberal economy. The possibility of how "Patriarchal forms, gender inequality, and women's oppression can be intrinsically embedded in different forms of capitalist institutions" (Benéria 2003, 15) is not queried. In other words, the women's

organisation representatives do not reflect upon that the reproduction of certain unequal gender structures might be a precondition for achieving economic growth. The global neoliberal economy is seen as autonomous from social structures, an interpretation that Butler (2010) claims is constantly produced through discursive and non-discursive practices and institutions. She states:

> "…the separation happens repeatedly, that it is part of an iterable structure, and that even now, when everyone turns their attention to what is called the 'economy', the interpretive procedure enacts and reenacts a selective process by which broader social and symbolic meanings are separated off from the economic thus producing the effect of the ostensible autonomy of the economy" (Butler 2010, 149).

While the local is perceived by the interviewed women as filled with old harmful institutions and gender structures that need to be eliminated or changed, the alternative concept-metaphor the global neoliberal economy is viewed as "free" and independent of social structures, a notion that is reproduced through the previously discussed discursive market society.

Participation in the monetary economy
For the interviewed Georgian women's organisation representatives, Georgia's incorporation in the global neoliberal economy is closely associated with increased job opportunities. Women's enhanced involvement in paid work, the so called monetary or formal economy, is seen as a positive outcome of economic globalisation. Ana who grew up in a context were many of her relatives lost their jobs after the fall of Soviet Union, has experienced how unemployment can change people.

> "And in society the problem is unemployment. This is the main. If the people [would be] employed they were more like lucky and more like open and love to each other and like spread the love /…/. Still we need the support and still we need the pushing from the other developed countries and developed regions" (Ana)

Bearing in mind the previously discussed rights-based approach were civil and political rights are in focus, the interviewed women's unified positive attitude to participation in the monetary economy is reflecting somehow a contrasting perspective of what is of most importance for

local Georgia. To be a part of the formal economy is by Ana seen as the ultimate route to happiness and the way to get to this stage is through engaging with the more developed actors in the global neoliberal economy.

Salome, Maia and Maka further highlight this perspective when they describe what constitutes gender equality and how to reach this. Making more women involved in entrepreneurship and starting business is emphasised by the women as a crucial way of reaching gender equality. These women have all been involved in helping socially vulnerable women in "practical" ways and they see that today women need to be educated so that they can also engage in the economy alongside men.

> "…the main problem is that women need promotion in their activities. They working only
> in one direction and all organisation, for example non-governmental organisations, state
> institutions, must give some opportunities, professional qualifications to get more chances
> to develop themselves and to get more income for their families" (Salome)

The interviewed women's expressed emphasis on women's strength in the economy and their focus on providing women with education and skills in the field of for example business-making, can be analysed in the light of NGOisation theory (Guenther 2011; Silliman 1999; Sloat 2005). The concept of NGOisation has been used when trying to explain the increased amount of NGOs that has been created in the East and South in the last two decades. Researchers have observed how "Neoliberal women's rights NGOs that adhere to or enhance international or government priorities have found it easier to attract funds than NGOs promoting alternative or radical agendas" (Silliman 1999, 29). Since focusing on women's practical needs was a safer path to get funds many women's organisations started to promote and strengthen women's conditions[33] under the existing socio-economic system instead of seeking to alter women's position and challenge power structures.

Returning back to the women's emphasis on women's rights, political decision-making participation and their rhetoric in general of improving gender equality, it seems like the aspirations of the women's organisation representatives is extending just improving women's

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[33] For example focusing on increasing women's resources, access to health care, credit, skills training and creating employment (Silliman 1999, 29).

"conditions" in terms of meeting needs. The interviewed women are intensively promoting that women need to involve in all spheres of the society on equal standings with men. It appears like their aim is to challenge the contemporary gender regime. But both their focus on women's political participation and enhancing women's participation in paid work and entrepreneurship (business) is in no way a challenge of the present global economic and political system. The women's emphasis on gender equality is built upon assumptions of how women should participate in the society in the same way and under similar conditions as men, because women *can* behave as men do (Benería 2003, 85). This correlates to Guenther's definition of the "status quo" feature of NGOisation (2011, 881). For her, promoting women's progress in capitalism and integrating gender equality concerns into existing institutions instead of questioning and seeking alternatives to capitalism[34] is to follow the status quo and not contributing to any major social and gender structure changes (ibid).

The relationship between the global neoliberal economy and changed gender structures in local Georgia seems to be regarded by the interviewed women as a "causal" one where economic growth and participation in the monetary economy are the intermediate factors. In other words, the neoliberal economy is creating prerequisites for transforming the social structures that constitute the local. The uncritical discourse that the interviewees wield about the importance of women's participation in paid labour and business-making for their wellbeing, a discourse that can be linked to the NGOisation concept, is iterating the assumption of the global economy as autonomous and independent from informal social institutions like gender relations.

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[34] Some of the interviewed women do express concerns about the downsides of the neoliberal economy. Maka states: "In Georgia we did so many changes in the economic structure but it must affect on the population. And it has not affected on us" (Maka). But none of the women are raising any concerns about the objectives of the global neoliberal economy like maximising of profits, the rational economic man as the desired norm and none are addressing the possibility of social inequality being an inherent outcome of the neoliberal economy.

7. Summary and Conclusion

In this last chapter, I make a summary of my interpretations and analysis of the women's organisation representatives' perceptions. Added to this, I make a few concluding reflections by returning back to the main aim of this study; to analyse how the global and the local and the relation between them are perceived by women's organisation representatives in Zugdidi.

7.1 Summary of empirical findings

In my research has shown that the alternative concept-metaphor the West is perceived among the women's organisation representatives as a provider of successful paragons for all spheres of society. The West is implementing the ideal models for everything from good governance to gender equality. And by dressing itself in the same suit, Georgia can and is currently heading in the same progressive direction. The women state that by adopting policies built on the western models but also learning from the West in other ways, Georgia (in this sense the local) can change and become a part of the global.

Western donors are perceived as both good teachers for the local but they are also crucial enablers. Without their money it will be impossible for the local women's organisations to pursue their activities and in that way implement western models and change local structures. On the other hand, some of the women's organisation representatives describe the importance of local knowledge and insights for implementation of the models. Georgia needs to change to become a member of the West, but one must know and take into consideration the specific context that prevails in the nation, consisting of both the particular problems in society and the social institutions. Moreover, the interviewees emphasise the importance of keeping and protecting the good aspects of the local, namely historical customs, artefacts and tangible "cultural" elements, from becoming swallowed by the generalised "western cultural traditions".

Adopting a rights-based approach is greatly emphasised by the women and their definition of this approach is to focus on civil and political rights. The interviewees associate and ascribe these kinds of rights with the West and therefore the women also state that with more integration with the western world and with the help of donors, Georgia can embrace these

rights values. The interviewed women emphasise particularly one type of western model or western value, namely women's participation in the political sphere. The interviewees see this as the best method for improving women's situation as well as an important constitutive of gender equality.

The women's organisation representatives' own role in the interaction between the local and the global can be interpreted when looking at how the women position themselves between their beneficiaries and the West. As well as the women regard intense relations with the West as a requirement for the Georgian population to adopt certain values, the wanted incorporation into the western world necessitates that the these values are truly embraced by the population. The interviewed women are the ones who are aware of the western ascribed values of gender equality and women's rights and they therefore have to inform the unaware local population in Georgia.

As a part of interpreting the interviewed women's perception of the alternative concept-metaphor global neoliberal economy, the interviewees' perspectives on Georgia's economic transition from socialist market economy to entrance into the global neoliberal economy have been analysed. Even though having different opinions about the transition, the women share a generalising perspective of the shift as being the catalyser for changed gender roles where women became the breadwinners of the family and passive men were sitting at home. In regards to Georgia's contemporary involvement in the global neoliberal economy, the women are expressing two perspective stands; involving in the global economy as the inevitable way to reach "development" and economic globalisation as unavoidable. Both of these stands are painting a picture of how the global economic structure is a "force of its own". From a Polanyian point of view, the women's opinions can be seen as constituting and reproducing a discursive market society where an assumptive notion of the global economy as natural and independent of other structures is reproduced.

Economic growth and participation in the formal economy, being the assumed outcome of involving in the global economy, are considered by the interviewees as both enabling new "practical" opportunities for women and creating the base for changed attitudes and opinions among the population, leading to changed norms and structures. Therefore, no efforts to

question and seek alternatives to the neoliberal economy are done. On the contrary, integrating gender equality concerns into existing institutions are of great importance for the interviewed women. No concerns are raised about the economic structure being the dominant of social, political and cultural structures or of how certain unequal gender structures might be embedded in the global economy. Rather the global neoliberal economy is seen as an independent and autonomous system.

Bearing in mind that the interviewed women are belonging to the middle-class and that they have intense cooperation with people from Western Europe and USA, due to their organisations being dependent on international funding, they are far away from representing the "common" Georgian woman. Furthermore, positioning themselves as the middle-hand between the West and the unaware Georgian population imply that their perceptions of the connections between changing gender structures and Georgia's integration with the West and in the global neoliberal economy, are most certainly differing from other Georgian men and women's perceptions. For future research it would be of great interest to focus on other groups of people in Zugdidi, Georgia and explore their opinions about these questions and interpret their perceptions of the interaction between the global and the local.

7.2   Conclusion

Departing from the standpoint that people construct their own versions of reality and that the social world is made up by multiple subjective realities that are formed by and are reproducing discourses and structures, I highlight the importance of a people-oriented approach. When theoretically trying to define what the process of globalisation "means", what it involves and what it will lead to, definitions of what constitutes the global and the local and the relation between these are always the implicit foundation. But since the global and the local are not measurable or tangible and are not commonly determined, people's perceptions of these concepts are what constitute them. Interpreting people's perception of these concept-metaphors should therefore be regarded as an essential requisite when theorising about globalisation.

Exploring how the women's organisation representatives make meaning of the connection between the global and the local, I return back to Moore's reasoning. Moore states that the concept-metaphor "the local" is generally perceived as linked to "the global" like "a part" is

part of and linked to a larger "whole". I suggest that when viewing the whole or "the holistic entity" as consisting of parts, this paradoxically also implies that one view the whole as having limits or borders or some overarching structure that unites it. If referring this idea to reasoning about how the local (the part) is perceived as linked to the global (the whole), also the global must be perceived as having some kind of unifying and defining structure that the local can be included in.

The interviewed women's experiences of living in the former socialist system and their explicit revulsion from this have influenced how they view the West as the ultimate contrast to Soviet Union. In making the West become the defined opposite, it is perceived as united by certain values (for example gender equality and universal civil and political human rights) and capitalist economy. I suggest that the interviewed women's perceptions of what unifies and constitutes the West, simoultaneously make up their definitions of the overarching structure that unifies and constitutes the global. Otherwise stated, the West is perceived as being the same as the global, a conclusion that is supported when taking into consideration how the interviewed women use the concept-metaphors the global, the West and the global economy[35] in such an arbitrary way.

That local interpretations of ideas, concepts and knowledge etcetera with origin elsewhere are always the actual case is today a common perspective among many scholars. But the interviewed women are not particularly viewing the interaction between the global and the local in this way. Rather the women seem to emphasise how global values should be transferred to Georgia through an incorporation of the local into the global. For most of the women it is not a matter of bringing in the content of the values they ascribe as being global/western and "re-interpret" these in the local context. It is more a matter of being a part of the global; being a part of the West and the global neoliberal economy and without conversion adopt the global/western values, structures and norms and the wealth that the inclusion in the global economy is assumed to bring.

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[35] Other terms like globalisation, western, American, European, capitalism and economic globalisation have also been used by the women. Most often I have regarded these terms as belonging within the concept-metaphors.

The women's valuing of western social, political and economical models, their gratefulness towards western donors and their ascribing of civil and political rights and gender equality as being the ethic-historical pillars of the West indicate that the women, quite contrary to the opinion of many westernisation theorists, are desiring globalisation in the sense of homogenising "westernisation" [36]. Going back to the debate about a clash of feminisms as an example of the power of the local, no traces of such a conflict are conveyed among the women. The valuing of women's special traits, a feature of western originated cultural feminism, as well as the highlighting of women's civil and political rights, are adopted by the interviewed women. Instead of showing any signs of rejecting a type of feminism that have been identified with the West, the interviewees seem to both share and want more of the values they ascribe as being western. Their logic of how Georgia's imitation and increasing contacts with the West will inevitably lead to change of local gender structures, norms and institutions also implies that they see westernisation as fully possible and presently on-going.

While the women regard the West as composed and united by certain values, the global neoliberal economy is perceived as autonomous from other structures and informal institutions. Like many globalisation scholars, the interviewees understand the economic structure as a main constitutive of the global and the global neoliberal economy is seen as a "force" that you need to be involved in. Furthermore the global economy is perceived as able to cause the prerequisites for changing social structures. But since the women, shown through their reproducing and iterating of a discursive market society, do not acknowledge that the global neoliberal economy's functioning is dependent upon certain social, political, cultural and gender structures, the economy is neither perceived as a direct dominant over these structures. According to my interpretation, the interviewed women perceive the concept-metaphor the West as "the global whole" while the global neoliberal economy is perceived as an overarching but autonomous unifying structure of the global.

Finally, I once again return to the idea of the global as the whole and the local as the part. I suggest that if the global is "built up" by parts this implies that also each part has "something" that unites it and is contrasting it from other parts. Taking into consideration the interviewed

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[36] Here my definition of westernisation goes in line with the theoretical definition of the concept, explained in the *Introducing the research problem* chapter.

women's opinions of how local "culture" should prevail, it appears like the women view this as the defining and delimiting features of the local. The global is simultaneously perceived as homogenous, united by structure of values and the global neoliberal economy, and heterogenic, built up by different demarcated local entities. However, what the interviewed women do not reflect upon though, is how the inclusion of more and more local parts would have an impact on and slightly and continuously change the global and its unifying structure. In sum, the women's perceptions of the interaction between the local and the global is elucidated in the interpretation of their understanding of the global, which is seen as both one-dimensional (homogenous) as well as multidimensional (heterogeneous) although the homogeneity dimension appears to be the dominant.

This analysis has shown that discourses about supremacy of the West and the naturalness and autonomy of the neoliberal economy are prominent in forming the women's organisation representatives' perceptions of the global. It argues that perceptions of the interaction between the global and the local reproduces, and is reproduced by, various overlapping and permeating discourses. These discourses in turn serve to depict and justify a metanarrative of European and American dominance.

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Interviews
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Appendix 1

Interview questions

"I am interested in studying the way women's rights activists are viewing the relation between change of social structures in Georgia and Georgia's involvement with countries from the West and the nation's integration in the global neoliberal economy. I am interested in finding out how you are viewing market economy and everything that it has brought as well as the impact of donors and collaboration with European and American institutions. I want to know how you think this will impact your work. Will Georgia's involvement in the global economy and increasing contacts with the West be positive or negative for gender equality and the change of gender structures? I want to get to know your perception and opinions through asking you some questions that I want you to speak as freely about as possible".

Information about interviewed person:
- Name, age and occupation. Brief background information (education, city of birth, job history)
- The focus areas of the organisation. When was the organisation founded? How does the organisation get funding?

Interview questions

Research question: How do the interviewees perceive the West and the connection between changing gender structures and Georgia's integration with the western world?

- What are gender structures?
  - Is it important to separate women's problems from men's? Why?

Theme: Attitudes and perception about the connection between Georgia and the West

- Describe what you consider to be pro-western politics in Georgia.
- Is pro-western politics and a pro-western stance something that will have a positive or negative impact for changing gender structures in Georgia? Why?

Theme: Attitudes towards donors

- Can you describe the influence that international donors have had for your work?
  - Would women's organisations have developed without the support of international donors?
  - What has your donors advised you to focus on?

Research question: How do the interviewees perceive the global neoliberal economy and the connection between Georgia's integration to the global economy and changing gender structures?

Theme: The economic transition

- During the economic transition - who had most problems? Men or women? Who got most new positive opportunities? Why?

Theme: Attitude towards involvement in global neoliberal economy

- Are you in favour or against Georgia's involvement in the global neoliberal economy? Why?

- What kind of changes in women's life has the transition to market economy and capitalism resulted in? Opportunities and negative impacts? Why?

- Will increasing economic integration in the future lead to changes of social structures like gender structures? Why?

Theme: Economic growth

- What is the best way to change gender structures in Georgia? By trying to change attitudes and opinions or by increasing the country's economy? Why?

Appendix 2

The women's organisation representatives and the organisations

Below I introduce the women's public and private status and the main activities of the organisations. In some cases I have left out personal status because of being asked to do so.

Organisation A: Mariam, Ana, Elo, Tamona and Lali
In 2002 organisation A was established to provide English and computer education for women in Zugdidi. After a few years of getting limited project funding from various donors, organisation A got yearly financial support from a Swedish international women's organisation and this support has been the economic base for the organisation ever since. During the years the organisation have increased in size and provided various trainings for women, free of charge, aiming at increasing their prospect of getting employed. The organisation has also provided medical and psychological support for women who are victims of domestic violence. In 2010 the organisation decided to change their focus towards a more "rights-based approach". This has resulted in the creation of a "club" where women meet and participate in trainings and workshops were topics like gender equality, women's rights and sexually and gender based violence are discussed. With encouragement from their donors, in 2012 another club was founded with the intention of providing trainings for women to take more active part in the political sphere.

Mariam is one of the founders and the chairperson of organisation A. She is in her late 40's and lives with her sisters. Mariam was born in Zugdidi but lived in Tbilisi during the latter part of the 1980s and during the fall of Soviet Union. Her profession is English lector. Mariam was during her student time taking active part in protests for the independence of Georgia from Soviet Union and today she supports the sitting president.

Ana is an educated social worker in her early 30s. She has lived her entire life in Zugdidi apart from a few years in the beginning of 2000 when she studied English at the university in Tbilisi. At the moment she is unmarried and lives with her parents. Ana got her social worker education in Zugdidi and she has had this profession, working for organisation A, for four years.

Elo is a lawyer in her late 20s who attended English courses at organisation A before being offered a job. In the beginning of the 2000s she studied to become a lawyer in Tbilisi and after her education she went back to live with her dad in Zugdidi. Elo has been working at organisation A for almost five years and she has been especially involved in providing legal advices for victims of domestic violence as well as being a facilitator for the different clubs. Since Georgia was a part of the Soviet Union during Elo's early childhood, she think of herself as affected by socialist ideology mostly through her relatives nostalgia.

Tamona is a middle-aged Georgian woman originally from Abkhazia, who fled during the civil war in the early 1990s. She is an educated German lector who before the war used to teach at the university in the province capital in Abkhazia. Together with Mariam she founded organisation A. Today she is working as an administrator and German teacher at the organisation and lives with her husband.

Lali is an accountant at organisation A and she has worked in the organisation almost since it was established. She is born in Zugdidi in the early 1960s and got her accountant education in the capital during the late 1980s. In the beginning of the 1990s she moved back to Zugdidi to stay with her sisters. Lali supports the sitting president and she feels no nostalgia for Soviet times.

Organisation B: Nino and Sofi
The main aim of organisation B is to increase internally displaced women's participation in all spheres of society. Since it was established the organisation has provided education and psychosocial rehabilitation as well as involved in peace-building processes. The organisation has also held trainings for women about their rights and especially been focused on the younger generation of women. Like organisation A, they get yearly core funding from a Swedish international organisation but many shorter projects have also been funded by other European organisations and UN-organs.

Like Tamona, Nino is originally from Abkhazia and fled to Georgia during the war. She is a middle-aged economist lector and before the war she lectured at different universities. In late 1990s she founded organisation B and is now the current chairperson of this organisation as well as a trainer and project coordinator. She has a husband and two grown-up children.

Sofi is in her late 20s and after being an unpaid intern at organisation B she now works as an office manager and peace-building trainer. Sofi was born in Abkhazia and after fleeing during the war she lived in Tbilisi and in Zugdidi. In Tbilisi she got a bachelor degree in Georgian grammar and literature. Even though not revealing any particular political stance, Sofi is not supportive towards the president. Sofi lives with her mother.

Organisation C: Maka
Before Maka founded organisation C she used to teach bio-chemistry at the university in Zugdidi. She is in her 40s and belongs to the middle-class. The organisation was officially registered in 2007 and has since then been working with young people to inform about gender equality and women's rights. In 2010 the organisation started a provincial "gender network" with the aim of gathering local gender and women's organisations to discuss the local problems that needs to be addressed, among them women's lack of health service. The organisation is small and has so far been depending on occasional project funding from various European organisations.

Organisation D: Maia and Salome

The organisation was established in 2000 and its main aim is to protect women's rights. A wide range of activities and projects have been implemented since the organisation started, among them rehabilitation of prison cells for women, activities for raising popular awareness about violence against women and providing health care for socially vulnerable women. Like organisation C, this organisation is depending upon short-term funding from various European, American and international organisations.

Maia is the chairperson of organisation D, being in her mid 40s. She is rather critical of the economic system in Georgia as it looks like right now and she also emphasises the importance of keeping local traditions and culture. Salome is a project manager at organisation D. She is in her late 20s and has a university education in English and literature. Salome sees with positive eyes on the future and she believes that women will soon have a more prominent role in the society and that Georgia's economic growth will increase.